

- Choose an open, sunny position well clear of moisture-seeking tree roots. Some afternoon shade in summer is acceptable – it will assist in reducing stress on your crops during the hottest part of the day.
- Mark out a 3 metre by 3 metre area. Start modestly; you can always expand it in the future if this proves to be too small.
- If the area is currently lawn, cut and lift the turf (this can be used for patching elsewhere), otherwise remove all weeds and other debris.
- A productive vegetable garden depends on reasonable quality soil and good preparation. If your soil texture is poor (too sandy or too heavy), consider building raised beds at least 30-45cm above the existing ground level. Use sleepers, treated pine logs or galvanised steel sheeting to form the edging and fill with **Organic Planting Mix**.
- Sandy loam, friable loam and clay-loam soils are all suitable for vegetables but will produce better crops when enriched with **Cow Manure**, **Organic Compost** and a few bags of **Organic Planting Mix**.
- Clay-loams will benefit from a dressing of **Gypsum** at the rate of a good handful square metre. This will improve both texture and drainage.
- Dig the entire area over to a depth of at least 30-40cm, breaking up large clods and removing any roots encountered.
- Add **Cow Manure**, **Organic Compost** and **Organic Planting Mix** and fork through and water thoroughly. If your soil is hydrophobic (repels water), add **Granular Soil Wetter** now to improve moisture penetration.
- Leave area to stand for a couple of weeks, removing any weeds that may appear as soon as they are noticed.
- For best results, plant or sow in rows running north-south so all crops receive equal sun exposure. The exception is Sweet Corn, which is best planted in a block to assist pollination and cob set.
- Rake the surface smooth and create a narrow path running north-south through the centre so you can easily reach into the middle of each planting area. It isn't necessary to create planting beds (or 'lands') but you may if you wish. Your patch is now ready for planting or seed sowing!
- Choose vegetables and varieties that are suited to your climate and soil type – your local Garden Centre is the best source of advice as to what is best in your area. Either ask a friendly staff member or browse the shelves and racks to see what's available.
- Sow seeds at the spacings recommended on the packet and water in. After germination, thin out if required. Spread **Sugarcane Mulch** when seedlings are about 10-15cm high.
- Plant out seedlings at the suggested label spacings and water in with **Plant Starter**. Spread **Sugarcane Mulch** along the rows and between plants (but not in direct contact with them) to keep the soil cool and moist for longer and to suppress weed growth.
- Remember to water deeply a couple of times a week either early morning or late evening, (or as allowed under current water conservation measures). Avoid wetting the foliage as this may assist in spreading diseases. Do not sprinkle often or lightly and do not water in the heat of the day.
- Feed fortnightly with **Organic Liquid Fertiliser**.
- Harvest regularly – the more often you pick crops (apart from root vegetables), the more they will produce.

