

# growing GUIDE

## BED PREPARATION

Prepare your soil, making sure it is loose with good drainage and ample sunlight. Potatoes prefer trenches or mounds. Dig 3-4" holes for the seed potatoes about a foot apart. Place seed potatoes in the mounds with the eye up. Cover with soil and water well.

## HILLING

After 5 weeks, you can do a process known as "hilling". Hilling involves piling soil around the plants using a hoe. This process forces new potatoes to grow above seed potatoes planted earlier. Be sure to never expose the potatoes to the sun.

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Sweet potatoes prefer a soil ph of 5.0-6.5. Phosphorus and potassium can be added before planting, but wait to add nitrogen until 3 weeks after they have been planted. However, too much nitrogen can cause large vines with poor yields.

## PLANTING

Plant slips in the garden when soil temperatures warm to 60 degrees. Plant slips about 1' apart and deep enough to cover half of the stem. Rows should have 9-18" between them. Full sun and excellent drainage are required. Sweet potatoes will grow best in mounds or raised beds that aid with drainage. They will produce a large vine throughout the summer.

# POTATOES

Prepare seed potatoes by cutting them into 2" chunks, including at least one or two eyes on each potato. Let these pieces air-dry for 2-3 days. If seed potatoes are smaller, they can be left whole.

## HARVESTING

On average, potatoes are ready for harvest after 70-100 days. One sign that they might be ready is when the foliage begins to die back. Leave the potatoes in the ground for 2-3 more weeks to allow their skin to toughen up. When you are ready to harvest, use a pitch fork or your hands to carefully dig them up.

Brush off the dirt and store in a dry place to cure for 2 weeks.

# SWEET POTATOES

Sweet potatoes are grown from "slips". You can purchase these in bundles.

## HARVESTING

Sweet potatoes should be ready for harvest after 95-120 days. Yellowing leaves will indicate they are ready. To toughen up the skin, you can cut the vines back a few days before harvest.

After digging up the potatoes, do not wash off the dirt until you are ready to eat them. Store in a warm, humid area for about a week to allow them to cure.

Sweet potatoes can be stored for over 6 months in a cool, humid area around 60 degrees.

