

Good yield, taste

Potatoes make great crop

Potatoes are a good garden crop to grow for a number of reasons — they don't take up much space, they are easy to grow, yield well and taste good.

Both early and late maturing potato varieties are available to the home gardener. Early maturing potatoes will yield the best new potatoes for eating while the skin is tender. Late-maturing varieties keep better through the winter in storage.

Early varieties include Norland, Red LaSoda, White Gold and Norgold Russet. Late-maturing types include Red Pontiac, Kinnebec, Nampa, Nooksack, Russet Burbank and Katahdin.

When buying potato seed stock, be sure to get certified seed. This kind of seed stock is disease-free and available at garden stores.

When planting, cut seed potatoes into quarters or halves. Each cut piece should have at least one eye or it won't grow. Dust the cut surfaces of each seed piece with Captan fungicide to prevent rot or disease, or cut the seed stock a day ahead of time and let the cut surfaces

dry before planting.

Plant the seed pieces in rows to three feet apart. The seed should be planted three inches deep in the soil. Plantings can go in as soon as the ground warms in the spring until the end of June. Potatoes intended for winter storage should be planted later than those for summer use.

Fertilize the potatoes with a 16-16-16 or similar fertilizer. It should be applied at the rate of eight to 10 pounds per 1,000 square feet or one-half ounce per seed piece. Place the fertilizer to either side and about an inch below the seed.

As the plants grow, mound soil around their bases to keep the new tubers protected from the sun. The new potatoes form above the level of the seed piece so more soil will have to be mounded around the plant as it grows. This is important because sunlight causes new tubers to turn green. Be careful not to cover the plant foliage completely when mounding the soil around the plant.

Irrigation of potato plants should be started when the

plants are about five inches high. After irrigation is started, the ground should be kept damp.

An alternative to mounding soil around the potato plant is to pile clean straw on top of the emerging tubers.

Don't put the full layer of mulch on all at once. Put two to four inches of mulch over the seed row after planting and add the rest after the plants tops emerge from the soil.

Tomato stands aid growth

Garden tomato plants will be easier to cultivate and harvest if you give them some support.

After they become established and start growing out, tomato plants need some type of support to keep the leaves and fruit off the ground. Supporting the plants on frames or stakes helps minimize fruit rot and keeps the branches out of reach of slugs.

Support structures also

improve air circulation around the tomato plant, which helps prevent disease such as late blight.

To be effective, supports should be one to five feet high and about 18 inches in diameter. They can be made of wood or concrete-reinforcing wire.

The wire is preferred because the holes in the wire are large enough to reach through when gathering tomatoes.

Because of its small mesh, chicken wire is not recommended.

Supporting tomato plants with stakes involves a bit more work, because smaller plant shoots must be removed to eliminate extra side branches. Leave one to three main stems on the plant and use up to three stakes, if necessary.

The stakes should be put in place when the plants are young to prevent damage to the roots.

Protein costly, needed

Protein is one of the most important and expensive food components we buy.

Each of us needs about 45 to 65 grams of protein a day, but many Americans get twice that amount, according to Sandra Zimmer of the Clackamas County Nutrition Council.

When food budgets begin to bulge, one of the quickest ways to cut costs without threatening good health is to eliminate excess protein foods from meals. This can mean having a smaller serving of meat and filling in with more vegetables, fruit

or grains.

Another method of cutting costs is to switch to some non-meat proteins. About one-third of a person's daily protein requirement can be met with two cups of milk, two eggs or one cup of cooked lentils. Eggs and milk products have very high quality, complete proteins.

A variety of incomplete vegetable protein food such as beans, grains and nuts can be teamed up each day to make a complete protein diet, and at a lower cost than red meats.



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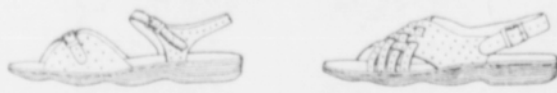


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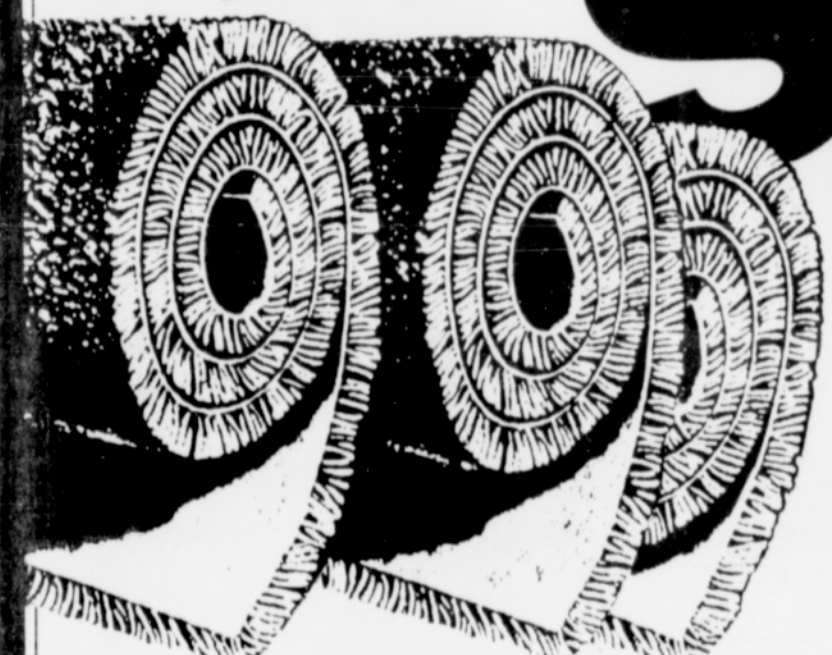
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