

Potato

DID YOU KNOW
POTATOES ARE
DETERMINATE OR
INDETERMINATE, JUST
LIKE TOMATOES?

HOW TO GROW POTATOES

Potatoes grow great in well-draining soil and in direct sun. Loose, slightly-acidic soil will be the best type of soil for growing potatoes. It is best to plant potatoes in February or early March to allow them time to become established without the fear of damage from too much winter weather. Make sure your soil has been amended with compost. You can also add a balanced fertilizer at planting. Cut your potatoes into wedges that have at least one or two good sprouts. Let them dry out for a few days. To plant, dig a trench through the center of your garden that is about 6 inches deep. Space the cut seed potatoes about 10-12 inches apart in the ditch, applying a bit of pressure pushing them into the soil. Cover with about three inches of soil. Keep the soil around your potatoes moist but not wet. Add mulch to keep in moisture and to keep out weeds. Allowing the soil to drain before watering keeps rot and other diseases at bay. Add fertilizer very 3-4 wks until blooms form. Then stop feeding.

PESTS AND DISEASES

Potato Blight can yellow the leaves, causing rot in the foliage and potentially the tubers. The best way to prevent Potato Blight from taking hold of your patch is to plant potatoes certified to be free of disease and to rotate your crops.

The Colorado Potato Beetle is one of the most prevalent beetles in the potato-growing world. These beetles will feast on the potato leaves, causing defoliation throughout your plant. You can apply either neem oil or Spinosad on your potato plants to kill potato beetles and protect your plants.

HARVESTING AND STORAGE

Your potatoes are ready for harvesting when the top foliage begins to die and the skins become firmer and tough to the touch. Use a shovel or other garden tool to carefully scrape the soil away from the tubers. Be careful not to damage or cut the potatoes as you remove them from the ground. Allow for the potatoes to dry out for about 2 weeks after harvesting and cover them with a loose cloth to allow for good air circulation but limit sun exposure.

