

ASPARAGUS



Asparagus is a hardy perennial vegetable that well worth the time and effort it takes to establish an 'asparagus bed' as it can crop well for 20 years.

The varieties we grow are 'Connovers Colossal', an early maturing heirloom variety that has been around since the 1800's, and is still very widely grown nowadays owing to its exceptional flavour and thick spears. We also have a purple variety, namely Sweet Purple.

Asparagus likes a sunny, sheltered site. The soil should be free-draining and have lots of organic matter incorporated into it before planting. It should be planted in rows, with around 30cm between each plant and row, and then mulched with organic matter (about 5cm deep) after planting to help suppress weeds, and also to provide frost protection for the spears when they first start appearing.

You shouldn't pick it the year you plant it, instead allow the ferns to mature, and cut them back in autumn when they turn yellow. By allowing the plant to grow on before harvesting you are allowing it to develop a good root system. The second year it can be harvested lightly for 6 weeks, and in subsequent years pick it for 8 weeks.

Weeding is best done by hand as asparagus roots are fairly close to the soil surface, and hoeing can easily damage the roots. This is where the mulch comes into its own as it will help suppress the weeds.