

## What to do in September

### **General Tasks**

**Soil Preparation** – Get rid of any plant debris or weeds (annuals and perennials) so you can prepare the soil for your next sowing or planting. Try to fill the bed to avoid patch.

**Turning Your Compost** – To help the compost to rot down, turn the heaps to mix the layers up. You can dig in the compost into the soil or spread the compost over the soil and let the worms to do the works by pulling it into the soil.

**Seed Saving** – If you like the varieties of vegetables, keep an eye on the healthiest plants for their seed. Let the plants go to seed, collect the seed in a paperbag. For the beans or peas, wait for the pods to dry before picking or pick the pods to dry in the shed or greenhouse.

**Wildlife Home** – Build a bird feeder, an insect home, a pond or a log pile. All these are essential and they help the wildlife such as hedgehogs, toads, birds, etc to survive the winter.

**Green Manures** – If it is possible to keep the soil covered with crops, it will be brilliant. Otherwise, sow green manure. They can be sown until the end of the month of September. They help to absorb nutrients until they have been dug in so it reduces losses due to rain and snow.

**Outdoor Tomatoes** – The plants will have finished their growing by end of this month. Probably struggle to get ripen. Remove their support, lay them down carefully on straws, and cover them with cloches to help them ripening.

**General Tidying** - Tidying up the garden as you go along so you won't have huge amount of work to do at the end of the year. Decide on which plant variety do well, what you like to grow and make a decision of what to order for next year's growing season. Don't wait till the last minute to make a hasty decision.

### **Greenhouse**

**Remove** any mature plants that have finished their job to provide light to the sun loving plants.

**Keep** an eye on tomato blight. If you spotted it, remove the plant to stop it from spreading the disease to the other plants.

**Polytunnel and Greenhouse** - Close the doors and windows to maintain the warm temperature now that the summer is near the end.

**Polytunnel and Greenhouse** – look after their structure. Repair any damages, loose hinges or ripped polythene. Cut back any overgrown hedges or overhanging branches before they cast any shade or may rip the polythene. Look out for any broken glass panes.

**September** is the month where everyone will be busy harvesting their crops. Remove any debris or lower leaves to prevent any pests hiding underneath the plants.

**Weather** during the month of September can be erratic. You may get warm summer heat to frosty nights. Keep an eye on young seedlings. Large plants will have good roots system to withstand the erratic weather.

## **Fruits**

**Grapes** – It should start to ripen now. The best way to check is to try a few of the berries. Retain as much of the stems attached as possible. Put the grapes in a jar of water. You can store it in a cool place for 12 weeks.

**Pear** – It is a sure sign when the pears are ripe is when the birds start to peck at the fruits. They are overripe when the fruits fell from the trees. It is best to pick the fruit when they are slightly under ripe.

**Apples** – If you got plenty of apples, here are a few ways to:

- 1) Store them in an unheated room, in the dark shed or garage. You can use cardboard trays or cardboard boxes with some soft material in the base.
- 2) Juice the Fruits – Fresh juice can be kept in the fridge
- 3) Freeze it – Remove the core, peel slice it and freeze it in portion for future uses in sauces and pies.
- 4) Dry it – Either uses a cool oven or a food dryer to store them in airtight jars.
- 5) Cider Making – It is the easiest alcohol to make. You will need a fruit press with a few other basic equipments or there are events organised by some communities whereby they will use your harvest to make it into apple juice or cider. You just have to pay them accordingly.

**Provide Protection and Pruning** – Pick the windfalls promptly – provide netting for the fruits and hand wasp traps.

**Fruits Bushes** – Remove fruited raspberries canes down to ground level. Prune 1/3 of the old growth from blackcurrants to encourage new growth. Mulch around the roots after removing all the weeds.

<b>Sow Now</b>	<b>Plant Now</b>	<b>Harvest Now</b>
Spring Lettuce	Spring Cabbages	Salad Leaves
Winter Spinach	Autumn Onion Sets	Lettuce
Oriental Leaves		Radish
Pak Choi		Potatoes
Hardy Salad Leaves		Globe Artichokes
Turnips		Spinach
Hardy Green Manures		Tomatoes
		Peppers

		Aubergines
		Cucumber
		Runner Beans
		French Beans
		Broad Beans
		Beetroot
		Leaf Beets
		Spring Onions
		Onion Bulbs
		Parsnips
		Peas
		Squashes
		Marrow
		Courgettes