

Potato, early

Top flavours are at harvest time, even in the first hour after pulling the smooth, shiny tubers; otherwise store at room temperature with soil on, and eat as soon as possible to enjoy that taste of early potato.

Potato, main

Tubers store for up to nine months at a cool 5°C (41°F), but less cool is possible for eating within a few months of harvest. Some varieties start to regrow sooner than others, and we find that Charlotte sprouts obligingly late, yet also grows fast once planted.

Parsnips harvested early spring after a winter in the ground, before and after washing



Pumpkin and winter squash

Fruits need to be hard-skinned and well coloured before cutting through the plants' trailing stem on either side of the drying neck, so that it does not snap off the fruit. Store in dry warmth, as for garlic. Pumpkins have a high water content and mostly need eating before winter solstice, while winter squash (Kuri, Buttercup, Acorn etc.) are good to eat until spring, when kept at room temperature.

Radish

Spring radish are best eaten fresh, otherwise store without leaves for a few days in a bag in the fridge. Winter radish are larger and have more dry matter; store like turnips, cool and damp until early spring.

Salad leaves including lettuce, mustards, rocket, purslane, corn salad, sorrel, pea shoots, endive

Cool is best though not too cold: 7°C (45°F) is gold standard temperature for storing most salad leaves. Winter salads with more brassica leaves keep well in a fridge.

Selling leaves to shops, where a few bags may sit for days on a shelf, has shown that moisture in the bag keeps leaves alive and in good condition. So after washing your leaves, drain off the excess but leave some moisture on, before putting them in a polythene bag.

Spinach, as for salad leaves



Kuri squash harvest from six plants; they keep for months once dry and hard-skinned, on a sunny windowsill here