

HOW TO... GROW CLIMBING PEAS



The variety Blauschokker has purple pods as well as pretty purple flowers - looks great outside the front door.

- **Sun:** Peas need 5-6 hours sun (half a day) to fruit well.
- **Support:** Climbing peas need some support or they will fall flat on their face! Make a wigwam of canes or branches. Or rig up some netting (you can even buy 'pea netting' in the shops).
- **Tying in:** Unlike runner beans, peas are NOT good at holding on to the canes. The need to be 'tied in' about once a week, once they get to about a foot tall. To do this, tie some string (or old bits of bicycle inner tube), *tightly* to the cane. Then, tie the string *loosely* round each plant to hold it up.
- **Watering:** check the compost in the container regularly. It should be damp, not dry or wet. Once the plants reach a couple of feet tall, they will need watering nearly every day.
- **Feeding:** peas are not as hungry as many other crops. This is because they can 'fix' nitrogen from the air to make some of their own food. However, you will still get a bigger crop if you can feed them with a liquid tomato feed once every two or three weeks after they have started flowering.
- **Harvesting:** Blauschokker is a 'mange tout' type pea. This means you eat the whole pod. Pick the pods regularly (don't let them get too large or they will get tough). Picking also encourages the plant to produce more.
- **Eating:** you can eat mange tout peas just like normal peas. You can boil or steam them and eat as a side vegetable. Or add to stir fries. You can also eat the pea flowers (no need to cook) if you fancy!

