

## Good Companions - using nature to get the best out of your veg. growing

Companion planting is not a new concept, it has to some degree been used for many years. Obviously some plants prefer shade to direct sun while others benefit from the shelter given from cold winds that larger plants can offer; but there are often benefits not so obviously gained in growing some plants together, while others absolutely hate each other and do not fare well if planted in close proximity.

Below, is a list of some planting said to be beneficial, which may be worth consideration:

**Apple Trees:** Plant chives around the base of the tree.

**Broad Beans:** Summer Savory discourages blackfly.

**Brassicas:** Plant Dill nearby (it attracts beneficial predators).

**Carrots:** Sow with Chives; Celery; Onions; Lettuce & Radish.

**Celery:** good with Leeks; deters cabbage-white butterfly.

**Chinese Cabbage:** grow in shade of Brussels Sprouts.

**Coriander:** Repels aphids.

**Courgettes:** Grow under Sweetcorn.

**Daffodils:** Deters mice so make new sowings of peas next to them.

**Feverfew:** Insecticidal properties & also relieves migraine.

**Gooseberries:** Grow with *Limnanthes douglassii* (poached egg plant).

**Hemp:** Deters potato blight. (make sure you don't grow cannabis)!!

**Hyssop:** Deters cabbage white butterfly.

**Lavender (Russian):** Deters many pests.

**Leeks:** Grow in a trio with onions & carrots - deters carrot Root fly.

**Lettuces:** Dill & Chervil will protect against aphids.

**Marigolds:** Good amongst all vegetables.

**Nasturtiums:** Prevent Woolly Aphid.

**Parsley:** Good with Tomatoes.

**Rhubarb:** Boil leaves to make home made dressing said to deter aphids, or place bits in planting holes of brassicas may help to control clubroot.

**Wallflowers:** Grow under apple trees to attract early pollinators.

*Thanks go to Robin Wilkinson for these tips.*



## BRIDPORT AND DISTRICT ALLOTMENTS SOCIETY



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### Information Leaflet 6

# Exotic vegetables and friendly Flowers

## **An exotic new range of vegetables to experiment with .**

Why not try something you maybe haven't bothered with before, which can be achievable even without a greenhouse or polytunnel. Some of the brightest and most nutritious vegetables around come from the pepper, melon or squash families, and with the amount of climate change we are already experiencing they are coming within reach of the UK gardener. Many garden centres are now selling plants of these "exotic" vegetables, and although it is now too late to germinate your own sowings out of doors, why not try something novel on a small scale to see if you want to grow more next year?.

Large transparent polythene bags over a stick or chicken wire frame, or a lean to of old windows or sheets of polycarbonate plastic can make do for a greenhouse, many years it is hot enough that you may be able to grow a variety of squashes, melons and two minute peppers without any glass at all.

### **Nutritional Values**

We all like the idea that our allotments impress by their colour and vitality, and very often the first colour that springs to mind is "green". It is certainly vital (in every sense) and is derived from the plant pigment chlorophyll. This is formed

by the action of sunlight in the presence of nitrogen, so our nice green allotment needs suitable amounts of each. And we have to eat our greens in suitable amounts to enable the vitamin C which they contain to keep up our resistance to disease and maintain a blooming complexion. But don't imagine that green is the only colour associated with vitamin C - for example, red and yellow peppers contain more Vitamin C than an orange. Other plant pigments have beneficial health effects as well. Most red and yellow colourings are provided by carotenoids which are found in carrots, ripening peppers, squashes and tomatoes, and in the red of chard and some spinaches, although in the latter they may be masked by the green chlorophyll content. Carotenoids do not actually contain vitamin A, but they contain chemicals which help our bodies to manufacture it. One carotenoid does not, but it does contain lycopene, which is thought by many to safeguard against cancer. It is found only in really ripe fruit, preferably grown away from extremes of heat or cold, so that may go some way to explaining the healthiness of the Mediterranean diet. - but what about imported apples and bananas, stored in dark cold conditions pending sale and routinely harvested at an immature stage? What you grow yourself must be better! -

### **Primary Colours**

All the fruits mentioned so far provide both colour and possibly health benefits too

Other plant pigments may not have identifiable health benefits, but they provide the pleasure of reds, purples and blues in the case of anthocyanins (aubergine, purple beans, red cabbage etc). The stunning red of beetroot is due to yet another pigment, betelain. Whatever helps to retain this mouth watering appearance must be good; steaming is often more successful than boiling. And the addition of an acid such as lemon juice to red cabbage helps to stop it turning to a rather dreary navy blue

If you have access to a heated greenhouse or propagator it is not difficult to raise your own exotic seedlings; increasingly garden centres are stocking them for planting out from May onwards. In a good summer you may get a crop without glass, but for best and tastiest results they prefer to be cultivated in a greenhouse or polytunnel.

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