

Potato CHEAT SHEET (Tahoe) Growing Potatoes in fabric containers & beds/gardens.

CONTAINERS (fabric or buckets):

Follow the sun.....

Prepare: whole or cut potatoes with at least 2 eyes each. If cut, allow to dry or callous for a day or two. Fill container with 3- 4” of soil and composted material, including pine needles & wood mater.

Plant: 3 seed potatoes about per 5-gallon bag/container, water-not soggy and cover with 3-4” soil & pat down soil. Keep extra pine needles on hand for unexpected frosts in our area. They will be fine if soil is at least 40-45 degrees at planting.

Care: when you see little green sprouts & leaves popping up 3-4”, add a bit of soil but don’t cover completely, leaves need sun and air to feed plant growth. If you see spuds peeking at the surface add soil to cover.

Water: provide even water until the leaves die/turn yellow, then stop watering for at least a week. Containers will require a bit more water overall than bed planting. Approximately:

0-30 days – minimal water, for growth. The seed potato has it handled a bit! Soaking = rot.

30-60 days – maintain even watering which is crucial for potato growth.

60-90+ - Even water, then taper off to stop. For longer storage, after foliage has died and you have stopped water, leave in soil for a week or so.

Harvest: In a container all you need to do is dump it over and uncover the treasure. Save your container or bag for next year.

Store: Put potatoes on a rack or sheet pan and allow to dry for a day, brush soil off and store in a cool, dry ventilated place (not fridge unless you let them mature in the soil).

BEDS (Raised or garden free-range):

Prepare: See containers.

Plant: Soil must be at min 45° , loose, aerated with good drainage. Amend if necessary, to have soil pH5-6., .

Plant each seed potato 6-10” apart (they don’t mind crowding) and at least 4- 6” deep.

Care & Water: Use just a bit less water than with container growing.

Harvest: When plants are brown or dead-looking, gently use a spade or kid hands (fun!) to carefully dig around 8-12” circumference of each plant.

It’s good to start with a tester plant to know how deep to search, and to ascertain if the spuds are a good size.

With growing in beds, you can harvest “new” potatoes along the way to eat that day, without damaging the plant. Just carefully feel around in the dirt for egg-sized spuds.

It won’t hurt the harvest, but you will just have fewer & potentially larger spuds.

Store: See containers.

***Remember potatoes grow horizontally from the mother (seed) potato, so don’t dig too deep. It’s ok if a little one escapes, then you know where they were grown last year and you can rotate where you plant. I always miss a few. You can also harvest one plant at a time, no need to pull up all the plants at the same time.**