

# Tombreck Market Garden

Newsletter #7 August 2023

August stayed cooler than we were hoping for before an unexpected burst of heat at the beginning of September. Unfortunately this means the squash harvest will be disappointing this year, in spite of all our attempts to help them ripen in the field as described in July's newsletter. Tomatoes have been very slow turning red as well, and a lot of the carrots have started to split, probably due to the inconsistent temperatures and rainfall. However it's swings and roundabouts with veg growing and some crops have done very well, particularly cucumbers, new potatoes and some of the largest, plumpest fennel I've ever seen. The brassicas are all looking healthy going into Autumn & Winter and there should be some good sized parsnips and leeks too.



We started noticing some damage on a number of plants, especially the leafy ones like lettuce and chard but also on the celery and even the carrot tops. They looked nibbled rather than slugged, so we borrowed a trail camera and eventually caught the culprit, a hare. So far we've managed to deter it by surrounding the plot with a mesh barrier, but we may end up trying to solve the problem more permanently... It's easy to be in favour of 'biodiversity' until it starts munching on your carrots!

One experiment we're trying is harvesting buckwheat from the plants in our green manure mix. As with most grains grown on a small scale it will probably be a lot of effort for minimal reward, but if we can find a way to separate the chaff and de-hull the seeds once they're dry it could be worthwhile. I had an idea to grow it around the polytunnel to keep back the weeds and grasses and maybe provide an extra crop, but they went in too late and germination has been poor. Maybe next year.



Otherwise we had a pleasant day out at the Killin Agricultural Fair, selling a decent quantity of veg in spite of the downpours, and enjoying speaking directly to the public, many of whom were good enough to sign up to this newsletter (welcome!) Sadly the Neighbourhood hub in Killin has closed down due to a lack of funds for organisation and delivery, so we've set up a new website for direct sales of veg boxes at <https://tombreckmarketgarden.co.uk>. Using the Growing Good platform, this has a number of features including customisable subscriptions, pauses for holidays and options for four pick-up points, including newly at the biodynamic garden in Camserney. We appreciate your ongoing support.