

TYPES OF POTATOES

Round White – Creamy, buff-colored, smooth skin. Very firm texture inside. Round Whites are good boiled, roasted, home fried, or mashed.

Round Red – Reddish skin, often netted, smooth skin and white flesh inside. Round Reds are best boiled or baked.

Long White – Light tan, smooth and shiny. Cylindrical and slightly flattened ends. Very firm inside. Long Whites are an all-around potato, as the Round White is, plus are excellent French fried.

Russet – Long and cylindrical, flattened at ends. Skin is russet and heavily netted. Inside they are “floury” or “mealy.” Best known for baking; however, they make good French fries.

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Guide to Growing Potatoes



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Potatoes are easily grown in the home garden and, with just a little care and attention, a fine harvest can be obtained. These tips have been developed to help you make a success of your potato growing efforts.

The Right Spot in Your Garden

Potatoes deserve one of your very best garden spots – one that gets full sun with a soil that is light and loamy. Try to avoid locations with heavy soils and those that are wet or shallow. While a finely tilled seedbed is not necessary for good growth and yields, it makes hand and mechanical weed control practices easier and more effective. Till thoroughly to a depth of 7 to 9 inches. Potatoes do well in an acidic soil. The ideal soil acidity has a pH level of 5.5. A pH level under 5.2 can reduce yields. It should be treated with a light application of ground limestone. A “dolomitic” limestone (one with magnesium compounds) is recommended.

How to Prepare the Seed

Cut each potato into halves, thirds, or quarters, depending on its size and the number of “eyes.” Be sure that each piece contains at least one eye; two eyes are preferable, but more than three will prove wasteful. Each piece should

be at least the size of a golf ball, weighing approximately two ounces. Allow the piece to “cauterize” by drying in open shade for an hour or two before planting.

Planting the Seed Potatoes

Once the seed has dried or cauterized, plant the pieces in a 2 to 3 inch deep trench at 8 inch intervals in the row. Soil should be moist but not wet. Cover the seed with 2 inches of soil. Rows should be spaced 32 to 40 inches apart, adjusting this to fit your cultivation method. If you use power equipment, plan early for a row that is wide enough to allow easy passage without disturbing the hill. Should you run into an extended dry spell before planting, it will pay to irrigate or water deeply once before come-up. If this is not possible, then pull another inch or two of soil over the row to help protect the seed pieces from drying out. A soil temperature above 45 degrees at the 6 inch depth is required at planting time. Remember, excessive wetness and cold soil conditions after planting can adversely affect tuber sprouting. Under normal growing conditions, allow about 3 weeks from planting to come-up. Plan for come-up after the danger of hard frost is over.

Harvesting the Crop

By late August to mid-September, the potato vines should begin to die back, indicating that the tubers have matured. In some years this die-back may not begin until later in the season when frosts begin to kill the plants. Generally this is not harmful, but the potatoes should be dug before the first ground freeze. Throw away any tubers that show a green skin discoloration. They are not edible. These tubers were partially exposed to the sun while growing.

Storing Your Crop of Potatoes

Once dug from the hill, allow the potatoes to air dry on the garden for about an hour. Store them, preferably in a lightly humid area with no natural light, where the temperature remains cool (40°F). Don't allow the potatoes to freeze or to become wet. There should be ventilation, particularly during the first week or two of storage.

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