

tomatoes.

Sow: First week in April, indoors or in a heated propagator.

Soil: Plenty of well-rotted manure before planting. Add shredded comfrey leaves, ground eggshells and powdered milk to give the plants a disease-free headstart.

Sun: The sunniest part of the garden.

Grow: Plant out in final position once frosts have passed. Feed once a week with liquid seaweed until first flower truss appears, then feed with comfrey tea three times a week, and milk once a week. Do not water on leaves. Spray milk on leaves once a week to fight blight. Sideshoots will appear in the elbow between stem and trunk: pinch them out to focus energy.

Harvest: once fruits have reached full colour and yield very slightly when pressed.

Problems: Blight: black patches appear on stems and leaves. Cut off all leaves save two. Do not compost a blighted plant: burn it. Blossom end rot appears on bottom of fruits if you are not watering regularly.

For more advice on growing and cooking tomatoes, visit the Stylish Gardening Blog: fennelandfern.co.uk