

What to sow and grow in February.

February might be the cold, tail end of winter, but there are plenty of flowers, fruits and vegetables to sow and grow this month.

Here are our top picks!

The powers of Lilies.

Chinese medicine classifies the lily plant as bitter in taste, mild in nature, and beneficial to our hearts and lungs. The flowers are dried and used in cooking stews or soups. The healing properties of lily include moisturizing the lungs, relieving cough from lung-dryness, clears heart-fire and tranquilizes the mind. Dried lily bulbs are commonly used in herbal formulas for promoting lung health, treating yin-deficiency of the heart which manifests as irritability, insomnia, dreaminess, palpitation and absent-mindedness, and promotes vital fluid and improves skin complexion. Lily bulbs have numerous important pharmacological activities and it can be considered as a valuable source of nutraceuticals.



Plante outdoor.

- • **Plant lilies and allium bulbs.** Although best done in autumn, you can get away with planting lilies and alliums until spring.
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- • **Plant bare root roses in a sunny position** for spectacular summer colour.
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- • **Plant fragrant winter-flowering shrubs** to add interest to borders, such as **daphne**, **viburnum x bodnantense 'Dawn'**, witch hazel (**hamamelis x intermedia**) and wintersweet (**chimonanthus praecox**).



Garlic is used for lowering cholesterol and blood pressure. It has antimicrobial effects. Reports from small, short-term, and poorly described studies show that it may cause small reductions in total and LDL cholesterol. But German research results on garlic's cholesterol-lowering effect have been distorted for a positive effect, the FDA says. Researchers are currently exploring garlic's possible role in preventing cancer. The FDA considers garlic safe. It should not be used with warfarin, because large amounts of garlic may affect clotting. For the same reason, large amounts should not be taken before dental procedures or surgery.

Vegetables and herbs to sow and grow In a cold frame/ under cloches.

- **Sow broad beans, carrots, parsnips, early beetroot, salad onions, lettuces, radish, peas, spinach and summer cabbages** outside under cloches, if you have light (sandy) soil and live in a mild part of the UK. Otherwise it's best to wait until the soil has begun to warm up in March or April.
- **Sow beetroot** under cover.
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- **Sow early carrot varieties**, such as
- 'Nantes 2', under cloches or in greenhouse borders.
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- **Grow chicory** under cloches, for early summer harvesting.
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- **Sow early peas** under cloches for your first crop of the season. 'Twinkle' is a good variety for this.
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- **Sow radish seeds** now under cloches or in greenhouse borders.
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- **Grow some salad leaves, lettuce or spinach** indoors or under cloches for a tasty and nutritious start to the growing season.
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- **Sow seeds of spring onions** under cloches, in greenhouse borders or in cold frames. 'Ishikura' and 'Summer Isle' are good early varieties.
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Direct sow outdoors

- **Direct sow hardy broad beans**, such as 'Aquadulce Claudia', if the soil isn't frozen.

Plant outdoors

- **Plant out garlic and shallots** in light soils only; heavy soils still need longer to warm up.