



THE TIDE — LOCAL GARDENING GUIDE

Local Gardening Guide



Spring's here, Coasties, and there's plenty for the garden to be getting on with.

SEPTEMBER 2026



TIPS



CALENDAR



SWAPS

Every month at thetide.co.nz/gardening-guide





SECTION 01

Gardening Tips

A few jobs worth getting on with this month, while the soil warms up and the garden wakes properly.



Feed the soil before you feed the garden.

Dig in compost, well-rotted manure and a slow-release fertiliser now, ahead of the big spring and summer plantings — easier to do while beds are still empty than once they're full.



Mulch while the ground's still moist.

A layer around plants and tree roots holds onto spring moisture as the days warm up, and it'll save you watering duties later on.



Watch for slugs and snails.

They come out of hibernation this month with an appetite for tender new growth. Pellets, traps or a simple barrier around seedlings will save some heartbreak.



Hold your nerve on the tender stuff.

Coastal gardens on the Hibiscus Coast are about as close to frost-free as Auckland gets, but late cold snaps can still catch tomatoes, courgettes and other warm-season seedlings out — more so if you're a little inland or in a low-lying spot. Keep them under cover a while longer; October's their month.





SECTION 02

September Planting Calendar



UNDER COVER

Tomato, capsicum, chilli, eggplant, courgette, cucumber, corn, beans, pumpkin, squash, melon and basil all want sowing now, in trays or a mini greenhouse. Hold them there until the soil's properly warmed and the frost risk has passed — for most of the Coast that's October, with Labour Weekend the traditional marker for planting tomatoes out.



DIRECT SOW

Carrots, beetroot, parsnip, radish, leeks, lettuce, spinach, silverbeet, peas, swede, turnips, spring onions, celery, kale, pak choi, rocket and herbs like coriander, parsley, dill and chives can all go direct into prepared beds. It's also the month to get seed potatoes chitting and into the ground, and to plant out asparagus crowns, rhubarb and new strawberry plants.



FLOWERS & COLOUR

Sow sweet peas, cosmos, marigold, zinnia and sunflower now (some prefer starting under cover first), tuck in dahlia tubers and begonias for summer blooms, and grab a punnet of pansies or violas if you want colour straight away.



A NOTE ON FROST

Our stretch of coast is close to frost-free, but every gardening guide we checked still counsels a little caution in September — cold nights can catch young seedlings out before the soil's truly warmed. If you're gardening inland or somewhere low-lying, it's worth being a touch more patient than your coastal neighbours.



SECTION 03

Community Produce Swaps

Got a glut of silverbeet, or more lemons than you know what to do with? A produce swap is the easiest fix — bring what you've got spare, take home something you haven't grown, and meet a few green-fingered neighbours while you're at it. No cost, no catch.



BRING A BAG

Whatever you've got going spare — lemons, a punnet of seedlings, cuttings from a plant that's thriving.



TAKE A BAG

Swap for something you haven't grown yet. No need to bring the same amount you take home.



MEET THE NEIGHBOURS

Half the fun is the chat — compare notes with other Coasties on what's thriving and what's not.

COMING SOON

A produce swap is on the way

We're lining up a regular community produce swap for the Hibiscus Coast. The where, when and who's running it aren't locked in yet — the moment they are, the details will be right here in the guide. Keen to help get one going in your neighbourhood? Just reply to this email and we'll be in touch.

