

The Organic Allotment

How to get nature on your side





- National charity for organic growing
- Founded in 1958
- Over 20 000 members
- Activities include:
 - Research
 - Campaigning
 - Community growing
 - Heritage Seed Library
 - Education



What is organic growing?

So much more than just
not using chemicals...

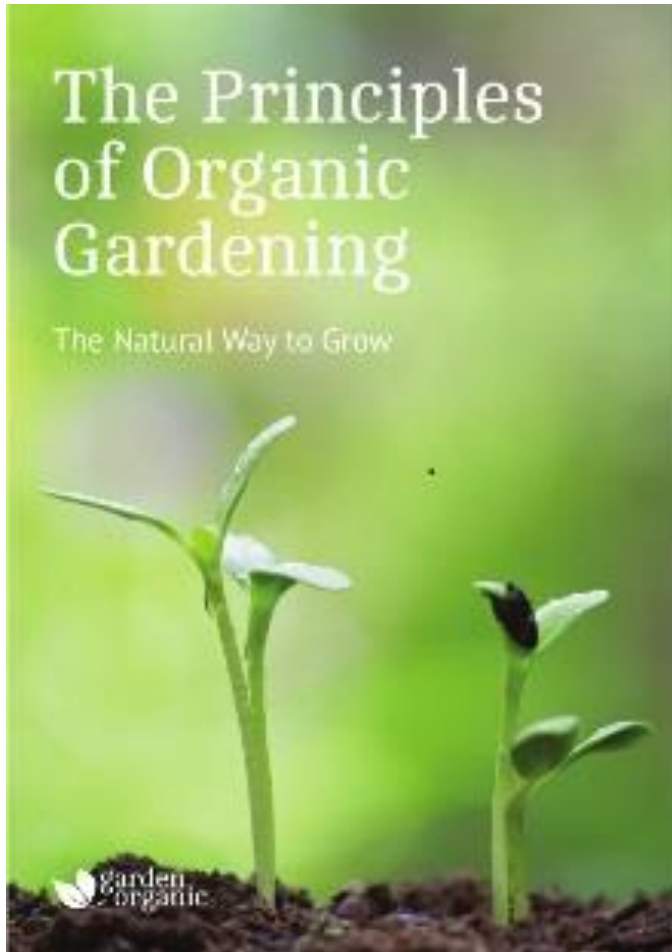


Vincent grows organically
without thinking about it.....

.....a common sense best use
of resources that works with
nature



Principles of Organic Gardening



1. Build and maintain soil health
2. Encourage biodiversity
3. Use resources responsibly
4. Avoid using harmful chemicals
5. Keep a healthy growing area

How do we garden organically?



Best practice



Good practice



Also acceptable



Not acceptable

1. Create a healthy soil

The soil is alive!



One teaspoon of soil can hold more organisms than there are people on the planet

Biological life looks after the soil



Importance of organic matter





Leafmould



Garden compost

2. Manage pests and diseases

Aphids on pepper plants



A week later....



Anticipate not obliterate....



Our order of priority....

- First choice - preventative measures: healthy soil / plants, timing of planting, biodiverse environment, choice of variety, physical barriers,
- Second choice – cultural reactive measures: hand picking, removing affected material
- Third choice – using organic / naturally derived pesticides

3. Reduce your water use

Smart water use in the garden



- Collect rain water wherever possible.

- Focus on water saving: perennial plants, smart water use, mulches.



4. Invite wildlife into your garden

Grow flowers around your veg



Poached egg plant
(Limnanthes)



Corn marigold



Bolted
coriander



Phacelia

Look after your predators

- Let nature do the pest control for you!



Adult hoverfly – vegetarian, likes pollen and nectar

Predators



Photo credit: Tim Ramson, 2009. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/bramblejungle/3566893991>

Hoverfly larvae

Predator friendly gardens

- Leave grassy refuges for predators to overwinter



Cocksfoot grass

5. Save seed

Peas and beans are an easy place to start...



- One step further towards self-sufficiency
- Select the best varieties for your local environment
- Satisfying!

What we can offer

Working with councils and allotments to provide:

- Training for community groups
- Talks
- Advice
- Volunteer programmes
- Membership to Garden Organic and Heritage Seed Library

www.gardenorganic.org.uk

