

There was a time when April showers meant just that. In the south we had nothing and the rest of the country did not fare much better. Come May we had two days of the wet stuff which filled a couple of water butts and since then virtually nothing. Being on a water meter at home I try and grow all the water hungry crops on the allotment. If Mr Trump did a bit of gardening he might change his mind about global warming.

Mind you the strawberries don't mind a bit, they love the warm dry weather. If Wimbledon run a bit short this year, I can certainly help them out .

Guess what's on the menu for dessert this evening.



Tomato 'Ferline' I took this photo on the 4th June. By the weekend these will be ripe for picking.

'Sakura' cherry tomato. We have been harvesting these for about three weeks now. They have a very good flavour, I will certainly grow this one again next year.



beautiful red stalks and I would love to get it on the show bench. Last year at the New Forest Show I won with my rhubarb, the only problem was that I won it with another of my varieties, Stockbridge Arrow.

The plants are now well into their harvest period. Keep them well watered and give a weekly high potash feed. I like to use Maxicrop Triple. Chempak No8 is also perfect for the job.

Rhubarb 'Fultons Strawberry Surprise' In taste tests this is the one that always comes out tops. The only problem is that it is a very fussy grower. You have to find the right spot to keep it happy. It will only tolerate partial shade and does better in full sun. I was lucky enough to get the original trial plants from the model vegetable garden at Wisley. It has



On the Allotment

The Ronnie Jackson onions, 'seed courtesy of the Plumbs' are showing signs of bulbing up. It would be nice if I could get a set for the Southern Branch Championships but that might be a tall order. The seed was not sown until late January.

Another member of the onion family that is ready, the **Hative de Niort** shallots. These are destined for the pickling class. Unfortunately even to my untutored eye I reckon quite a few of these are going to be oversize.



'Bell Boy' Sweet Peppers. Just setting fruits. This one will produce green

peppers which will eventually turn red.

I also have the yellow variety. Some people recommend pinching out the tops of the peppers when they are about 8" tall to get them to branch out. I find this unnecessary, mine branch out without any interference from me. Also pinching out the growing point delays fruiting. The only peppers that require pinching out are the chilli's.

A problem on Teds plot



One of my fellow allotment friends Ted, called me over to have a look at his sweetcorn 'Early Bird'. Every one in the bed was throwing up a flower spike. This in fact is quite normal. The flower spike is the male which should be followed by the female flowers that set the cobs.

The courgette trial is progressing nicely. All the plants doing well. The first one to produce an edible courgette was 'Defender' that was picked when 4" long. It went straight into a salad for that evenings meal.

You will notice that most of the courgettes have silver flecking on the leaves. The only one that doesn't is my old favourite 'Black Forest'. The growing point has now been tied up to the stake.



A splash of colour on Julies allotment from this gorgeous clematis.

There is always room for a little bit of beauty on the allotment site.



Next time catching up with the peas & cues.

John Trim