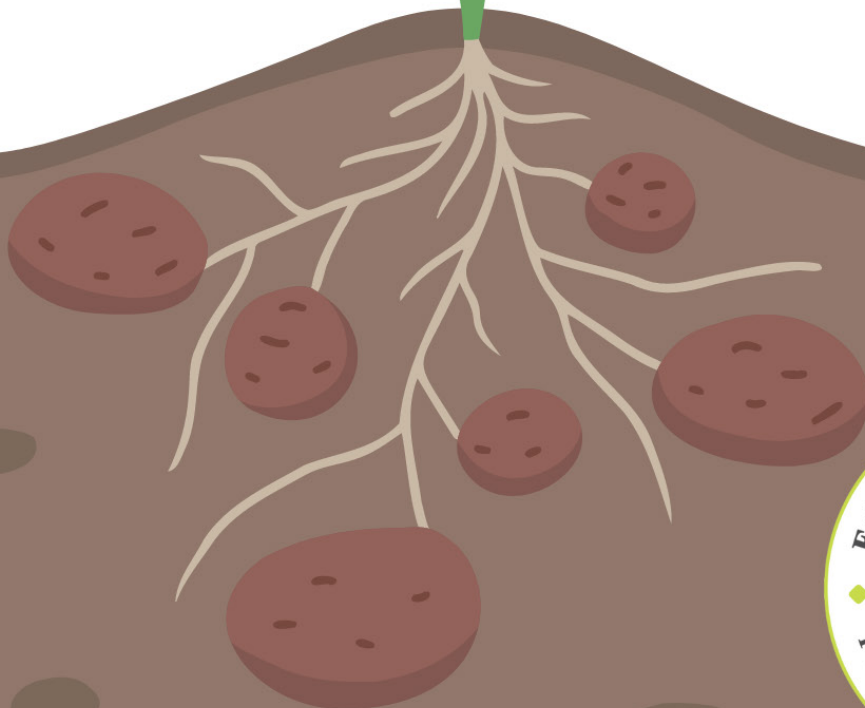


POTATOES

A Sprout to Supper Guide



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Sample

POTATOES

A Sprout-to-Supper Guide

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INTRODUCTION

Are Potatoes Hard to Grow?

If a new gardener, whose primary goal was to grow her own food, asked me what plant to start with, I'd say potatoes.

Despite a few horror stories here and there, growing potatoes isn't that hard. As long as you know a few basics, you can successfully grow potatoes into large, plump tubers.

This guide will help you overcome any trepidation you might have about producing a crop of delicious potatoes. To encourage you, we'll even introduce you to the "lazy man's potatoes" approach.

Potatoes Are One of the Easiest Crops to Grow

You may have heard that growing potatoes is difficult, but let's set the record straight. These versatile veggies can flourish almost anywhere, from spacious gardens to compact pots and bags on your balcony.

Whether you're nurturing first early, second early, or maincrop potatoes, each type has its own schedule and climate preference, making potatoes a great choice for gardeners across different regions. (For most regions, early spring is planting time for potatoes.)

This adaptability and the range of options available debunk the myth that potato growing is only for those with a green thumb or vast plots of land.

POTATOES: A SEED TO SUPPER GUIDE

Potatoes offer a friendly start for anyone wanting to start a garden.

The Realities of Potato Plant Care

Based on our introduction, you might think tending to potato plants is a walk in the park, but there's certainly still work involved.

For instance, watering can't be hit or miss; potatoes crave consistent moisture, especially during the peak of their growth. Too little water spells trouble, leading to small tubers, while too much can drown them or encourage disease.

Fertilizing can be hard to get right, too, in that there's a balance you need to strike. We'll discuss all of this in detail throughout this guide.

The “Lazy Man's” Potato Growing Method

Our family experimented last year, and the method we used turned out to be the easiest method by far.

We're big proponents of a no-till approach to gardening, but the heavy clay soil we have in the South posed a challenge. So, we devised a plan to revolutionize our potato patch and, in turn, prep the ground for future beds.

To start, we planted grocery-store potatoes directly on the soil surface; that's right—no digging. Then, we simply covered our potatoes with straw. (You can use spoiled hay or straw mulch.)

As the potatoes grew, we kept layering on the straw, ensuring 4 to 6 inches of the plant remained above the mulch line.

Fast forward to harvest day, and what we discovered beneath the surface blew us away.

As I peeled back the straw, I was greeted by soil—rich, dark, and teeming with life. Worms wriggled everywhere, feasting on the remnants of rotting seed potatoes. It was a sight to behold, a testament to nature's remarkable ability to regenerate.

INTRODUCTION

Not only did we grow potatoes the easiest way possible, but we prepped that ground for future garden beds without heavy labor.

Just one word of caution if you try this method:

Make sure your hay or straw hasn't been sprayed with a herbicide like Grazon.

If you're tight on garden space, another easy approach is to use grow bags. Grow bags are containers that can be made from jute, burlap, or other fabrics and that are filled with dirt for growing plants. Grow bags can be purchased in many size, but for potatoes, you will want to use grow bags that are 10 gallons or larger.

You'll just fill your grow bag or pot with a mix of potting soil and compost. Drop in a few seed potatoes, and cover them with 3 to 4 inches of your soil mix.

Easy or Hard? You Decide

At its core, potato gardening embodies a blend of simplicity and challenge, perfect for those ready to dip their hands into the soil.

Remember, each potato plant you nurture has its own set of needs—consistent watering, timely fertilizing, and vigilant pest management.

So, is growing potatoes hard? Let's say it's rewarding.

The satisfaction of unearthing your first batch of home-grown potatoes is delightful.

Consider the resources you have, your willingness to learn, and the space available. Whether it's a sprawling garden or a modest balcony setup with grow bags, potatoes are accommodating. They ask for little yet give much in return.

In the end, the question isn't really about how hard it is to grow potatoes. It's about the adventure you're willing to embark on.

With a bit of soil under your nails and sun on your back, you might just find joy in watching those green shoots break ground. Go ahead, plant a potato, give it love and attention, and let nature do the rest!

VIDEOS

Potato Library



Preparing Seed Potatoes



When to Harvest Potatoes



Dehydrating Potatoes



Canning Potatoes

