



# BACK TO FRONT

Back to Front Community Guidelines were the original idea of Roxana Summers, compiled by Dawn Fuller. Designer Emma James with original design idea by Katie Grimley.

Back to Front would like to thank all of the participants who contributed ideas for the guidelines and our four case study participants: John at Richmond Hill Community Centre and his group; John; Iris and Margaret.

Emma Goodway, project manager and growing mentors who have supported local residents to think Back to Front.

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Photo images are either Back to Front's, Space2's, Leeds Metropolitan University's or are stock photography unless otherwise stated.

Disclaimer: While every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in the guidelines is accurate, some details will inevitably change over time.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



"I am delighted to support the Back to Front (BtoF) project.

Like all good projects the idea behind this is very simple: to encourage more of us to use our Front Gardens to grow food. There are so many benefits to doing this. We get to watch plants grow. We can enjoy tasty fruit and vegetables on our own doorstep. It makes us exercise. And lifting those paving stones and tarmac helps rainfall to soak away.

BtoF supports people with free gardening resources, materials, advice and support on what works and how to do it. The results are great to see as you walk down roads, with lovely front gardens full of life and plants and colour to enjoy.

I wish the project every success and I hope you will enjoy reading the community guidelines."

**Hilary Benn**  
**Member of Parliament, Leeds Central**

**FOREWORD**

## **Foreword by Hilary Benn MP**

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# Section 1

What's Back to Front All  
About?

BtoF is a project that supports the use of front gardens to grow fruit, herbs and vegetables. Some communities in Leeds already use their Front Gardens in this way and they provided the initial inspiration to the project. So why not join in and spread the word? You too can have a beautiful and tasty front garden!

We also developed and published ideas for making the most of small spaces in our BtoF Manual. This is available from Leeds Libraries or downloadable from our website ([backtofront.org.uk](http://backtofront.org.uk)).

### **Leeds has a large proportion of back-to-back houses with only front gardens to grow food. That is how the BtoF Project was born.**

BtF built three demonstration gardens in Chapeltown and Harehills to show what could be possible. The colourful gardens produced so much food that one family cooked a daily curry from their own front garden. Another resident said that working in the garden had made her meet her neighbours!

In South Leeds, Asha Community Group encouraged local families to take part and achieved beautiful and tasty results. They grew an amazing range of foods from coriander to sweet potatoes and Bangladeshi gourds. People harvested, prepared and cooked healthy meals together. Neighbours introduced each other to different ways of using the produce including sweet potato leaf curry (please see recipes section at the back).



WHAT'S **BACK TO FRONT** ALL ABOUT?

In the wet summer of 2012, local organisation Space2 supported local people across three different areas in North East Leeds to grow food the Back to Front way. Over 158 families managed to grow at least something.

**So what did our new front gardeners think after their first year 'grow your own' adventure?**

My neighbour is so happy she comes and helps me sometimes.

I really enjoy growing plants. The garden smells good and looks good.

I'm very proud of my garden especially when friends and neighbours want to do the same in their garden and ask for tips..

I like and enjoy gardening and love watching it grow. I'm happy my seeds are growing.

My neighbours have started asking me what I am growing, it is spinach/etc. I feel proud and happy.



WHAT'S **BACK TO FRONT** ALL ABOUT?

With such good results we thought we should share our experience with others. The result is this beginners guide to BtoF gardening. Here you will find top tips, information on local resources and ideas for growing the Back to Front way. If you like our project, you might want to become a BtoF Growing Mentor and encourage your neighbours to get growing.



We also developed and published ideas for making the most of small spaces in our BtoF Manual.

**This is available from Leeds Libraries or  
downloadable from our website ([backtofront.org.uk](http://backtofront.org.uk))**

WHAT'S **BACK TO FRONT** ALL ABOUT?

Leeds is a natural home for this project because in the city we have a large amount of back-to-back housing in the country.

There are many advantages for using front gardens productively, for example:

**It's convenient** - BtoF growing may be the only way for many living in the inner city to have a go at growing their own fruit and vegetables even if this means a bag with potatoes by the front door, a hanging basket with cherry tomatoes or a balcony garden in a flat. Btof growers can harvest on their way in to the front door and see at a glance what needs doing and what is ready to harvest. No extra effort required!

**Cheap and easy** - Especially salad crops like radishes, spring onions and herbs, but also things that may be expensive to buy in the shops like raspberries or figs!

**Recycling** - Gardening in general is a great opportunity for recycling and helps to reduce landfill waste through home composting vegetable peelings for compost and so much more.

**Food safety** - You know where your food comes from and your food won't have been brought from halfway across the world to get to you, just 30 seconds from picking to the pot.

**Taste** – Gardeners swear that when you've grown it yourself it tastes better, it might be because of all that love and attention that you put into growing it that makes it taste so good. One thing is certain: freshly picked food does taste better!

YOU MAY STILL BE ASKING BUT WHY **FRONT GARDENS?**

It's inspiring, fun, and it's for sharing - Front Garden growing gets everyone talking often about the beautiful gardens in place of drab, concrete yards. You can celebrate together or share a meal cooking what you've grown. Back to Front growing makes it easy for people to share and swap seeds, tips and ideas, cutting the costs of a healthy and enjoyable activity, whilst making new friends.

### Reduced flooding

Productive Front Gardens can help reduce the risk of downhill flooding as rain water can soak in to the soil and drain away slowly rather than running off concrete and brick into drains that can't cope.

#### TOP TIP

Some flowers planted next to your veg plants can help them grow. They can attract useful insects or deter pests. Some examples are marigolds with carrots, nasturtium with runner beans and petunias with tomatoes.

BtF gardening makes happier and healthier people. Studies show that being in touch with nature is great for us and is great for the earth too!

#### TOP TIP

Plant lavender, thyme, rosemary and oregano to attract helpful insects. Bees and butterflies love purple and blue flowers and they'll pollinate your vegetable plants too.

#### TOP TIP

Weed your garden often, as young weeds are much easier to pull out!

YOU MAY STILL BE ASKING BUT WHY **FRONT GARDENS?**

Do you want flowers in your front garden. Well, many flowers are also edible. Nasturtiums have lovely bright flowers and are very easy to grow, attract bees, draw pests away from other veg and taste delicious – a bit peppery like watercress. Other edible flowers include hollyhocks and pansies. Fried dandelion flowers have a lovely mushroom flavour and courgette flowers brighten up a summer salad just make sure you pick the 'male' one that has no swelling (baby courgette) behind it!

**WARNING:**

Please always check when eating flowers as some can be extremely poisonous, such as sweetpeas, daffodils and foxgloves or have side effects for some people.



Elder flower



Courgette flower



Courgette flower

**FLOWERS** YOU CAN EAT!

# **Section 2**

Giving it a Go

Starting Front Gardening



### **A gardener's busiest time of the year!**

- Sow seeds indoors and outdoors once the risk of frost has passed
- Plant strawberry plants outside in early spring
- Sow seeds for radishes, lettuces, beetroot, beans and tomatoes outside in late spring
- Plant sunflower seeds
- Sow herbs indoors for planting out later
- Clear weeds
- Watch out for pests attaching to your seedlings
- Harvest over winter produce like cabbages and broad beans



### **Watering is the key in the summer!**

- Plant out seedlings in your prepared soil or containers
- Sow pumpkin seeds in early summer
- Put in supports for tall plants
- Continue to sow more radishes, lettuces and beetroot
- Pick strawberries
- Keep weeding and keep the garden tidy so pests and diseases don't spread
- Train climbing veg like runner beans on their supports
- Remove sideshoots from tomatoes
- Earth up potatoes – keep adding earth around the roots to encourage more potatoes to grow

## **SEASONAL JOB CHART**



### **Harvest time!**

- Rake up fallen leaves and save them in plastic bags to make leaf mould
- Pick green tomatoes and leave to ripen on the window sill
- Cut your pumpkins and make delicious pumpkin soup
- Collect your seeds for next year
- Tidy the garden and put all old crop plants onto the compost heap
- Remove lower leaves on tomato plants so any fruit still left can ripen





















### **Tidying up and preparing for next season!**

- Add compost to your growing areas and dig it in
- Make sure soil isn't too wet, otherwise it will become like clay
- Wash pots and seed trays
- Clean gardening tools
- Make a compost bin
- Begin 'chitting' early seed potatoes in midwinter by leaving them out in a cool light place to start sprouting

### **TOP TIP**

Keep your own growing diary, so next year you can look back and remember what to do when and what worked for you.

Basil				
Beans				
Beetroot				
Chillies				
Coriander				
Courgettes				
Garlic				

One welly  
Two wellies  
Three wellies

=  
=  
=

Easiest to grow  
Easy to grow  
Difficult to grow

## TOP TIP


















Don't forget to label your seed rows or pots. Write the seed name on an old wooden peg and attach to pots. You'll know what seeds to plant next year too.

## TOP TIP

Take a walk in your neighbourhood and check out what veg plants are growing well in other local gardens or allotment sites.

Chances are you'll be able to grow them successfully too.

# GROWING CHART

Kalaloo				
Leeks				
Lemon Grass				
Onions				
Potatoes				
Radishes				
Salisfy				
Tomatoes				

## TOP TIP

Take a walk in your neighbourhood and check out what veg plants are growing well in other local gardens or allotment sites.

Chances are you'll be able to grow them successfully too.

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Don't forget to label your seed rows or pots. Write the seed name on an old wooden peg and attach to pots. You'll know what seeds to plant next year too.

# GROWING CHART

**What you grow will depend on what you eat and what you can easily grow.**

## WHAT YOU'LL NEED

### Garden

- Watering can
- Hand trowel and fork
- Rake and hoe
- Spade
- Fork
- Canes and garden twine
- Seed trays or containers

### Container planting

- Watering can
- Hand trowel and fork
- Canes and garden twine
- Seed trays or containers
- Pots and containers



### TOP TIP

Ask a BtoF growing mentor what they found easy to grow first time around.

**GIVING IT A GO** STARTING FRONT GARDENING



Growing fruit, herbs and vegetables in containers is now very popular and a great way for all the family to join in. Just like growing direct into the soil, you need to make sure the plants will have everything they need.

Good drainage is still needed so pierce the base of the container and enough goodness and nutrients to help the plant grow. You may need to feed the plant as it grows. We describe cheap solutions in our Section 6 Resources.

### TOP TIP

A window box is ideal for a colourful display of flowers and herbs. Place on your kitchen window sill so you can reach it easily when you're cooking.

You can use just about anything to grow your food in but you might want to consider how an old toilet would look on the way to your front door!

**Back to Front would love to see what you've recycled as growing containers**  
**Send us your pictures [www.backtofront.org.uk](http://www.backtofront.org.uk).**

### TOP TIP

Keep containers well watered. If the weather is very sunny or dry, you may need to water containers more than once a day.

### TOP TIP

The beauty of containers is they can be moved around the garden to catch the sun and generally be placed in the best spot at the time to speed the growing process.

# POTS

There are different sorts of compost. Garden compost is made from garden and vegetable kitchen waste. Mixed together and left to rot in a compost heap or bin, it will rot down to a rich crumbly mixture that can be put on the soil to improve the amount of goodness in the soil and help fruit and veg grow better and produce more.

Garden centre compost is used for growing seeds and young plants in containers.

**But, there are ways you can prepare the soil to up the odds of getting some home grown goodies at harvest time.**

### **Depth**

If it's a root veg like carrot or radishes you'll need deep soil, but salad veg like lettuce and spring onions can grow in shallow soil.

### **Drainage**

If water can't drain away the soil may become waterlogged and plants can rot. In Leeds most of the soil contains lots of clay, so drainage isn't great. Add sharp sand or compost to help improve the soil.

#### **TOP TIP**

One of the easiest & cheapest ways to make compost for your garden is to collect fallen leaves in autumn in a black sack, make a few holes in the sack, add a bit of water, tie up & leave in a corner of your garden until spring.

#### **TOP TIP**

If you have used compost for pots, add it to your garden soil at the end of the growing season. In time you can switch from using pots to using your garden for growing.

Leafmould is one of the best sources of goodness you can give your soil. In some parts of the country it's known as Gardener's Gold!

# **WHAT IS COMPOST?**

## WATER

Water your plants throughout the summer, unless we have another one like 2012 that is! Keep an eye on plants in pots. It's easy for the soil to dry out very quickly on sunny or dry, windy days.

## SEEDS

You can pick up cheap seeds at some high street stores or discount supermarkets and some Farmers Markets offer a seedlings swap. Or why don't you organise a seed/seedling swap with your neighbours or just share packets of seeds? Sometimes there are over 100 seeds in one packet – that's too much for anyone's front garden, surely! Let us know your plans and we may be able to support you or offer you seed

## SUPPORT

Some plants need support to stop them falling over or getting blown around by the wind. It's obvious with tall plants like beans and tomatoes, but some not so obvious ones might need a hand too, especially if the soil is shallow or they're in containers. Garden canes are the easiest way to support most plants, but smaller ones like lettuce or cabbage can be protected in other ways. You could try cutting off the bottom of a lemonade bottle and using the circular collar you've made as a support.

### Sun or Shade

Some like it hot and some aren't so keen!  
Check our guide to decide the best place to plant your seeds.

### TOP TIP

Let us know your plans via our website:  
[backtofront.org.uk](http://backtofront.org.uk)

**Store potatoes in a cool, dark place. But if it's outside in your garage or shed, make sure they don't freeze on cold, winter nights as they'll turn to mush.**

Basic Checklist: Your plants will need

- \* **Sunshine**
- \* **Water**
- \* **Good soil**

You can add compost to improve your soil.

### TOP TIP

Take a walk in your neighbourhood and check out what veg plants are growing well in other local gardens or allotment sites. Chances are you'll be able to grow them successfully too.

### TOP TIP

Don't forget to label your seed rows or pots. Write the seeds name on an old wooden peg and attach to pots. You'll know what seeds to plant next year too.

### Things to think about:

**You can plant straight into your garden. Adding compost helps to keep your soil full of goodness needed for the plants to grow. You can make your own compost, or get it very cheaply (see resources section) or free from us if you become a Back to Front mentor! But if you're really keen you just dive in. Give the soil a good dig, perhaps adding some compost and plant your seeds. Plants can be closer together if you use a square per crop, rather than long lines. Or get really creative and plant to give a colourful and mixed display of herbs, vegetables and fruit.**

**Giving it a go often gets results, so why not?!**

# POTATOES

# Section 3

What could go wrong with front garden growing and what you can do about it?

**BtoF partners have asked people what worries them about using their front gardens for growing fruit and veg. The main ones are:**

**Pollution from cars and lorries:**

This does happen, of course, but on most urban streets it's not as much as you might think.

**What can you do about?**

A thick hedge between your garden and the road will stop some of the pollution reaching your plants  
And always wash your fruit and veg really well before you eat it.

**Cat and dog poo!**

This is a big worry for some people and can have some health risks, especially cat poo for pregnant women.

**What can you do about it?**

- Use gloves to garden and wash your hands as soon as you've finished gardening
- Use fences or hedges to keep dogs and cats out of the garden
- If it's a big problem or one that just won't go away, try planting in pots
- Peel and wash all root crops, like carrots, parsnips, potatoes
- Cooking the veg should kill any diseases
- And always wash your fruit and veg really well before you eat it

WHAT COULD GO **WRONG**  
WITH **FRONT GARDEN GROWING** AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT?

### **Theft and vandalism:**

Again, our Back to Front gardeners did not find this as common as people think, but it was very upsetting when it happened after all the effort and hard work.

### **What can you do about it?**

Grow a hedge to make it clear where your garden starts and the pavement ends.

There are lots of edible hedges, like red and blackcurrants you could grow.

Spend time in the garden, getting to know neighbours and perhaps sharing some of the veg you grow. The more it's used and the more neighbours like your garden, the less opportunity for thieves and vandals to ruin it.

Better still help other people on your street to start front gardening.

The more people out and about, the less likely thieves and vandals will target your street.

**If, though, it does happen, try not to get disheartened.** You could use the Back to Front Facebook page or website to find out what others are doing about the same problem or simply to share your disappointment. It's amazing what a few words of encouragement from a stranger (even on the internet) can do to get you motivated again.

WHAT COULD GO **WRONG**  
WITH **FRONT GARDEN GROWING** AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT?

### **Soil contains waste from before your house was built**

This is a possibility as Leeds is, of course, an old industrial City, but again old maps and some research show that it is unlikely to be as bad as you might think.

**But if you are worried you can ring Leeds City Council on 0113 247 8154 and speak to the Contaminated Land Team.**

### **What can you do about it?**

Fill containers with clean soil to plant in.

Fill raised beds with clean soil to plant in. You can make your own from recycled wood. It does mean though that you'll have to find some soil to bring in to your garden. That can be expensive, but take a look at our resources section for ideas to cut costs.

And always wash your fruit and veg really well before you eat it

### **OK, so you still need convincing your front garden is a good space for grow your own?**

Well, in fact, many Leeds homes already use their front garden to grow fruit and veg.

In some parts of Leeds it is strange not to!

Be a trendsetter. If it's not happening on your street, why not be the first to give it a go. If you don't want to stand out from the crowd, start small with a couple of pots or grow edible flowers. It won't be long before you may be hooked, and maybe some of your neighbours will be too.

WHAT COULD GO **WRONG**  
WITH **FRONT GARDEN GROWING** AND WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT IT?

# **Section 4**

Case Studies:

Taking a peek at our  
neighbours' front gardens

John leads a weekly group for adults with learning disabilities and found the project had more benefits than just the fresh fruit and veg. Back to Front was one of the first activities the group got involved with when they met last spring.

In the words of one participant, Paul

**"The best bit was meeting the people in the group and learning to get on as a group".**

John felt that the workshops were perfectly pitched for the group and most importantly could take place in a familiar environment with everyone together around the table. So the idea that gardening is all about being outside, getting cold and breaking your back was dismissed immediately. Once the project was underway, the whole group looked forward to Thursday. For most it was the first time they'd grown from seed and they learnt how to nurture lots of different vegetables.

Now they have a good grasp of what to do and are planning for this year.



John's advice is get involved:

**"It was great to see the group bond, working together as a team and sharing the pride they felt when we were pulling the potatoes out. They weren't expecting that kind of a harvest. We had loads of taties."**

**JOHN**

**NEW GROUP TO TEAM PRIDE**



John lives in Richmond Hill with his young son and quickly became a BtoF convert. His front garden is paved, but this didn't stop John from energetically filling it with vegetables, herbs and fruit during last summer. He made a number of planters from old bits of wood and used bricks and got planting, ably assisted by 2 year old, Thomas. His commitment to the project and recently gained knowledge quickly enthused neighbours and supported by John 8 other houses on the street also started front garden growing. Again proving that front garden growing doesn't just help you produce lovely home grown fruit and veg in small spaces, but connects you with neighbours and creates a community spirit.

John was recruited by the project as a volunteer growing mentor. Not bad for someone who 6 months earlier certainly wouldn't have described himself as a gardener, never mind supporting others to get growing.



John is so taken with his newfound passion that he and his son now also go foraging, looking for edible plants in local woods and wasteland and cook their home grown and foraged foods creating new recipes along the way.

**"Meeting a lot of other people and having a good laugh with people regardless of their background"**

## JOHN AND SON

BUDDING GROWER TO BLOOMING BTF MENTOR IN SIX MONTHS

Margaret hadn't really thought about gardening, but joined BtoF after attending other community projects with Space2. It's fair to say that she's now got the gardening bug.

She struggled last year because of the terrible weather and abundance of slugs, as did many growers, but a lot of chard plants survived. Margaret was also inspired to grow some apple trees from seed. Her favourite variety is Royal Gala and she now has two tiny, but strong seedlings which she'll take to her new garden when she moves.

BtoF coupled with a cookery course at Ministry of Food, has encouraged Margaret's ten year old daughter to try new foods. She even gave the chard a go and likes any recipes that involve pasta.

Being able to grow herbs cheaply and cook with fresh herbs, particularly appealed to Margaret and this is her aim for the new growing season. It reminds her of growing up in Africa. When she wanted an orange she would just go outside and pick one from the tree and is delighted that she will now be able to do the same here.

**"I love the idea of going into the garden to pick what you want to eat. It's what we used to do when I was growing up in Africa".**



**MARGARET**  
HAS CAUGHT THE GARDENING BUG!

# **Section 5**

## **Getting the Neighbours Involved**

## **Now you've caught the gardening bug and want to share it with your neighbours.**

That's part of what Back to Front is all about. We have a few ideas to help your street become one of the most colourful and tastiest in the City!

Take time out from your gardening to talk to neighbours and passers-by about what you're growing, why you enjoy it and accept compliments about how good your garden looks.


Share your growing experience with neighbours and others interested in growing - what has worked, local resources, growing tips.

Tell others where things went wrong or didn't go as planned.

**The learning will help your success the next time.**



GETTING THE **NEIGHBOURS** INVOLVED



You might consider passing on some unused seeds or seedlings or organising a seed / seedling swap. Some seed swaps have worked really well in some areas of Leeds.

**Even a group of 2 or 3 neighbours can save money.** You can share growing tips too if you're growing the same vegetables. Maybe even pass on some unused seeds or seedlings.

**Enjoy your neighbours' gardens and let them know how lovely it is to see! Many good friendships have been struck up over a garden wall and a garden fork!**

**If you've had great success with some produce – a tomato glut or lettuces galore, why not share it with your neighbours?  
With any luck, they'll soon be doing the same.**

**Or bring your harvests together and enjoy a street celebration or evening meal with neighbours.**

If you really caught the bug, have a little spare time and enjoy talking to people, we'd love you to consider becoming a local growing mentor with Back to Front, supporting first time growers to get growing in the front garden.

**Finally, tell us what you did or what you would like to do and we may be able to help you.  
Contact us on [www.backtofront.org.uk](http://www.backtofront.org.uk)**

GETTING THE **NEIGHBOURS** INVOLVED

# Section 6

## Resources



**STEP 1:** You will need a 4 pint plastic milk bottle, scissors and string.



**STEP 2:** Use your scissors to cut the plastic milk bottle in half.



**STEP 3:** Pierce bottle on both sides, thread string through pull tight & knot.



**STEP 4:** Use your new watering can!



**STEP 1:** You will need some recycled plastic lids, pen, scissors and template.



**STEP 2:** Draw around a template on your lid to make the shape you want.



**STEP 3:** Using your scissors cut out the shape you have drawn.



**STEP 4:** Write onto each plastic shape, then stick into your plants!



**STEP 1:** You will need an ice cube tray and herbs of your choice.



**STEP 2:** Cut up your chosen herbs.



**STEP 3:** Put the herbs into the ice cube tray and fill with water; freeze.



**STEP 4:** Use your herb cubes in drinks or cooking!



**STEP 1:** You will need a 4 pint plastic milk bottle, scissors and pen.



**STEP 2:** Use your pen to draw around the handle area of the milk bottle.



**STEP 3:** Using your scissors cut along your pen marks.



**STEP 4:** Use your new trowel!

**We only came across this recently so haven't had a chance to try it ourselves. But it looks cheap and easy and you could confine it to a small corner of the yard. Basically, you place organic materials – that's your vegetable peelings, small bits of cardboard or paper, weeds, autumn leaves, straw, grass cuttings etc on to layers of cardboard sheets or newspapers – hence the name 'lasagne gardening'.**

### **STEP 1**

Lay a large sheet or recycled cardboard or layers of newspaper over the soil where you want to grow.

### **STEP 2**

Water the cardboard sheet well. This will help to start it rotting and breaking down in to the soil.

### **STEP 3**

Lay your organic materials over the top – it needs to include both brown (leaves, newspaper) and green (vegetable peelings/grass cuttings).

### **STEP 4**

Repeat the layering until it's about 14"/35cm high.

### **STEP 5**

Water again and leave to rot down.

**Once you're ready to plant you can make holes in the cardboard if it's not rotted down enough to plant through, then start the process all over again next season.**

**These happen in church halls, community centres and fairs or even car boot sales. If you have time, they're well worth a visit and you can often pick up good quality seedlings and plants at bargain prices. You also get to meet other local people who enjoy growing and can offer sound, local advice.**

### **Bradford Potato Day**

This happens every year around mid-February. It's usually held at Shipley College, a short walk from the train station. Many, many varieties of potato tubers are sold at very cheap prices. You can buy as few or as many as you like. And again there's lots of volunteers around passionate about potatoes who can give you good advice from what varieties to choose to how to cook them.

**[www.wyog.org.uk](http://www.wyog.org.uk)**



### **Roundhay REAP**

Have a stall at the Oakwood Clock farmer's market on the third Saturday of every month. They offer seedling swaps, a library of gardening books and magazines and lots of friendly advice as well as other events throughout the year.

**[www.reap-leeds.org.uk](http://www.reap-leeds.org.uk)**

## Nettle Juice

You can make plant food from soft and lush leaves of plants such as nettle or comfrey. Place the fresh shoots and leaves of these plants in a container and then add enough water to cover them. Leave for three to four weeks. Remove the pulp and dilute the liquid with one part liquid to 15 parts water. It's ready to feed your plants.

## Compost Tea

You can use manure from rabbits, chickens, horses, and cows. These should be placed in a cloth and tied. Once your cloth bag is ready, put it in a large bucket and add the water. Leave for a week or so and then add the liquid to the soil



**Besides the above recipes, you can add crushed egg shells and water from your aquarium tank to the soil. These will really be beneficial for your plants.**

## Red Hall Nurseries

Leeds City Council's Parks and Countryside stores and garden centre often sell surplus equipment, plants and seeds at reduced prices. BtoF will be able to distribute some recycled materials (like old scaffolding boards) from this nursery so keep an eye on the Leeds Cardholders magazine for details.

**[www.leeds.gov.uk/leisure/Pages/Parks-and-Countryside-Nursery.aspx](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/leisure/Pages/Parks-and-Countryside-Nursery.aspx)**

## Bardon Grange

Bardon Grange also offer compost and wood chippings. You do have to pick it up yourself but it might be possible to arrange with neighbours to do a joint trip, especially if somebody has access to a van.

**[www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/community/bardongrange](http://www.leedsuniversityunion.org.uk/community/bardongrange)**

## Seagulls

Seagulls can provide very cheap, recycled containers for pots and other useful bits and bobs for the garden.

**[www.seagullsreuse.org.uk](http://www.seagullsreuse.org.uk)**

**If you and your neighbours can get together, BtoF could help you find free topsoil that could be delivered to your street! If you know of other local resources or suppliers that might help BtoF gardeners please let us know. We will keep this updated on the website.**

# Section 7

## Recipes

**SERVES: 4**

**PREPARATION TIME: 5 MINS**

**COOKING TIME: 15 MINS**

## INGREDIENTS

### Homegrown:

1 large onion, chopped

4 large carrots, chopped

Handful of fresh coriander, roughly torn

### To buy:

1 tablespoon of vegetable oil

1 pint of vegetable stock

### TOP TIP

This soup freezes really well, so why not make double the quantity and save some for a busy day?

## HOW TO MAKE IT:

**Step 1:** Heat the oil in a large pan and gently fry the onions.

**Step 2:** Add the carrots and the stock and simmer until the carrots are soft.

**Step 3:** Add the coriander.

**Step 4:** Blitz the mixture until smooth with a blender.



# CARROT AND CORIANDER SOUP

**SERVES: 4**  
**PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINS**  
**COOKING TIME: 20 MINS**

## INGREDIENTS

### Homegrown:

3 cups of sweet corn loosely packed

### To buy:

1 cup double cream\*  
(tinned or frozen would do)  
1 tsp vanilla essence  
125g melted butter  
180g wheat, rice or corn flour or a mixture  
2 tsps baking powder  
150g sugar  
4 eggs - separated eggs from yolks

\*You can also use some grated cheese like Cheshire, Wensleydale, Lancashire or Philadelphia to replace some of the cream. I've also added grated orange zest to great results

## HOW TO MAKE IT:

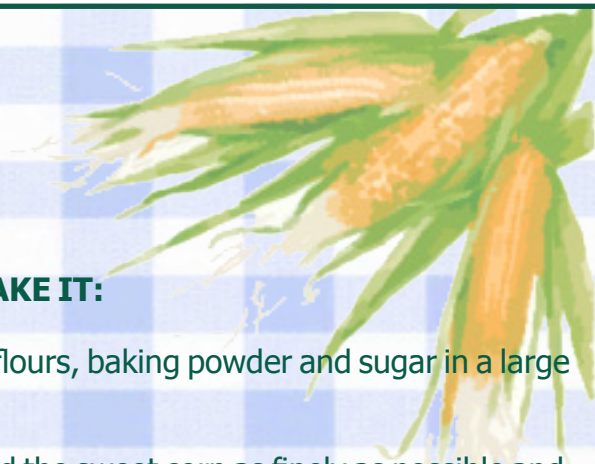
**Step 1:** Mix flours, baking powder and sugar in a large container.

**Step 2:** Blend the sweet corn as finely as possible and add the vanilla, double cream and melted butter and combine with the flour mixture into the large container.

**Step 3:** Beat the egg whites to snow peaks, add the yolks and fold in to the sweet corn and flour mixture.

**Step 4:** Bake in an oiled and floured mould and bake in a preheated oven at 170°C over 45 minutes.

**(If you use small silicone muffin moulds you might not have to have to oil/butter the moulds)**



# SWEET CORN CAKE

**SERVES: 5**  
**PREPARATION TIME: 5 MINS**  
**COOKING TIME: 15 MINS**

## **INGREDIENTS**

### **Homegrown:**

1lb sweet potato leaves, washed, drained and chopped

### **To buy:**

1 cup coconut milk  
3 tablespoons vegetable oil  
2 tablespoons curry powder  
1 tablespoon soy sauce  
1 cup water  
Salt to taste



## **How to Make It:**

**Step 1:** Heat oil, add curry powder and fry over a low heat until you can smell the powder's flavours, approximately 2 minutes.

**Step 2:** Add sweet potato leaves and fry over high heat for approximately 1 minute.

**Step 3:** Cover the pan and simmer for 15 seconds.

**Step 4:** Add coconut milk, soy sauce, salt and water.

**Step 5:** Stir evenly and cook over medium heat for another 1 minute.

**Step 6:** Serve with rice or naan bread and enjoy!

# **SWEET POTATO LEAF CURRY**

**SERVES: 6**

**PREPARATION TIME: 10 MINS**

**COOKING TIME: 30 MINS**

## INGREDIENTS

### HOMEGROWN:

1 large onion, chopped

2lb Vegetables of your choice, chopped

1½ teaspoons of herbs of your choice

### TO BUY:

½ tablespoon vegetable oil

50g/2 tablespoons dried pasta

1 litre of vegetable stock

Pepper to taste

### TOP TIP

**Potatoes make a good soup thickener, so add a large chopped potato if you like hearty soup!**



## HOW TO MAKE IT:

**Step 1:** Heat the oil in a large pan, add the onions, fry gently for 5 minutes, then add the other vegetables and fry gently until sizzling.

**Step 2:** Lower the heat, cover and cook gently for five minutes, stirring if needed.

**Step 3:** Add the vegetable stock and stir. Blitz with a blender if you like your soup smooth, or just enjoy chunky soup.

**Step 4:** Bring to the boil and add the pasta, herbs and pepper.

**Step 5:** Lower the heat and simmer for 15 minutes or until the pasta is cooked, stirring frequently to make sure the pasta doesn't stick.

**Step 6:** If you're adding chopped green leaves or cabbage leaves, add 5- 10 minutes before serving so they still taste good.

**GROW YOUR OWN SOUP**

**MAKES: 1 POT**  
**PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINS**  
**COOKING TIME: 1HR 20 MINS**

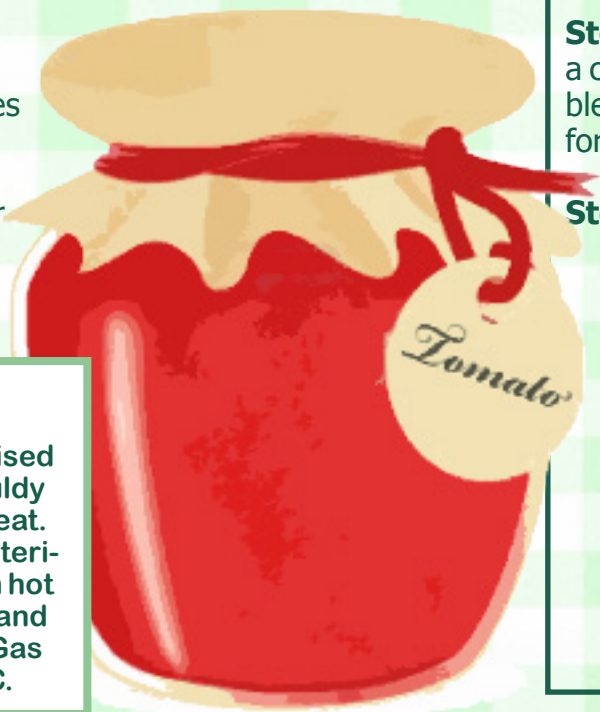
## INGREDIENTS

**Homegrown:**  
1lb/400g ripe tomatoes

**To buy:**  
½lb/200g white sugar  
A stick of cinnamon

### TOP TIP

If the jar is not sterilised the jam may go mouldy before it's ready to eat. You can use a baby sterilising unit or wash in hot soapy water, rinse, and dry in a low oven – Gas mark 3/100-160 C.



## HOW TO MAKE:

**Step 1:** Blanch the tomatoes in boiling water and peel them when cool.

**Step 2:** Mix sugar and tomatoes and in a cooking pot and bring to the boil, then blend and add the cinnamon stick. Cook for about 20 minutes until thickened.

**Step 3:** Store in a cool dark place.

**This jam looks and tastes beautiful and will cheer up any winter's day.**

**Have it with cream cheese on toast.**

**You can also add powdered cinnamon at the end for a stronger fragrance.**

# TOMATO AND CINNAMON JAM

**SERVES: 3-4**

**PREPARATION TIME: 15 MINS**

**COOKING TIME: 20 MINS**

### **INGREDIENTS**

#### **Homegrown:**

1 bunch of pumpkin leaves  
2 tomatoes, chopped  
1 onion, chopped

#### **To buy:**

1 cup of peanuts,  
crushed to a powder



**Did you know:**  
Pumpkin leaf is  
considered a  
delicacy in parts of  
Africa and here in  
Harehills!

### **HOW TO MAKE:**

**Step 1:** Clean the leaves, flicking them to remove any dirt particles.

**Step 2:** Strip the outer fibres down to the leaves by holding the stem in one hand and stripping the outer fibres. We're not eating the prickly bits!

**Step 3:** Chop the leaves into small pieces ready for cooking.

**Step 4:** Place the chopped onion and tomatoes into a saucepan with approx ¼ pint/120mls of water then add the chopped pumpkin leaves.

**Step 5:** Cover and steam until the leaves have wilted.

**Step 6:** When reduced by half (or it looks like the leaves have shrunk to half their size), add the crushed peanuts and oil and simmer for about 10 mins.

## **PUMPKIN LEAVES AND PEANUTS**

**SERVES: 4**

**PREPARATION TIME: 35 MINS**

**COOKING TIME: 10 MINS**



## INGREDIENTS

### Homegrown:

1 green pepper or  
chilli (or ½ of each)  
4 sliced courgettes  
2-3 garlic cloves  
2-3 tablespoons coriander  
4 ripe tomatoes, sliced

### To buy:

Pinch sugar  
4 tablespoons olive oil  
2 tablespoons white wine vinegar  
Salt and pepper to taste  
Water

## HOW TO MAKE IT:

**Step 1:** Place the chilli/pepper under a pre-heated grill until the skin is blackened. Place in a plastic bag, twist to seal well and leave to stand for 20 minutes.

**Step 2:** Peel the skin from the chilli/pepper, then remove the seeds and slice the flesh. Set aside.

**Step 3:** Bring about 5cm/2" of water to the boil in the bottom of a steamer. Add the courgettes to the top part of the steamer, cover and steam for 5 minutes or until tender.

**Step 4:** Meanwhile, combine the garlic, sugar, vinegar, olive oil and coriander thoroughly in a bowl. Stir in the chilli and pepper, then season with salt and pepper.

**Step 5:** Arrange the courgettes and tomatoes in a serving bowl or on a plate and spoon the chilli dressing over it. Toss gently and serve.

# TOMATO AND COURGETTE GLUT SIDE DISH

**SERVES: 1-2**  
**PREPARATION TIME: 5 MINS**  
**COOKING TIME: 15 MINS**

## **INGREDIENTS**

### **Homegrown:**

Vegetables of your choice (about 2 handfuls)  
Salad vegetables to accompany the omelette

### **To buy:**

2 eggs, beaten  
1 tablespoon of vegetable oil



## **HOW TO MAKE IT:**

**Step 1:** Slice up vegetables.

**Step 2:** Gently heat the oil in a frying pan.

**Step 3:** Add the vegetables and fry for 2 minutes.

**Step 4:** Add the beaten eggs. Keep the mixture moving gently.

**Step 5:** When it starts to go firm, transfer the pan under a grill and cook until the top goes brown.

**Step 6:** Serve with salad and enjoy!

**Thanks to Julie from Seacroft  
Mind, Body and Soul  
Women's Group**

**GROW YOUR OWN OMELETTE AND SALAD**

**SERVES: 6**

**PREPARATION TIME: 20 MINS**

**COOKING TIME: 30 MINS**

## **INGREDIENTS**

### **Homegrown:**

1 green pepper, chopped  
1 large onion, chopped  
1 -2 garlic cloves  
2 carrots  
1 courgette  
1lb chopped tomatoes or 1 tin chopped tomatoes  
1-2 chillies or 1-2 tablespoons chilli powder  
Black pepper and salt to taste

### **To buy:**

1 red pepper, chopped  
1 can kidney beans, drained and rinsed  
1 can of beans of your choice (try Pinto or black beans)

## **HOW TO MAKE IT:**

**Step 1:** Chop the garlic, onion, carrots and bell peppers. Fry lightly over medium/high heat in 1-2 tablespoons of vegetable oil.

**Step 2:** Meanwhile, wash the beans until all of the canning liquid is gone.

**Step 3:** Once the veggies have softened for about 5 minutes, add everything else into the saucepan (tomatoes, courgette, beans, chillies and chilli powder, black pepper and salt). Bring to the boil.

**Step 4:** Reduce heat and simmer for 30 minutes or longer as needed.

**Step 5:** Serve with rice or why not try a mexican theme with nachos and dips.



**VEGETABLES AND CHILLI SAUCE**