Common varieties available in WA*

VARIETY	CHARACTERISTICS	MATURATION
DELAWARE	All round firm potato perfect for microwaving, boiling or roasting. Great tasting.	Matures relatively early and plant is extremely vigorous.
DESIREE	Firm pale yellow flesh. Great for boiling, mashing, roasting or microwaving.	Medium to late maturing in WA and relatively vigorous, medium sized plant.
EUREKA	Better tasting than Delaware and good for frying and roasting but not a good potato for mashing.	Matures later than most other potatoes but has some good disease resistance.
KESTREL	Excellent for roasting and frying and is very good for all other forms of cooking.	Medium maturing potato that has become very popular.
MONDIAL	Very good taste and suitable for boiling, mashing and microwaving. Not the best for chips.	Matures relatively early and is perfect for growing through winter. Produces high yields and has improved resistance to viruses.
ROYAL BLUE	Excellent all purpose potato that is suitable for just about any type of cooking.	Matures relatively early. Keep an eye on them around harvesting time as skin finish can suffer if left too long.
RUBY LOU	Very good flavour and a great potato for just about everything.	Matures slightly later than Delaware but should be harvested as soon as crop is mature.

Subject to availability and seasonal conditions.

Better Pets and Gardens
All your Pet and Garden needs

To see the full range of fact sheets and to find your nearest store, check our website

www.betterpetsandgardens.com.au

For more great garden advice, ask one of our team members at any Better Pets and Gardens store.

OPEN 7 DAYS

All your Pet and Garden needs

BETTER advice!

GROWING POTATOES

Growing Potatoes at Home

Potatoes are easy to grow and taste great when harvested from your own backyard.

Better Pets and Gardens
All your Pet and Garden needs

You'll never go back to supermarket potatoes once you have tried your own and your kids will have great fun rummaging under the straw to find their own spuds for dinner.

Potatoes can be grown for most of the year in WA, except in areas prone to frost. For best results the soil should be between about 10°C and 30°C so autumn is a fantastic time to plant. Potatoes prefer full sun and some water to establish but too much water can cause diseases so it is important to monitor carefully.

The availability of Certified Seed Potatoes for the home gardener differs from year to year simply because of the changes to climate conditions. Our seed potatoes are grown in the south-west of WA and the amount of rain, sunshine and the effects of pests and diseases have a big impact on what is available in stores each year.

Better Tips:

Choosing to plant only Certified Seed Potatoes is the best way to ensure that diseases are not introduced to your garden and helps to protect the relatively virus-free potato industry that is so important to WA.

Growing Potatoes – Permaculture

This is incredibly easy and allows potatoes to be grown on any surface at all, including concrete and directly on grass areas and is an ideal way to improve a garden bed ready for vegetables and herbs in the future. Growing potatoes in this way on impoverished soils or clay ground enriches the soil with organic matter and breaks up the hard ground as the potatoes roots break through. It also encourages worms and micro-organisms in to the soil which continue to improve its structure.

If growing over a weedy area or grass, start by spreading a thick layer of newspaper over the ground and overlapping it so that the weeds don't shoot through. If growing on a weed-free garden bed, this layer isn't necessary. Water the newspaper as it is laid down to stop it blowing away.

Spread the Certified Seed Potatoes about 30cm apart over the ground and cover with plenty of peastraw to a thickness of 50cm. Grass clippings and compost can also be thrown on. Cover with a thick layer of sheep manure and then a generous application of Blood and Bone. Another layer of peastraw on top will get the straw to the required thickness. Water lightly. As the leaves of the plants grow, mound more peastraw over them to keep the foliage and the new potatoes completely covered. This step is crucial to prevent the new potatoes from turning green and becoming inedible.

Growing Potatoes – Vegie Patch

This couldn't be easier. Dig a mix of compost and sheep manure in to the soil and let it settle for 2 or 3 weeks. Make a shallow trench about 20cm deep and plant the seed potatoes with the main eye pointing upwards. Use a rake to back-fill. If the soil is very acid, add a little lime to the surface. To test, bring a soil sample from about 15cm below the surface in to Better Pets and Gardens and we will tell you the exact pH of that area.

As the crop forms on top of the seed potato, mound up the soil to cover the leaves. This will prevent attack by potato moth and will encourage heavier cropping.

The potatoes can be harvested after about 3 to 5 months once the foliage has died down but digging in after a few months for the baby potatoes will give you a few early meals as well. Sometimes after flowering the potatoes may develop small, tomato-like fruit which are not edible and should be removed. Discard any green skinned potatoes as these are inedible.

Better Tips:

Table potatoes should be kept in a cool, dark place. Do not refrigerate as temperatures below 10°C can cause them to blacken when cooked.

Growing Potatoes – in Tyres

Where space is an issue, this is a good option. Place one tyre on open ground and put a layer of straw inside. Place about 6 seed potatoes on the straw and then add another layer of straw. Put another tyre on top and continue layering the potatoes and straw until there are 4 or 5 tyres stacked up. Cover the top layer with about 5cm of soil and some slow release fertiliser. A little bit of organic matter such as sheep manure or compost will help. Water only lightly to prevent it collecting in the tyres and turning sour. Drilling holes in the tyres may help to prevent this.

Shoots from the potatoes will appear through the top surface and when they are about 30cm tall the top layer of straw can be removed and the potatoes harvested. Remove the top tyre and in a couple of weeks another layer of potatoes will be ready for harvest. Continue the process until there are no levels left.

Pests and Diseases

Keep an eye out for sap-sucking aphids on the young growth and treat with a low toxic product like Confidor or Natrasoap. Fungal blights can be a problem in damp weather and can be first identified by leaf spots which then lead to the entire tuber rotting. Treating with Copper oxy chloride will control this. Giving a monthly application of Potato E Manure will help to push the potatoes growth along and keeping them healthy will help withstand pests and diseases. If you do have problems with your potatoes, bring a sample of a tuber or the leaves in to Better Pets and Gardens and we will do our best to help solve the problem.