

# LEEKS

## Varieties

**Summer harvest** (August, September): Kilima, Lancia.

**Autumn harvest** (October, November): Jolant, Tadorna, Carleton.

**Over-winter:** Arkansas, Ashton.

See your seed dealer for the most recent variety recommendations.

## Soils

Leeks should be grown on well-drained soils and should not be subjected to flooding at any time. They can be grown successfully on mineral soils but in heavy, clay soils harvesting may be held up and the removal of surplus soil from roots may require more labour.

## Seeding and Transplanting

Leeks are normally transplanted. They should be seeded under protection early in the season (February to March) or in outdoor seedbeds (April to May). Leeks for harvesting in August to September should be seeded from mid-February to mid-March. For harvesting in early winter, seed from mid-March to mid-April. For spring harvest, seed may be started

from April to mid-May. The right varieties (above) must be used for each harvest season.

At transplanting, leek seedlings should be placed in furrows 15 cm deep. Furrows are filled in during cultivation and as the plants develop, the rows should be hilled up. Leeks should have a white shaft that reaches almost to the base of the leaves. Care must be taken not to introduce soil between leaves as it will penetrate the shaft.

Another method of transplanting is to drop each seedling into an individual hole, 15 cm deep, pressed into the ground. This procedure eliminates the need for filling of furrows but ridging should still be done.

Leeks should be spaced 8 to 10 cm apart in 90 cm rows.

## Fertilizer

A soil test is necessary to determine phosphate and potash requirements. See Chapter 3 for recommendations based on soil test results.

Prior to planting, broadcast and disc in 70 kg/ha (28 kg/acre) nitrogen and all of the required phosphate and potash.

A further 50 – 100 kg/ha (20 – 40 kg/acre) of nitrogen applied in one or more side-dressings is usually necessary to maintain growth.