



FREE  
DOWNLOAD



FIRST TUNNELS  
[www.FirstTunnels.co.uk](http://www.FirstTunnels.co.uk)

growing

harvest

## Lettuce

Using the right varieties and a bit of protection you can harvest top-quality lettuce from your polytunnel all year round. I tend to eat salad more in the winter than I do in the summer, spicing up the lettuce with plants like rocket and mustard.

**Varieties:** 'Paris Island', 'Rouge d'Hiver', 'Webbs'

**Sowing:** Sow lettuce seeds thinly onto the surface of seed compost in modules or small pots and barely cover them with compost. Using a propagator you can do this at any time of the year, but it is best to avoid November to January unless your tunnel gets a lot of light, or unless you can spare some space on a bright windowsill. Lettuce plants don't tolerate dryness so keep the modules nicely damp: in the summer it is best to sow the seeds deeper – perhaps as much as 1cm. Once the seedlings have a couple of pairs of true leaves, plant them out into the soil beds.

Beyond protection from slugs, regular picking and enough water to stop them drying out, lettuces need very little attention. Less hardy varieties may need protection from late frosts in spring.



salad days...





keep up to date  
with all that's happening, share hints,  
tips and much more...  
[www.facebook.com/polytunnels](http://www.facebook.com/polytunnels)

# TOP OF THE CROPS



a section of the First Tunnels site  
dedicated to video guides  
for all aspects of your polytunnel  
[www.firsttunnels.co.uk](http://www.firsttunnels.co.uk)

lettuce

harvest

## growing

Slugs are the biggest nuisance when you grow lettuces, and the best strategy is to keep their numbers down throughout the year by constantly removing debris, minimizing low, crowded growth, and removing them by hand on humid evenings. When you grow lettuces, try to keep the area around them open and clear, and if necessary protect the young plants with copper rings.

Some varieties of lettuce are also attractive to greenfly: at the first sign of trouble squirt them off with water from a hand sprayer.

TOP TIP  
don't crowd your crops  
lettuce need space



TOP TIP  
if you're worried about  
slugs eating your crops  
a copper ring will help  
protect them



FIRST TUNNELS

[www.FirstTunnels.co.uk](http://www.FirstTunnels.co.uk)



lettuce

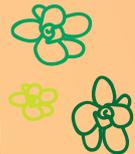
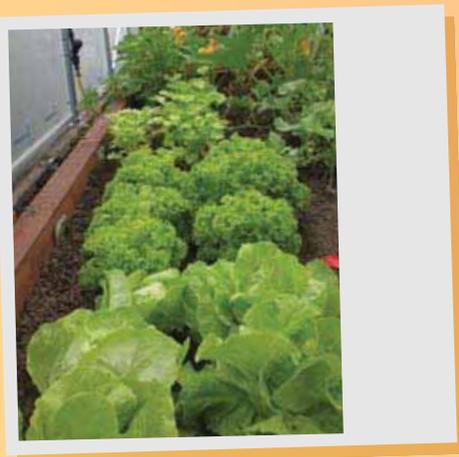
growing

harvest

For the best yields from your lettuce beds, choose loose-leafed varieties and pick the outer leaves constantly to leave a crown of at least four young leaves untouched. This means you will be harvesting from several plants at a time, but is much more efficient than waiting for whole 'heads' which are tremendously attractive to slugs. 'Pick and come again' harvesting (pick, don't cut) means that you will probably only need to make three or four sowings per year – perfect for the lazy gardener!

**Recipe:** Lettuce is a main stay of so many salads and also works well for soups.

TOP TIP  
remember to use the 'pick and come again' harvesting method keeping at least four young leaves per plant



Visit [www.FirstTunnels.co.uk](http://www.FirstTunnels.co.uk) for all your polytunnel products, spares, accessories and guidance. You can find out about what we're currently doing via facebook, [www.facebook.com/polytunnels](http://www.facebook.com/polytunnels) and through our blog, [www.polytunnelgardening.co.uk](http://www.polytunnelgardening.co.uk)

Don't forget to check out the growing guide too



© [Andy McKee 2011](#)