



# How to reduce the need to water

- Dig in or mulch with plenty of organic matter; this will help to retain moisture in the soil.
- Apply mulches when the soil is warm and moist, this will reduce water loss due to evaporation and also suppress weeds.
- Weeds compete for moisture and nutrients in the soil so weed regularly or cover soil with a weed suppressing geo-textile. The weeds, roots and all can be composted if processed correctly by drowning in water or put in a black plastic bag in the sun until they decompose. Weed seeds will only be destroyed in the hot compost process.
- Grow crops that suit your local conditions.
- A greenhouse or poly-tunnel can increase the need for water significantly so water harvesting from these structures is important.

## Watering wisely

The best time to water your crops is in the evening or very early morning, using a watering can and aiming at the roots not the foliage. Water thoroughly on a weekly basis and soak the soil, rather than a little at a time.

Water appropriately to the crop; plants also need different amounts of water at varying stages of growth and too much water can affect yield and taste.