



# Homestead Nurseries

Kirstead Green, Norwich, Norfolk. NR15 1EE tel: 01508 550342



Open 7 days a week  
Located just off the B1332 - 8 miles south of Norwich

## Growing Potatoes

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The traditional method of planting and **growing potatoes** is to choose a nice south facing site that is away from tree and hedges. You should try not to **plant potatoes** in areas that can be prone to frost in low lying pockets.

### Soil Conditions for Growing Potatoes

Ideal soil conditions for growing potatoes are sandy loam soils which can be enriched with lots of organic matter to aid water retention and provide suitable feeding for you potatoes.

Heavy clay soils can be improved by adding sharp sand and lots of organic matter in the autumn of the year so that the new soil mixture can be exposed to frost which will help break up the soil structure and make it easier to work with.

If you are unable to get organic matter you can add compost to the area you wish to plant your potatoes in.

### Using Fertilizer

In the early part of spring where weather conditions allow you can broadcast a balanced **potato fertilizer** at a rate of around 4oz per square yard. Vitax organic potato fertilizer would be suitable for this as it is a slow release fertilizer formulated for potatoes.

Once you have spread your fertilizer you can either fork the soil so that it is well mixed or gently rotovate and leave for around 10 days before planting for the fertilizer to work into the soil structure.

### Get Digging

Now to make your potato beds. Dig a trench 6 inches deep and the width of your shovel. Sprinkle 2oz of your potato fertilizer for each metre length of your trench. Again gently fork the fertilizer into the soil in the bottom of the trench.

### Slugs

If you have problems with slugs in your garden then now would be the time to add slug pellets to the trench following the recommended dosage from the manufacturer or use nemaslug which are nematodes designed to attack slugs and stop the problem.

### **Planting your Seed Potatoes**

Now to plant your potatoes. **First earlies** should be planted 12" apart along your drill and the space between drills should be around 24".

**Second earlies** and **maincrops** can be planted 15" apart with a space of 28" between the drills.

Now that you have your potatoes in the ground simply use the soil that you had already taken out of the trench and carefully scatter it on top of the potatoes until the trench is once again flat.

### **Earthing Up**

Once the potatoes start to grow through the top of the drill you should then start to earth up.

Earthing up is best done with a garden hoe. The aim is to form a peaked ridge with the loose soil at the edge of the trench to prevent your potatoes turning green which would make them inedible.

This might be required 2/3 times a season.