



September 2020 Newsletter

Additions to our Seed Catalogue

Over the next couple of pages, you will see the new (old) vegetable and herb varieties that we will be adding to our seed catalogue in January. Obviously, there may be more additions, but these will be the bulk of the changes.

I have also added prices for the shallot and onion sets we will be selling this year (the prices for these include postage and packing).

All of the new seeds and "sets" can be ordered now; either email you order to sales@thomasetty.co.uk or use the order form on the seed catalogue. I have included a link. (page 3)

Broad Beans & Pea Varieties suitable for over-wintering

Broad Bean - Aquadulce Claudia. By 1937. *"...perfectly hardy & stands the most severe winter conditions. What the plants do resent are cold east winds, so for preference they should be afforded some shelter.*

30 seeds £1.80p: 50 seeds £2.80p: 100 seeds £5.00p

Douce Provence (Syn Petit Provençal). By 1924. Very early & reliable cropper with an excellent sweet taste. It can be sown from mid-October to the end of November. This sowing will produce one of the earliest pea crops.

300 seeds £1.95p. 2 packs £3.50p

Sharpe's Meteor. By 1914. Bred & introduced by Charles Sharpe & Co. *"Dwarf but very hardy. Can be sown at any time from September in one year to June the next. Sow in late October in the North, & in November in the South."* To 15ins

300 seeds £1.95p. 2 packs £3.50p

Ordering Bulbs

There is still time to place your bulb orders. This link will take you to a copy of Mr Etty's Bulb Catalogue.

<http://www.thomasetty.co.uk/bulbs/bulb-catalogue-2020.pdf>

Early Historical Seed Lists

For many years, Mr Etty has been collecting historical seed lists and catalogues, which he has, where necessary, transcribed in order to make them, hopefully, more understandable in this current day and age.

Many of these lists may now be found on Mr Etty's website, and listed below are links to two of the earliest.

Perhaps the first list to contain named vegetable varieties that are still available today is that of **Stephen Garraway** dating from 1777. Included in this list are such recognisable varieties as the Windsor Broad Bean, Silver-skinned & Blood Red (Brunswick) Onions, Black Spanish Radish, Seakale and Long Prickly Cucumber. Found herewith

http://www.thomasetty.co.uk/seeds/vegetables/1777_stephen_garraway.pdf

By the turn of the 19th century many more named varieties enter the fray, and the **Crombie and Cormack** list of 1800 includes, along with others, the "Bloody" Cos Lettuce, Hamburg Parsley, Red Dutch (Red Drumhead) Cabbage, Scarlet (Scarlet Emperor) Runner Beans together with three colours of Broccoli.

http://www.thomasetty.co.uk/seeds/vegetables/1800_crombie_cormack.pdf

Wholesale Bespoke Seed Packets

You may not be aware that Mr Etty's emporium is the premier supplier of bespoke seed packets & gift boxes to many of the UK's garden attractions & stately homes. My chief clerk will be pleased to supply a copy of my current trade pack should you be interested in viewing a copy. Please email for more details.

Why sell someone else's seed packets when you could be selling your own!

Herewith a link to our trade pack

<http://thomasetty.co.uk/trade/thomas-etty-trade-pack-september-2020.pdf>

NEW VARIETIES

Heritage, Rare & Unusual

The following varieties, which are now available, will be added to our 2021 seed catalogue when issued in January.

Agretti or Saltwort. (*Salsola soda*). It lies somewhere between seaweed and samphire in flavour. Succulent and naturally seasoned, it has fine grass-like strands of sweet, salty deliciousness with a hint of bitterness, the way good greens should. **100 seeds £2.60p**

Basil. Holy. (*Ocimum tenuiflorum*). Quite possibly the most revered medicinal herb on the planet. Holy basil is a plant that has violet flowers and blossoms; the stems are green, but sometimes have a purple tinge. **200 seeds £2.25p**

Basil. Siam Queen. Modern. An outstanding strain with dark green leaves and deep purple flower stems. Excellent spicy anise/liquorice aroma and flavour. **200 seeds £2.25p**

Bath Asparagus. (*Ornithogalum pyrenaicum*). In the past the Spiked Star of Bethlehem was grown commercially and sold in Bath market for its young, unopened flower shoots which can be eaten in the same way as asparagus, hence the local name. **25 seeds £2.50p**

Beetroot. Lutz Green-top (Syn. Winter-keeper) 1921. One of the best heirloom beets for autumn & winter storage. Smooth-skinned, reddish-purple roots, shaped like a top, with a half-long tap root. It also produces vigorous large leaves on attractive red stems which can be used like leaf Beet. **300 seeds 1.95p**

Broad Bean. Imperial Green Long-pod. In 1968. Mr. D. Gillett of Wisbech released his *Imperial Green Long-pod* broad beans after 20 years of patient research & selection; his new long-pod contains up to 9 beans per 15 in. pod. **30 seeds £1.80p: 50 seeds £2.80p: 100 seeds £5.00p**

Cabbage. Quintal d'Alsace. By 1867. "This is a late, very hardy, and productive kind, and is one of the sorts which are most used for making Sauer-kraut." **300 seeds £1.95p**

Cabbage (Savoy). Perfection. 1887. Sweet, crinkled, mild & tender leaves form tightly wrapped drumhead type hearts. This is a short-stemmed variety that in optimum conditions can weigh in at 3kg but is generally a smaller. **200 seeds £1.95**

Carrot. Blanche des Vosges. Before 1845. Root very broad at the neck, entirely sunk in the ground, narrowing abruptly to the point, nearly twice as long as it is broad, about 8 ins with a diameter of 4-5 ins. **500 seeds £1.95p**

Carrot. Touchon Ideal Red. Before 1936. "A very refined home garden and market carrot. Similar to Nantes but a little longer and has more intense colouring." **500 seeds £1.95p**

Chervil. Turnip-rooted. (*Chaerophyllum bulbosum*) The raw root has a nice, aromatic, starchy flavour. When cooked it becomes floury and sweet with a peculiar flavour that is excellent and unlike any other vegetable. Peeling the roots ruins the flavour. The root is about the size of a small carrot. It can be harvested when the foliage dies down. Sow in autumn or spring. **50 seeds £2.85p**

Corn Salad. Coquille de Louviers. By 1904. a versatile French variety of lamb's lettuce. The deep green rosettes have a mild nutty flavour and buttery texture. **300 seeds £1.95p**

Cucamelon. (*Melothria scabra*) Before 1936. "The fruit is about the size of a grape when it is ready to be picked. Also called the Mexican Sour Gherkin. They taste of pure cucumber with a tinge of lime. An excellent addition to salsas, salads and cocktails." **20 seeds £2.00p**

Cucumber. Hokus. Before 1962. Early, high yielding Gherkin variety that produces uniform, dark green fruits. Excellent for pickling. For outdoor growing. **30 seeds £1.95p**

Edamame Bean. Green Shell. Modern. Young soya beans which are picked when they are sweeter. Vibrantly green in colour High in protein & dietary fibre, so a really nutritious choice. **50 seeds £2.25**

French Bean (Dwarf). Borlotto. (Syn. Lingua Di Fuoco). Very early and extremely productive, the beans are white with red specks and great in soups. Whilst usually used dried, they can also be eaten like fresh green beans before they fully ripen. **60 seeds £2.25p**

French Bean (Dwarf). Purple Teepee. Modern; Gourmet. The beans hold their pods above the foliage which gives the plants the shape of an American Indian teepee. Easy to harvest. Super flavour round purple pods & suitable variety for late planting & harvesting. **100 seeds £2.60p**

French Bean (Dwarf). Taylor's Horticultural. ..have been grown in North America since the early 1800s. The strain was probably brought to America by Italian immigrants. Semi-runner type in growth habit with 14-18-in-long runners. It does well in cool climates. The seeds borne in 6ins pods are tan streaked with dark-red. They are good early as a green bean but generally used as a shelling beans. **40 seeds £2.25p**

Orach. Green. (*Atriplex hortensis*) "A tall growing variety, the upper surface is dark, inclining to dingy green the under surface is a much brighter colour." **100 seeds £2.00p**

Orach. Red. (*Atriplex hortensis*) 4'-10' tall and bright red. A beautiful and tasty addition to salads or cooked. **100 seeds £2.00p**

Pea. Corne de Belier. (Syn. Tall White Sugar or Large Crooked Sugar.) By 1859. "About 6 ft & rather late. Pods very large, broad, flat, crooked & something like a ram's head; tender when young so that they can be snapped in two like the young pod of a kidney bean when they are fit for use." **200 seeds £2.00p**

Pea. Feltham First. (Syn. Merveille d'Italia, Early Wonder) By 1946. Raised & introduced by Watkins & Simpson, Ltd. This first early, round seeded pea gives early crops of large well-filled pods of sweet tasting, fine flavoured peas. Winter hardy. **300 seeds £2.00p**

Pea. Serge. Modern. For Pea Shoot production. Tender crispy shoots and tendrils of young pea plants make a wonderful edible garnish and a perfect snack. **300 seeds £2.00p**

Pea. Serpette vert a rames. (Syn. Laxton's Supreme) By 1872. Vilmorin has these two varieties as the same. "Plants robust in appearance and character Pods very large, long, broad but scarcely so well filled as they appear, containing from 7 to 9 peas. **200 seeds £2.00p**

Pepper. (Hot) Fatali. A Capsicum chinense type. Described as having a fruity, citrus flavour with searing heat, comparable to or exceeds the standard Habanero. Up to 400,000 SHU. **10 seeds £2.25p**

Pepper. (Sweet). Tolly's Sweet Italian. Produces large yields of 5" long red peppers. Very good eaten fresh or used in Italian tomato sauces or as a frying pepper. **20 seeds £2.00p**

Pepper (Sweet). Doux de Landes. A sweet pepper, that is long and wrinkled and sometimes twisted. Quite variable, fruits average 8 inches long but can reach a foot, with ease. The peppers ripen from green to red and are used fresh or cooked. **20 seeds £2.00p**

Pumpkin/Squash. Howden's Field. In the early 1970s, John Howden of Massachusetts began developing the Connecticut Field Pumpkin, to improve uniformity & size. This resulted in Howden's Field Pumpkin, which quickly overtook all other decorative varieties in popularity and now fulfils most of the market demand for carving or decorating. **10 seeds £2.25p**

Pumpkin/Squash. Early Yellow Summer Crookneck. Like custard marrows this is an old form of summer squash. Summer Crookneck are noted as early as 1828. Mild, sweet, and full of flavour the delicious tender fruits are easy to grow & prolific. **20 seeds £2.25p**

Runner Bean. Hestia. Modern. To 18ins. An ornamental dwarf variety with large, red & white flowers, followed by stringless beans on compact plants. Good disease resistance. Can be grown in pots or containers on the patio. **20 seeds £2.25p**

Sea Buckthorn. (*Hippophae rhamnoides*). The fruit raw or cooked berry is very rich in vitamins A & C. They are usually too acid, when raw, for most people's tastes. It is being increasingly used in making fruit juices, especially when mixed with other fruits. **25 seeds £2.50p**

Spinach. Bloomsdale Long-keeping. Arising from a single plant discovered in 1925. Dark glossy green leaves crumpled & blistered. Vigorous, with tender fleshy leaves that have a rich flavour. Slow to bolt. Round-seeded. **500 seeds £1.95p**

Spinach. Large Prickly or Winter. By 1859. Distinguished by its seeds being prickly. The leaves are smaller & thinner than those of the summer kind. **500 seeds £1.95p**

Sweetcorn. Bloody Butcher. A striking Heirloom corn grown since the 1800's, Bloody Butcher is probably the deepest red corn available anywhere. Ears grow to 12", with a deep and bright red colour. Perfect for use as corn-on-the-cobs when young, or for making red-flecked cornbread. **20 seeds £2.50p**

Sweetcorn. Strawberry. By 1957. After the red kernels are harvested, they can be used for popcorn. To make the kernels suitable for popcorn, grow as you would any other type of sweet corn; once the kernels are harvested let them dry for at least a month while they are still on the stalk. Once off of the cob let them dry for another month before popping them for popcorn. **40 seeds £2.25p**

Tomato. Amish Paste. This is, as the name implies, a plum tomato of Amish origins, One of the largest and best tasting paste type tomatoes available producing fruits that are virtually core-less with a really rich and sweet tomato flavour. **20 seeds £2.00p**

Tomato. Mortgage Lifter. "Developed in the early 1930's in Logan, West Virginia by a radiator repairman, MC "Radiator Charlie" Byles. As the story goes, he selected a tomato, from a bunch of seedlings, that produced so well, he was able to sell one crop of fruit and pay off the mortgage." **20 seeds £2.00p**

Tomato. Shimmeig Creg. By 1960. Named in honour of the last known speaker of Manx (Isle of Man), translates as 'Striped rock'. The fruit, which are smooth and plum-shaped, are red with yellowish streaks. **20 seeds £2.00**

Tomato. White Beauty. May derive from a variety called White Apple, which was grown before 1860. Large beef-steak fruits are slightly flattened and ribbed medium-large (around 1lb), and creamy white inside and out when ripe. Indeterminate. **15 seeds £2.00p**

These can be ordered now from our current seed catalogue, a copy of which can be found here

<http://www.thomassetty.co.uk/seeds/vegetables-flowers-2020.pdf>

Onion & Shallot Sets

(Price shown includes P&P)

Available from October

Onion. Roscoff. (Kereval). Grown in the Roscoff region of Brittany since the 17th century. These pink onions (the onion of the "Onion Johnny") are not only beautiful, fragrant but also very good raw. Use them in salads or sandwiches, to enjoy their sweet flavour. **30 sets (bulbs) £7.00p**

Onion. Paille des Vertus. (Brown Spanish). By 1793. "A rather early and exceedingly productive variety. The winter supply of Onions for Paris and of a great part of Europe consisted chiefly of the variety, which may be often seen hanging up in dwelling houses in long hanks formed by interlacing and plaiting the withered leaves together." **40 sets (bulbs) £7.00p**

Shallot. Griselle. (French Grey) Considered to be the true shallot, beloved of chefs. Bulbs the size of a small walnut, sometimes larger. Pear-shaped, narrower at the upper part into a rather long point and covered with russet-coloured skin, of a coppery-red colour in the lower part shading to grey towards the top. **30 sets (bulbs) £7.00p**

Shallot. Hermine. A modern, white skinned & white fleshed shallot that has been very prolific for us over the last couple of years. We use the larger bulbs for cooking, the medium ones for pickling & the smallest as "seed" for the following season. Stores well **10 sets (bulbs) £7.00p**

Onion. Perutile. (*Allium cepa* var "perutile"). The everlasting onion, with a growth habit similar to chives (although much larger), it is usually evergreen and can supply fresh leaves all winter. In the growing season, you can dig up the entire clump, pull off some of the larger stems (they look like, and are used like spring onions). You can also divide the clump before replanting.

(Per bunch of minimum 10 stalks). **£8.75p**

Seeds of Oriental Vegetable Varieties

Chopsuey Green (*Chrysanthemum coronarium*) "Shungiku, also known as Chrysanthemum Greens. An easy and undemanding plant to grow and both the young shoots and stems can be eaten. The flavoursome serrated leaves are used as both flavouring and as a vegetable. They are aromatic and taste somewhere between celery and carrots. Even the petals can be eaten and are used to make the fragrant Japanese pickle, kikumi. **300 seeds £1.95p**

Kai Laan. These Chinese broccoli seeds produce fast growing eat all plants. Easy to harvest and use as any broccoli. Thick succulent stems, leaves and flower buds are all edible. **300 seeds £1.95p**

Komatsuna. Spinach Mustard. This large leafy green is also called spinach mustard, has dark green leaves that are rich in calcium and often quite glossy. They can be harvested at any stage and prepared like spinach in the early stages and more like cabbage as they mature. **300 seeds £1.95p**

Mibuna. Tight clusters of long, narrow, rounded dark green leaves, it will grow to 1ft tall. It has a light spicy flavour which may be enjoyed in salads or lightly cooked & seasoned making it productive & versatile. **300 seeds £1.95p**

Mitsuba. Looks like flat-leaf parsley, and has a clean flavour like parsley, (it belongs to the same family) Sometimes called Japanese parsley, but it is a distinct herb used in Japanese and Chinese cooking. **300 seeds £1.95p**

Mizuna. Grows an abundance of deeply fringed feathery lime-green leaves with a subtle mildly spicy flavour. Highly resistant to bolting & easy to grow. Continues to produce many weeks from one planting, with continued re-growth after cutting. **300 seeds £1.95p**

Mustard - Giant Red. A beautiful brilliant reddish maroon mustard from Japan, it has well-savoyed thick leaves and a strong mustard flavour. The leaves are slightly textured for a better bite and good holding power. The flavour is zesty and full. **300 seeds £1.95p**

Mustard - Green in Snow. makes the perfect leaf to add to mixed salads with tender jagged leaves and a lovely mild mustard flavour which intensifies if left to mature on the plant. It is very hardy and can be grown all year round standing well in winter. **300 seeds £1.95p**

Mustard - Red Frills. Frost hardy annual. Ht 6ins. Attractive dark Red narrow indented leaves with a mild mustard flavour. Very attractive in salads. **300 seeds £1.95p**

Pak Choi. Easy and fast to grow, this Chinese non-heading cabbage that is 8 to 10 inches long, producing tender, loose, spoon-shaped leaves with thick white ribs. Crisp and mild and great for oriental cooking. Is cold-resistant and grows over a long period of time. **300 seeds £1.95p**

Tatsoi. Its lustrous dark green leaves have a delicate mustard flavour with a crunchy but succulent & juicy stalk. delicious sautéed with a little sesame oil or slightly wilted in stir fries. **300 seeds £1.95p**

Wong Bok. Tender, crisp and sweet, with a pleasant spicy flavour with early medium maturity. Chinese Cabbage is used like lettuce in salads, cooked like spinach, shredded for slaw, steamed or stir-fried. Plants are 16 to 20 inches tall and 6 inches across at base weighing up to 5lb. Thick green leaves blanch creamy white inside. **300 seeds £1.95p**

Flower Variety Timeline

Amongst his many resources, Mr Etty has, over the years, compiled a timeline of when the majority of the flower varieties in his seed catalogue were first introduced (*or the first date of use we have been able to identify*)

This link will take you to relevant page on his website

http://www.thomasetty.co.uk/seeds/flowers/flower_selected_timeline.pdf

Concerning Leek Bulbs

"A year ago I made a note on leek bulbs. Now is the time for those who want a supply to take measures to secure them. Leeks that remain in the ground are little use, & will soon throw up flower spikes, & run to seed if allowed. The rule is to pull them up & destroy them as from this time, unless seed is required, in which case of course, it is a very simple matter to allow them to produce seed, as they will do in great plenty. It is however a fact of some importance that the worthless plants that are usually destroyed, will if allowed, produce a crop of elegant & delicious underground bulbs, & those who wish to obtain such bulbs have but to do as will be advised to ensure complete gratification."

"In the first place, clean the ground & hoe surface to admit the showers to the roots & cut the tops of the flags but not severely. In the course of a short time the pointed scapes or flower-heads will appear. Pinch them out the instant they can be got, for not one must be allowed to rise. This pinching out will have to be done again & again, for scapes will show themselves to the last. When the flags begin to wither lift the roots, & you will find that the old bulb (or leek proper) has perished & in its place are two or three silvery bulbs of the size & shape of the largest tulips, attached to the withered stem. These underground bulbs may be kept some time, & may be useful in the place of onions. But the way to understand their real value is to stew them in gravy & eat them hot with butter & pepper."

The Gardener's Magazine 17th April 1875

The turning point for the Tomato

"...came in 1820, when Colonel Robert Johnson, and eccentric but enthusiastic gardener announced that he would eat a basketful on the steps of the courthouse in Salem, New Jersey. A Large crowd gathered, expecting to see Johnson "foam and froth at the mouth and double over appendicitis" as his own physician had predicted. Instead Johnson downed the entire basket, lived and inspired a worldwide passion for tomatoes"

October

A month's work in the vegetable garden

WEEDS & falling leaves are the plagues of the season. It may seem that they do no harm, but assuredly they are directly injurious to every crop upon the ground, for they encourage damp & dirt, & prevent a free circulation of air amongst the crops, & prevent the access of sunshine to the land. Keep all clean and tidy, even to the removal of the lower leaves of all the Cabbage-worts where they lie half decayed upon the ground. If in want of work, ply the hoe amongst all kinds of crops, taking care not to break or bruise healthy leaves, or loosen the roots of anything. Dig vacant plots & lay the land up in ridges in the roughest manner possible. Heavy land may be manured now with advantage, but it is well not to put manure on light land until spring.

Cabbage.- We advocate crowding the land now with Cabbage plants, for growth will be slow & the demands of the kitchen constant. 'Crowding', however, is not quite the same thing as overcrowding, & it is only a waste of labour, land, & crop to put the plants so close together that they have not space for full development. The usual rule in planting out the larger sorts of Cabbage at this time of year is to allow a distance every way of two feet between the plants. But we carry the crowding principle so far as to put the small growing Coleworts & other miniature Cabbages in the interspaces.

Cardoons- to be tied round & earthed up.

Carrots.- to be taken up & stored in sand. Late-sown crops to be thinned & weeded.

Celery to be earthed up, & protecting material got ready to assure its safety during frost.

Endive.- to be blanched for use as it acquires its full size, but not before, as the blanching makes an end of growth.

Garlic.- may be planted now on dry warm soils, but on cold, damp soils to plant now is to throw roots & labour away.

Lettuce.- plant out all that are large enough, selecting, if possible, a dry, sloping bank for the purpose.

Potatoes.- to be taken up & stored with all possible speed. In times when work is slack, the seed Potatoes for next season's planting may be got ready, & put in baskets & boxes, preparatory to being spread out in the daylight in lofts & sheds when the New Year has turned