



October Newsletter

“All of a sudden, summer collapsed into autumn”

October is the month of change, we are past the equinox and autumn arrives along with the first frosts; on average the first frost in our area is around the third week in November. It is now time to prepare one's plot for winter and the new season. The nights are drawing and the clocks go back at the end of the month leaving us less time in the evening to get all the jobs completed.

Time to select our seeds, potatoes, onions and shallots and peas and beans for next year. Kings Seeds catalogues along with the potato, beans and pea order forms are available at from the Store.

Seed orders to be returned to the Store by 29th October

Harrogate Spring Flower Show. We are considering organising a trip to the Harrogate Spring Flower Show on 20th April 2023 at a cost per person of £37.50. This cost includes coach travel to and from the Great Yorkshire Showground, Harrogate and entry to the Spring Flower Show. Those wishing to take advantage of this offer are requested to confirm the number of seats they require, by email, before the 29th October 2022; by emailing me at mal.nlhschair@gmail.com

Whilst mentioning Harrogate my wife and I visited the Autumn Flower Show which was a real eye opener. The show benches were teaming with vegetables and flowers. Excellent displays from the National Vegetable Society the National Dahlia Society along with stalls from many of the north's nurseries. The exhibits of giant vegetables was interesting to say the least, the large beetroot looked rather like aliens from a series of Dr Who. In the Flower Hall the dahlias took centre stage well outshining the chrysanthemums which, overall, appear to be losing their popularity. I enjoyed looking at the vegetables noting the varieties that were popular on the benches many of which are available in the Kings Seed Catalogue.



The Annual Produce and Flower Show was a great success and more-so after the sweltering summer. The Show Hall was full of around 280 exhibits and the tables were heaving with the weight of exhibits. Each individual section was well supported but with the majority of exhibits(200) in Sections 1/2 Vegetables and Fruit. The children class is well worth a mention with a gathering of monsters and an army of gingerbread men - superb. For details of the awards follow this link: <https://www.northlincolnhorticulturalsociety.co.uk/annual-show>

There will be a few changes in the schedule for next year's show which I expect to be uploaded on the website in the next couple of months, so keep checking so as to plan your exhibits for next year's show.

Most of your crops apart from those for overwinter should be being harvested now. Tomatoes will finally succumb to the cold even those under glass or in the poly-tunnel. Unripe tomatoes can be ripened on one's window sill, place a ripe banana with them which will aid ripening, this is due to the bananas giving off minute amounts of ethylene gas. Alternatively, make them into green tomato chutney(see recipe) or store them wrapped in tissue paper for later in the year.

Now is the time to consider planting broad beans, garlic and onion sets. There are presently some excellent garlic bulbs at the Store ready to be either planted direct into the ground or in pots for planting out later. Aquadulce broad beans are the variety to plant this month and they will give you a good crop of early beans before the dreaded black-fly become a problem. I have already sown mine and will make a second spring sowing, in pots, of a variety called Crimson Flowered; an excellent bean in short pods with as you might guess an attractive crimson flower. Shallots can be planted outside in prepared beds late this month or next. Early planting ensures that the shallots are growing strongly in late spring to ensure that the lengthening days trigger the formation of bulbs. Similarly, overwintering onion sets planted in the autumn will be ready to harvest next June/July. These onions are what is classed as intermediate day length and hardy which is why they grow over winter and are usually bolt resistant. They start to bulb up when the day length is 12 hours (at the end of March) whereas the normal onions do not bulb up until the day length of 16 hours which is usually in June.

Shallots, beans, onions and garlic are available form the Store.

Green Tomato Chutney:

I am sure many will have their own recipe but, perhaps, this recipe is worth a try:

Ingredients:

5 lb green tomatoes
1 lb onions
1 oz salt
8 oz seedless raisins
8 oz sultanas
1 tablespoon of whole black peppercorns
1 oz root ginger
12 cloves
4 red chilies
1 lb Demerara sugar
1 pint malt vinegar

Method:

1. Wash and finely chopped tomatoes. Peeled and finally chopped the onions.
2. Place the two together in a bowl, sprinkle with salt and leave for at least an hour.
3. Transfer into a pan with the raisins and sultanas. Bruise the ginger and chilies and put with the other spices into a piece of muslin, tie firmly and add to the pan with the vinegar.

4. Bring to the boil and then switch down to simmer, add the sugar stirring frequently until dissolved.

5. Continue stirring occasionally and pressing to the muslin bag until thickened.

6. Remove the Muslin bag.

7. Pour into hot sterilised jars and seal.

Hints:

1. Vinegar is one of the most important ingredients in successful chutney making. This must be of good quality and have it in acidic acid content of at least 5% if you check the bottle it will usually tell you the degree of acidity which can range up to 8%. If it doesn't say, assume it is lower than 5%.

2. You can use ordinary granulated or brown sugar. Brown sugar gives a dark colour to the chutney. If the lighter colour is wanted then add the sugar should when the fruit and the vegetables are soft and mushy.

3. Generally whole spices are preferable in chutney making rather than ground ones which can give a muddy appearance to the chutney although it doesn't make a lot of difference if any if any were dark coloured chutneys.