**December**

The year is coming to an end and the shortest day is in this month, which heralds the slow advance towards next season. So take a bit of time to reflect on your successes and to consider what went wrong with some crops. Always remember, that there are no failures in gardening it is always down to the weather, furry things or if all else fails Acts of God. Allow yourself a little relaxing time around the New Year and be ready to hit the ground running in 2013.

**Harvesting**

Keep picking the Brussels sprouts to ensure the sprouts don’t blow open. Also harvest winter cabbage regularly although according to variety they can remain in the soil for months. The parsnips and leeks can be left in the ground to be lifted as needed.

If a prolonged cold or wet spell is forecast you can lift leeks and parsnips to store them in containers of old compost or soil to be used at a later date. Cabbages and even sprouts can be lifted with their roots in a soil ball and stored in a shed or greenhouse. Don’t forget to water the soil occasionally.

**Sowing and Planting**

There isn’t anything to sow in the garden this month except your onion seed which should be sown in trays or pots in a gentle heat towards the end of the year. Treat yourself for once and spend some dream time looking through the pages of the seed catalogues putting your order together and to posting it asap. King’s Seeds make it so easy for you there are no excuses, and their catalogue is an Aladdin’s cave of goodies.

**General**

Check over all of your tools in the shed to make that they are safe and fit to use next season. Clean the metal and wipe it over with something like 3 in 1 oil. Clean and wipe down all wooden handles with linseed oil. It not only preserves the wood but makes the more comfortable on the hands. Check for pests and diseases on any produce in store especially for rat and mouse damage. Set the traps to catch them if you have to.