

# Winter Gardening Newsletter

by Linda Gilkeson

**November 28, 2013**

## **Cold Snaparoo**

Looks like a very cold spell is on the way, possibly with overnight lows of -6 to -8oC (21 to 17oF) around the coast. This is pretty cold for unprotected hardy greens and overwintering cabbage family plants out in the garden, especially since lows might be a couple of degrees colder in frost pockets or at higher elevations.

I assume you all had everything well mulched before the cold spell earlier this month (right?), but you might want to go around and put on another layer by Monday. If it does get as cold as forecast, leafy greens will come through in better condition if they are temporarily covered with a sheet of plastic or a tarp. Plants now under plastic tunnels or in coldframes or unheated greenhouses should be OK at these temperatures for a few days.

If it gets colder, say dropping to -10oC (14oF), then I throw a plastic tarp over my bed of winter broccoli and cauliflower and also cover the bed of lettuce and other greens in my unheated greenhouse.

Of course, the best thing for the garden would be a nice thick insulating snowfall before the cold hits..... (but I had better be careful what I wish for!)

Good idea to do a big harvest this weekend to get in enough roots, greens, cabbage, leeks, etc. to last your household for a couple of weeks. You can harvest roots anytime, but after the cold ends, wait until there has been a few days above freezing before you harvest hardy greens, cabbage and other above-ground vegetables. The plants need time to thaw out, take up water and get crisp again.

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See my web site [www.lindagilkeson.ca](http://www.lindagilkeson.ca) for hundreds of colour photos of pests and diseases to help you ID problems, to order books or check my 2014 schedule for talks, workshops and gardening classes in your area.

All of my previous messages are archived on my web site under the Gardening Tips page and are also available through the Salt Spring Energy Strategy website: [www.saltspringenergystrategy.org](http://www.saltspringenergystrategy.org)