



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

Planting Potatoes

After purchase, carefully empty your **seed potatoes** into shallow boxes or trays – egg boxes or apple trays are ideal. Keep these away from frost and store in a cool area.

6 weeks before you want to plant your early potatoes you should move your potatoes into a light area of about 10 degrees Celsius to produce a strong, thick sprout, making sure that the potatoes are rose eye upwards. This is known as 'Chitting' see separate fact sheet

The potatoes will turn green when exposed to the light but do not worry as this is normal. If you wish to grow large potatoes you can carefully cut out some of the eyes on the potatoes so that only a few chits are formed and the potato will produce larger but fewer tubers.

If you wish to grow many small tubers to eat, like baby potatoes, then leave all the eyes intact and plant the potatoes at half the distances shown below.

How to prepare the beds

With the use of a garden fork simply turn the soil over and work in some well-rotted manure to provide essential nutrients for your potatoes. If you are unable to use manure then specialized potato fertilizer can be used but the fertilizer should be placed below the potato and a layer of soil or compost put in between so that the potato roots grow down into the soil to establish properly.

The potato bed should be a trench about 4-6 inches deep and you place the potato into the trench and cover with soil so that good peak is formed. I have videos below that you can follow for even more information.

First Earlies can be planted 12" (30cm) apart with 24" (60cm) between each row.

Second Earlies and **Maincrop** can be planted 15" (37.5cm) apart in row widths of 28" (70cm).

Always make sure the eyes are facing upwards and planted at a depth of between 4-6" (10-15cm).

Growing seed potatoes in a container.

You will need a container of around 40 litres to grow a good crop of potatoes from 5 seed potatoes. Make sure your container has adequate drainage holes in the bottom.

Do not use garden soil. You can buy good general purpose compost from a garden centre.

Add a layer of 15cm or 6 inches of your compost to the bottom of the container. Place your seed potatoes with the eyes upwards about 5cm or 2 inches into the compost.

Your potatoes will require water and fertilizer. The key to growing potatoes is the correct amount of water, not too much at first but once they are 16" high they should be kept moist.

Potatoes grow upwards, so cover your potatoes with more compost as the weeks go by and your crops get bigger to stop the crop turning green and render them inedible.

When to plant your seed potatoes: The normal time to plant potatoes is mid-late March **dependant on weather conditions.**

Harvest times: Subject to weather and climate.

- **First Earlies:** 10-12 weeks
- **Second Earlies:** 13-15 weeks
- **Maincrop:** 15-22 weeks

Fertilizer:

Apply 135g/sq.m (4oz per sq.yd) to the soil before planting and gently work into the soil.

For container growing add at a rate of 140g/sq.m (4oz/sq.yd) Equivalent pot size is 30cm (12in) diameter pot – 35g. 38cm (15in) diameter pot – 50g. 50cm(20in) diameter pot – 80g.