

# Grow Your Own

Contributed by OtleyLad

With shop bought produce getting more expensive week by week, producing your own food makes much more sense. Growing food for your table all year round is a bit of a challenge though, especially with our 'eccentric' UK weather.

I like to eat every day of the year (obsessive I know) and to do this reliably requires some planning ahead. Its fairly straightforward to produce one set of crops from the allotment or back garden during the summer, but not so easy to produce a supply all year round. If you want to keep chickens for eggs and/or meat, you want to be collecting eggs and meat right through the year too.

Keeping records of your crop and chicken production can really improve productivity and help you get more for your efforts

I have been an organic gardener for over 25 years now and when I wrote The Vegetable Gardeners Almanac in March 2004 in my spare time (I was a university lecturer at the time) it was more for my own use than as a commercial product. However, much to my surprise it was popular enough to encourage me to quit lecturing and concentrate on producing the software (don't mention the word retiring to my partner).

Since then we have moved out of the city and have a garden large enough to grow all our own vegetables and keep some chickens. Of course it was then inevitable that I should write the Poultry Keepers Almanac to help keep track of the egg production and hatching. Chicken keeping being what it is, we now breed Cambars, a rare breed that we were lucky enough to get hold of. There is more about our Cambars here.

These two pieces of software can help not only with planning ahead, but also to record what happened over a number of seasons so you can look back and see just how your crops/chickens have performed. Both come with 1 years email support (that can be extended for a small charge year by year) and free upgrades during the subscription period. The Poultry Keepers Almanac

Whether you keep hens for pleasure or profit, the PKA

can help you keep:

Flock and Bird records - Keep track of your flock or flocks (up to 200 separate flocks) and individual birds.

Egg/Table Bird Production Records - Keep track of your production daily,

weekly and over the years.

Costs & Income - Record how much you have spent and what you have earned from sales.

Incubation - Breeding your own? the PKA can remind you what to do when (and record all results).

Accounts, Reports etc - Produce weekly, monthly, yearly reports.

Personal Journal - Keep your own informal records (including your own pictures) of your poultry keeping.

Plus lots more useful features for only £9.99 (download) or £14.99 for the CD! - take the Tour to find out more....

#### The Vegetable Gardeners Almanac

- Try something different - With 190+ vegetables & herbs, there is sure to be something new to grow.
- Match crops to your location - Find the right plants for your soil and climate.
- Year by year reports - Generate detailed reports of crop and bed histories.
- More than 1 Plot? - You can keep track of every crop in each area (up to 200 separate plots!).
- And much more.....

Also just £9.99 for the download version or £14.99 for the CD (prices includes P&P and VAT).