



How to grow Sweet Potatoes

How to plant

- Space your sweet potatoes roughly 12 to 18 inches apart.
- In locations where space is at a premium they may be planted as close as 8 inches apart.
- Keep in mind they will need more regular watering if planted in a square foot garden style.
- Like most plants, Sweet potatoes love compost, fish emulsion, seaweed and other naturally sourced fertilizers.
- Over fertilizing may produce lush leafing out at the expense of root size.
- As with tomato plants, a sweet potato plant will sprout roots anywhere along its stem. In warm conditions roots grow rapidly.
- Plant slips with only 1 – 2 leaves above ground as to ensuring as much soil contact with the stem as possible. Even planting at a bit of an angle parallel to the surface rather than deeper.
- Water them well in the first couple weeks after planting to encourage them to grow and establish healthy root systems that will carry them through extreme heat.

Where & When To Plant

- True heat loving plants sweet potatoes should only be set out into the garden after the soil has warmed and a reasonable threat of frost has past. In Manitoba the first week of June is optimal sweet potato planting time.
- Sweets need as much sun as your garden can offer and have a impressive ability to withstand extreme heat. Choose hot spots in the garden or even challenging places like planters that are surrounded by scorching concrete.
- Plants can really benefit from a boost of a few degrees that even a small micro climate up against your house can offer, especially on cool spring or fall nights.
- For ease of harvest as well as nicely shaped roots they should to be planted in loose soil and they do very well in sandy situations. Similarly to carrots, sweets do best in average soil rather than one too rich in much manure.
- Slight hilling of rows can make for a easier locating and harvesting tender sweet roots at the end of the season.
- Because these plants are vines they will sprawl around 4 feet from the base of the plant so it is smart to consider planting in wider rows or patches where they are able to roam freely.
- Sweet potatoes will grow roughly within twelve inches directly below the plant. Some may develop up to 18 inches away which warrants well dug soil for easier locating of tender roots.
- Good drainage is very important and sweet potatoes love to grow in sandy soil. That being said, they can also do well in heavy clay soil that so many Manitoba gardeners are familiar with. Clay tends to take longer to warm in spring so clay soil would benefit from being warmed prior to planting