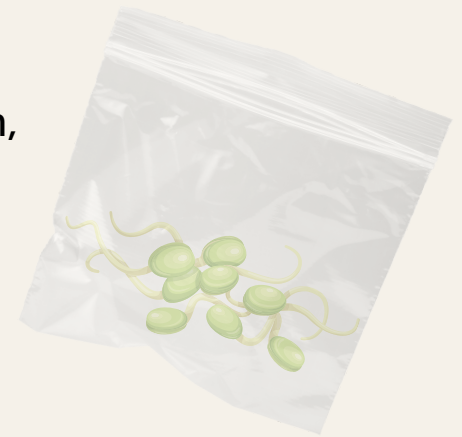


Broad Beans & Fava Beans

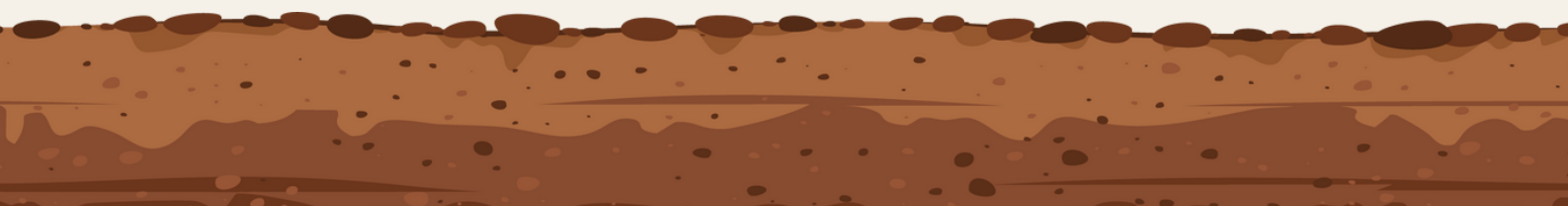
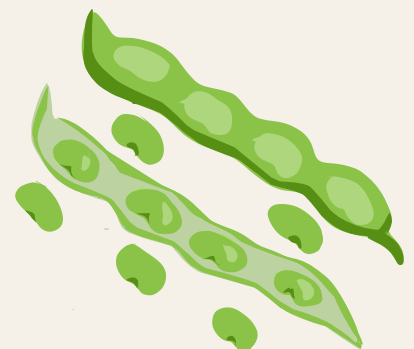
Originally brought over by Neolithic farmers, fava beans have been grown in the UK for at least 5,000 years and were a staple crop until relatively recently.



A close relative and descendent of the fava bean, the broad bean is very easy to grow, and can be sown directly into the soil. You could germinate the beans before planting them by spritzing a paper towel with water, lying it flat inside a zip-lock bag and placing it in a warm spot with the beans inside: your pupils will be able to see the root grow out of the base of the bean, and the beans will get a head start! Once in the ground, each bean produces a metre-high plant laden with beautiful, sweet-smelling white, pink, red or purple flowers, which when pollinated transform into pods each containing 3-10 beans.



Broad beans are one of the first Spring crops to sow: the children will be amazed by their rapid growth, and they're usually ready to harvest before the end of the Summer term. Chock-full of fibre, protein, nutrients and antioxidants, and delicious in many dishes including houmous and falafel, it's strange that we don't grow them more!



Broad Beans & Fava Beans

Explore our Beans recipes [here](#).

As well as their health credentials, broad beans (like all legumes) have an important role to play in the climate crisis: a triple help in tackling the issue, they can help slow soil degradation, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve biodiversity.

Beans (and all legumes) store nitrogen (an essential nutrient for plants to grow) in the soil, via a symbiotic relationship with bacteria in the soil. You can actually see evidence of this taking place!

Once you've harvested your broad beans, you can pull up the stalk and see small, grain-sized nodules all over the roots. These nodules hold special bacteria that convert nitrogen from the air into nitrogen available in the soil for the plant to grow!

A very neat organic gardening solution!



For these reasons, we're so glad to be partnered with [BeanMeals](#), with whom we are working to increase both the growing and eating of beans in the UK.

World Pulses Day - 10th February!

So why not celebrate in style by taking the kids out, and getting your broad beans sown for the year? It's time to break the ground, and sow the first seeds of Spring!

