



**Organic Seed Potatoes, Fingerlings,  
Onion Sets, Shallots, and Garlic**  
P.O. BOX 65, Guilford, ME 04443 · 207-717-5451  
[www.mainepotatolady.com](http://www.mainepotatolady.com) · [info@mainepotatolady.com](mailto:info@mainepotatolady.com)

## **OPEN YOUR PACKAGE IMMEDIATELY AND REMOVE THE PLANTS**

### ***When Your Slips Arrive***

Your slips are ready to plant immediately upon receipt. They may have lost their leaves and have very little root but unless they look rotten they will immediately set out growth from the 'nodes' on the stems. If you cannot plant immediately, put the slips in water in sunlight.

### ***Preparing The Soil For Sweet Potatoes***

Sweet potatoes like a fertile well-drained, well-aerated soil of any type with a pH of 5.5-6.5. Make a ridge 8" high by 12" wide; rows 36" apart. In cooler climates use black plastic mulch to increase and maintain soil temperatures over 65°.

### ***Planting Slips***

Sweet potato slips should be planted in warm (65°) soil as soon as possible after you receive your order. Plant 12-15" apart in rows 36" apart. Set plants out in the evening if the day is hot and sunny. Water well for 7-10 days after planting to encourage quick root growth.

### ***Maintenance and Cultivation***

Once sweet potato plants are established they need very little attention. If needed, cultivate shallowly to prevent root damage. Once the vines spread they will keep the weeds down. Use row covers to increase and maintain the warmth.

# **GROWING SWEET POTATOES SUCCESSFULLY**

Advice and tips from the Maine Potato Lady™

### ***Pests***

Sweet potatoes are generally not bothered much by pests; especially in the north but here are a few pests that can be bothersome.

- Voles can eat their way through your crop underground without you knowing it.
- Deer love sweet potato foliage! And we can eat it, too! Use row cover or electric fence for control.
- Wireworms can be a problem in soil that was in sod as the click beetle (adult stage of the wireworm) has a two-year cycle. Contact your extension agent on ways to control these pests as they may damage other crops you are growing.

### ***Harvest***

Harvest sweet potatoes in the 3rd or 4th month when the vines stop growing and you have sizeable roots. You can wait until frost to get the most production but harvest before the soil chills below 55° (around the 1st frost). Be careful not to chill the roots as they will not develop their sugars and store well. Minimize skinning and bruising as this leads to decay in storage. Allow roots to cure and dry before removing excess soil. Approximate yield per 10ft row is 6 to 15 lbs.

### ***Curing and Storage***

Sweet potatoes are cured to heal wounds and improve flavor by converting the starches to sugars. Cure for 10 days at 80-85° and 85-90% relative humidity. Or you can cure near your furnace at 75° for 2-3wks. Store in a cool (55-60°) area. Place in storage crates or boxes and cover with paper or heavy cloth to maintain humidity. Well-cured and properly stored sweet potatoes can last till April.

