



## **Veg Patch: River Cottage Handbook No.4**

Mark Diacono

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Drawing directly from his experience as an acclaimed climate-change gardener, and of setting up a kitchen garden from scratch for River Cottage, Mark explains the practical aspects of organic growing, introduces us to a whole world of vegetables we may not have previously considered, and does away with alienating gardening jargon once and for all.

Mark begins with a catalogue of vegetables that will grow in this country, explaining for each their benefits, what varieties to go for, dos and don'ts, and popular culinary uses. He then invites us to create a wish list of foods, and shows us his own list from his early gardening days. Next, he explains how to turn this wish list into a coherent kitchen garden plan appropriate for our space, whether it be a patch of acidic soil, a roof-top garden or an allotment, whether we put on our wellies in every free moment or are 'time-poor' gardeners. Then he puts all the theory into practice, showing us how to look after nutrients in the soil, how to resist pests and diseases, and how to make our garden sustainable and organic. In clear, concise sections we learn about seed trays, supporting plants with climbing structures, mulching, composting, companion planting, irrigation and promoting pollination, and there are additional tables showing sowing and harvesting times, plant sizes, and alternative varieties of plants for different sites.

About thirty recipes and a directory of useful addresses finish the book, and the handbook is complemented by bright colour photography throughout. Practical and inspiring, with a textured hard cover and an introduction by Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, *Veg Patch* is destined to join Handbooks No. 1, 2 and 3 as an indispensible household reference.



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