Spring Planting: Tomatoes, Capsicums, Chillies and Potatoes

October 17, 2026 / Gavin Jackson

gardening vegetables

The winter beds are nearly cleared and the summer planting has gone in. This is the follow-up to the winter wrap-up: what is actually growing for the 2026-27 season.

The garden in mid-October. The lettuce bed on the right is still producing from winter.

The three raised beds carry the bulk of it, with two large pots added for the potatoes. The lettuce from winter is still going strong in one of the beds, so the new summer crops have been distributed around whatever space was left.

Each bed got the same preparation before planting: three handfuls of blood and bone and a bag of compost forked through the soil, then sugarcane mulch over the top once the seedlings were in.

Frost is possible here until late October, so planting frost-tender crops in mid-October is a small gamble. The seedlings had outgrown their punnets and the alternative was potting everything on for two more weeks, so the gamble is on.

Tomatoes

The main event, and possibly too many of them. Nine varieties this year, all purchased as seedlings. The first six:

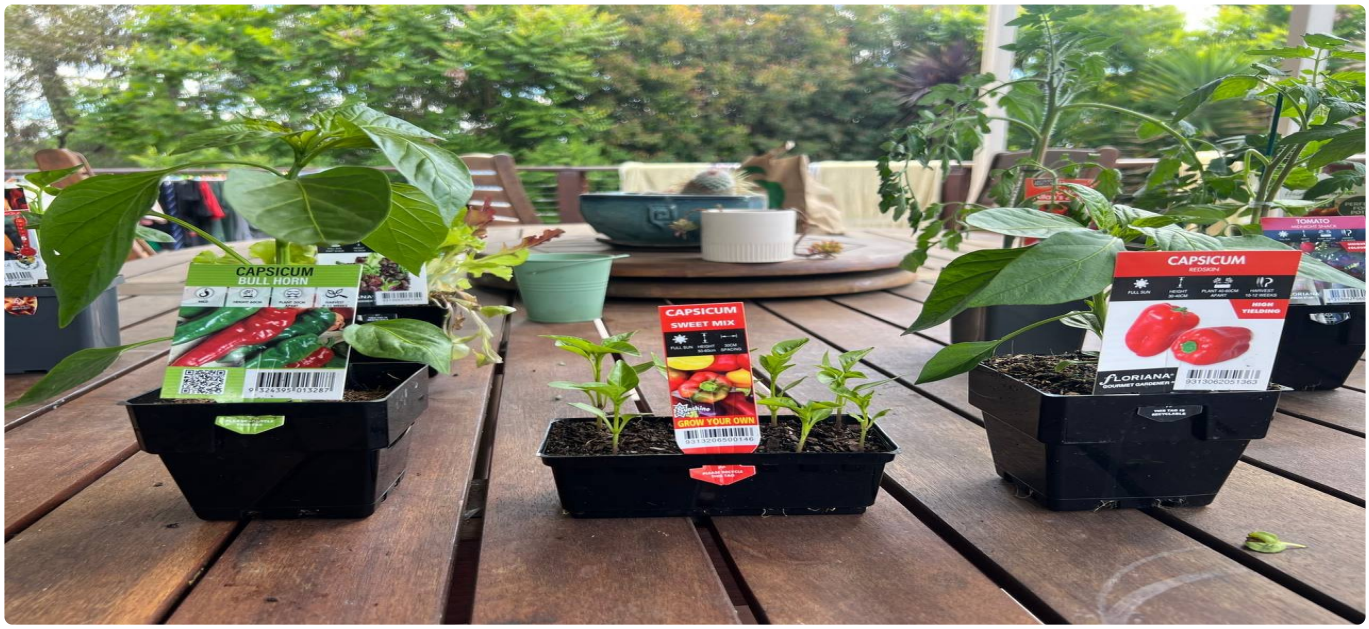
- **Allan's Early Red** (Renaissance, "Modern Heirloom" range)
- **Tasmanian Chocolate** (Diggers Club heirloom, compact enough for pots, 16 weeks to harvest)
- **Rapunzel** (Floriana, known for metre-long trusses, grows to 1.8-2 m so it will need serious staking)

- **Midnight Snack** (a dark-skinned cherry type)
- **Honey Drop** (1.5-2 m, staking required)
- **Trussty** (supposedly good disease resistance, which will be tested)

Plus three more: **Yellow Pear**, a red round variety, and a cherry tomato. Nothing was grown from seed this year; everything came home as seedlings.

The seedlings planted out in the oval bed.

Capsicums and chillies



Three capsicums: **Bull Horn**, **Sweet Mix**, and **Redskin**. All Floriana's Gourmet Gardener range, all marked "high yielding", which remains to be seen.

Three chillies, one for each step of the heat scale: **Serrano** (mild), **Aji Yellow** (medium), and **Habanero** (hot).

Planted out. The peas climbing the fence behind them are a holdover from winter.

Potatoes

A 1 kg bag of **Nicola** certified seed potatoes for $10.35. Nicola is a late-season variety: plant 10 cm deep, 30-35 cm apart, harvest in 120-130 days. That puts harvest around February. They have gone into the large pots rather than the beds, on the theory that harvesting potatoes from a pot is a matter of tipping it over rather than digging.

Still going from winter

The lettuce bed refuses to quit. Green and red leaf varieties plus a romaine, all cut-and-come-again, and still the most reliable crop in the garden.

What I am watching

- Whether the mid-October planting gets caught by a late frost. The tomatoes and capsicums would all be lost; the potatoes would shrug it off.
- Whether nine tomato plants across two beds is six too many. Spacing says yes. Optimism says no.
- The Trussty disease-resistance claim, against whatever last summer's humidity brings.

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