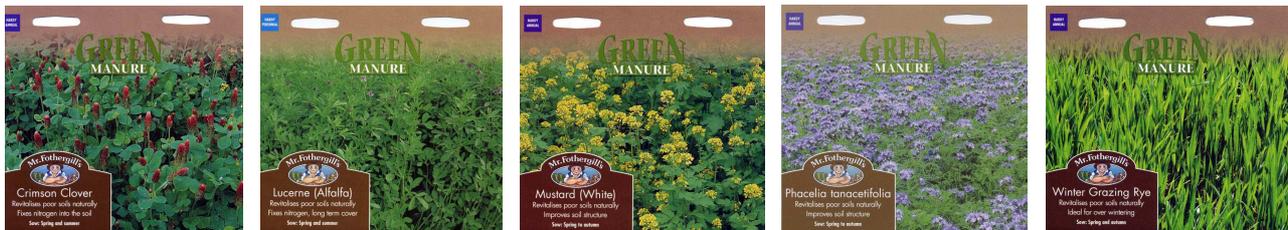# GREEN MANURE

Green manure is the term for a crop grown to improve the soil, usually for subsequent vegetable crops.

The use of green manures is a practice as old as farming itself and is being rediscovered by more and more gardeners wanting to avoid the problems of using chemicals to produce food.

| CRIMSON CLOVER | LUCERNE (ALFALFA) | MUSTARD (WHITE) | PHACELIA | WINTER GRAZING RYE |

How it works

Green manures are usually grown in rotation with vegetable crops and can provide numerous benefits.

They provide organic matter which, when dug into the soil improves the structure, circulation of air and water and the vital microbial environment in the soil.

As the organic matter breaks down it provides nutrients for later crops and several green manures add to this process by fixing nitrogen into the soil from the air.
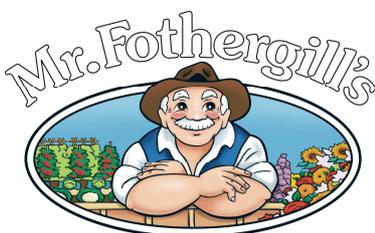
Apart from also suppressing weeds, the cover provided significantly reduces the leaching of any remaining minerals and nutrients, easily washed from bare soil by heavy rains.

Green manure crops also create excellent habitat and food for beneficial, pollinating and predatory insects, of which a healthy population is vital to help control pests naturally and is lost when ground is left bare.

VARIETY	CLOVER	LUCERNE	MUSTARD	PHACELIA	RYE
SEASON	SPRING & SUMMER	SPRING & SUMMER	SPRING & AUTUMN	SPRING & AUTUMN	SPRING & AUTUMN
DIG IN DATES	MAR - SEP	APR - AUG	MAR - NOV	MAR - NOV	FEB - DEC
HEIGHT (CM)	50	100	60	60 - 90	30 - 60
NITROGEN FIXING	=	=	~	~	~

How to use

The seed is simply broadcast sown onto raked and watered ground, when previous vegetable crops have been harvested and the soil lies bare. The green manure can be dug into the soil after a minimum of 40-60 days depending on the variety or left on the ground to provide cover until the ground is required again. Plants are best dug in before the flowers set seed and chopped up with the spade as this is done.