BarterintheHood.com presents

Grow your own food

For Self-Sufficient Living – *The Real Economy*



Potatoes - Indeterminate Variety

Artwork by Esperanza J. Creeger

About BarterintheHood.com

"Everything old will become new again."

Kent Dunn – Quantum Shift Show

"If you give a hungry man a fish, you feed him for a day, but if you teach him how to fish, you feed him for a lifetime."

Lao Tsu

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"Everything Old will Become New, Again."



About BarterintheHood.com

"It's all about self-sufficient living in our local communities."

Imagine a world where access to the internet, grocery stores, and (gasp) cell phone service unexpectedly goes down for days, weeks, or even months. Urgent voices warn of a coming depression where families will be forced to become self-reliant for food, water, and basic needs.

Are we approaching a time where trade and barter will be the only option available to the general population for obtaining products and services? If access to some of the things we take for granted today are taken away tomorrow due to circumstances beyond our control will we be prepared to, at the very least, **feed our families**? No. We are not prepared – *not even close*.

This guide charts our journey to **Self-Sufficient Living** starting with growing our own food then setting up basic, street-level trade and barter systems in our local communities. Even apartment dwellers with limited space, on a back patio, can become **Self-Sufficient Citizens.** Please copy, forward, share this information with your family, friends and others. Let's begin! Esperanza J. Creeger - September 2020



"It's all about self-sufficient living in our local communities."



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	Neighborhood Outreach Contact Form
	This simple approach assumes access to the internet, cell phones, and grocery stores go down for an indefinite time period. Designated Neighborhood Block Co-Leaders may copy and distribute this notice to neighbors in the local community. While we <i>currently</i> have internet access, please print this document today. Prepare your gardens now. Who knows what may come in the days to follow
	BARTER IN THE HOOD OUTREACH
	Hello Neighbor. Do you have a product or service you wish to trade or
	barter? Please attend our free Neighborhood Trade and Barter Market Day!
	DATE:
	WHERE:
	i l
	BRING: Produce, product, service, trade, etc. & your own small table/chair
	set up.
	SEE YOU THERE, NEIGHBOR!
	www.barterinthehood.com© September 2020 Esperanza J. Creeger





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HOW DO WE GET STARTED?

- 1. Host a get-together with your close neighbors, especially with those who resonate with the intention and purpose of contingency planning in a world turned upside-down after a global electronic communications meltdown. Dire circumstances could lead to disruptions in other community aspects (water, food, transportation, etc.).
- 2. Post a notice to your Social Media about contingency planning.
- 3. Conduct virtual meetings via Zoom or Google.
- 4. Select 2-3 Co-leaders (nominate yourself). Those Co-leaders will delegate actionable parts of the plan to the community volunteers (distribution of communication materials, for example).
- 5. Develop an action plan for continuing communication within your local community in the event of a fatal electronic communications breakdown.
- 6. Identify community members who possess specialized skills (ham radio operator, military intelligence, security, botanists, medical pros, teacher, butcher, baker, candlestick maker, etc.)







Nutrient-Dense

Easy to Grow

Long Shelf Life

May be grown on a small patio with full sun

Indeterminate main crop potatoes grow in multiple layers on a single stem, produce larger potatoes, and the potatoes store well for many months.

Determinate potatoes grow fast, grow in one layer, produce smaller potatoes, and do not store as well compared to the Indeterminate type potato.

Potato seeds with 1-inch "chits"...



- Potato Seeds with 2-3 healthy chits per potato for planting. Plant 2 3 potato seeds per grow bag /bucket with the most robust chits pointed up. Select Indeterminate/Main Crop varieties for best long-term storage and higher yields. Refer to the "Plant Varieties" section.
- 1-2 chits per potato seed will produce larger potatoes where 3+ chits per potato will produce smaller potatoes.



Potato Seeds with White "Chits"

Potato Seed propagation is easy. Place whole potatoes in:

 1) Empty eggshell carton reservoirs (with potato eyes pointing up). Set the carton in front of a window with indirect sunlight or in a dark place. After a few weeks, check for chit development. Cut the potatoes into golfball sized sections, making sure each section has robust chits. Air-dry the sections for 3 days to form a callous around the exposed cut (the callous protects the potato from bacteria which can contribute to rot), then the seeds will be ready for direct planting.

OR

 2) Plastic bag. Place smaller, whole potatoes in a plastic bag covered in damp mulch or aged compost. Check for chits after 5-10 days. Be careful not to break off the chits. Smaller potato seeds may be planted whole, chits pointed up.

- 5-gallon (minimum) to 10-gallon size cloth grow bags or BPAfree plastic, preferably black, buckets or black grow bags. If using plastic buckets, check for the recycle logo ("2" = food grade). I prefer the cloth grow bags for natural drainage and ease of use, especially at harvest time.
- Quantity: 5 buckets per Family, minimum. You may barter any excess produce with neighbors in your local community.
- If using plastic buckets, be sure to drill 5 drain holes, then line the bucket bottom with a circular piece of burlap.



- **Quality Soil Mix** loose and free draining. Use:
- 1/3 garden soil (mixed with Sphagnum Peat Moss and Garden Sand). Nutrient-rich, pesticide-free, soil existing in a garden bed is better quality soil compared to sterile, sweet, high pH, store-bought soil (that may contain sticks, rocks, and other unknown elements). Check for available free soil through your local landscape company or in your local forest, if available.
- <u>Farmyard Manure</u> well aged and odorless. Use:
- 1/3 well-aged Farmyard Manure (cow or horse)
- Organic Compost store bought or, preferably, homemade compost (refer to the "Composting" section). Use:
- 1/3 Aged Compost



- Plant Food Choose:
- Blood Fish Bone Meal, OR
- Pelleted Potato Feed, OR
- Trifecta Plus Organic Fertilizer

Whichever you select, use ¼ cup max, per potato plant planted, mixed into the soil.

After planting, mix in two Tablespoons **Pelletized Sulfur** into the topsoil to combat scab.

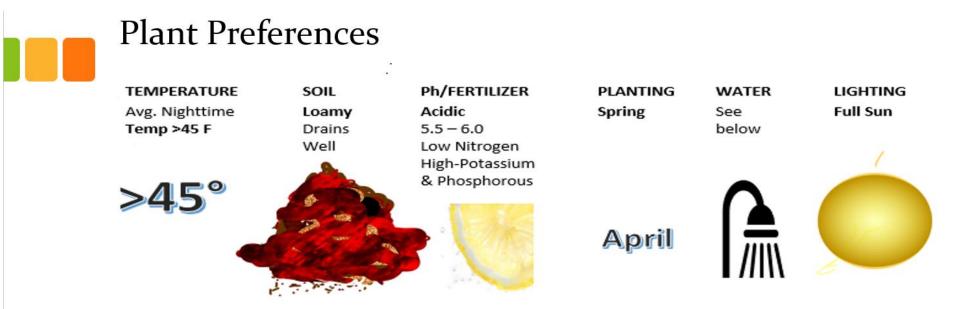
MIX TOGETHER IN EQUAL PARTS



1/3 Part Aged, Odorless Farmyard Manure
1/3 Part Organic Aged Compost
1/3 Part Peat Moss mixed with garden soil, Perlite

Sprinkling of Perlite Blood/Fish/Bone Meal (or Trifecta Plus or Pelleted Potato Feed) – Use ¼ cup per Potato Plant Potassium Fertilizer

Straw Mulch (sugar cane, barley, or alfalfa hay) for topping off later on



Water: Every 1 – 2 days in hot weather, or 3-4 days in cooler weather. Be careful not to overwater; overwatering will cause blight/rot. Water from plant base, not overhead, and not in the evening.
RULE OF THUMB: Stick your index finger deep into the dirt. If it feels dry, water. If still moist, don't water.
Feeding: Low nitrogen, high phosphorous, high potassium. NPK mix (nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium)
5-10-10, 8-24-24. Avoid excess nitrogen as it promotes top leaf growth to the detriment of tuber growth.
Harvest: 16 to 20 weeks / 4 to 5 months

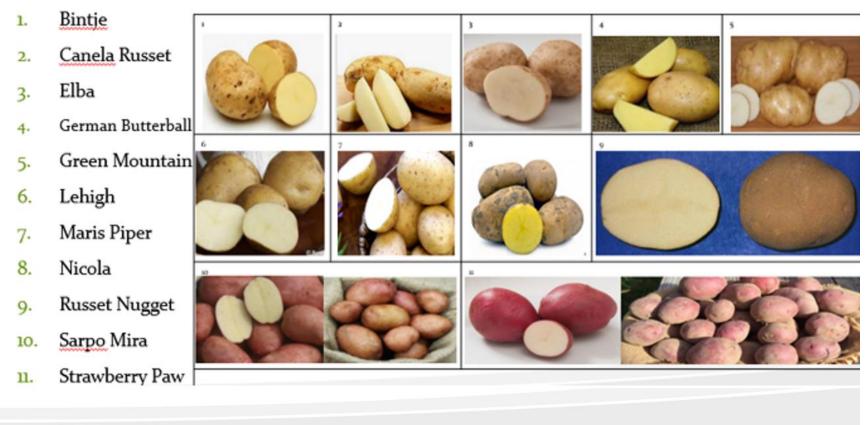


*** IMPORTANT NOTES ***

- Greater yields are produced in food-safe, dark-colored plastic buckets or cloth containers (versus in-ground hill planting). Check with your local bakery for food-safe 5gallon buckets.
- Dark-colored containers absorb more heat and limit sunlight from reaching the growing potatoes as sunlight may turn the tuber green. Green potatoes are inedible (due to poisonous alkaloid development).
- Container-grown potatoes are easier to harvest.
- Set the filled containers on **raised platforms**, like wooden crates. Do not allow the container bottom to touch the ground to avoid bug and other critter infestation.
- Buy organic, GMO-free potato seeds from a reputable nursery. Commercially-grown, store-bought potatoes, may have growth inhibitors sprayed on them (to extend store shelf life). For seed potato propagation purposes, avoid commercially grown, grocery store potatoes.
- Nutrient-rich garden soil may be sourced through your local landscaping company.



Some Plant Varieties - INDETERMINATE POTATO TYPES



Planting Time!

Mix soil components in ratios referenced on page 20.

Loamy Garden Soil

Aged Farm Manure

Organic Compost

Garden Sand to better aerate the soil

Potato Fertilizer

Shovel blended mix into your grow bag, or food-grade BPA-free black bucket, to a depth of 4 inches.

NOTE: If using plastic buckets, drill 5 drainage holes first, then line bucket bottom with a circular piece of burlap.

Planting Time!

Gather your potato seeds. Chits should be well-developed and around 1" tall. Remove the smallest chits, leaving only 2-3 of the most robust chits per potato seed.

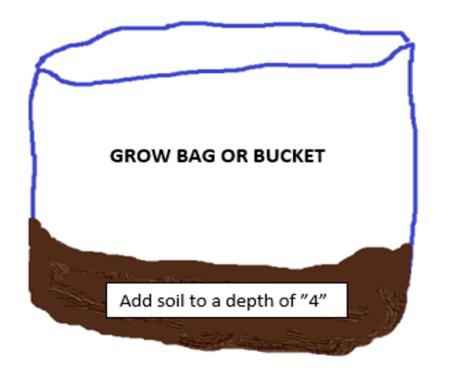
2 Chits per potato seed produce larger potatoes

3+ Chits per potato seed produce smaller potatoes

Spacing – 8" apart, chits facing up.

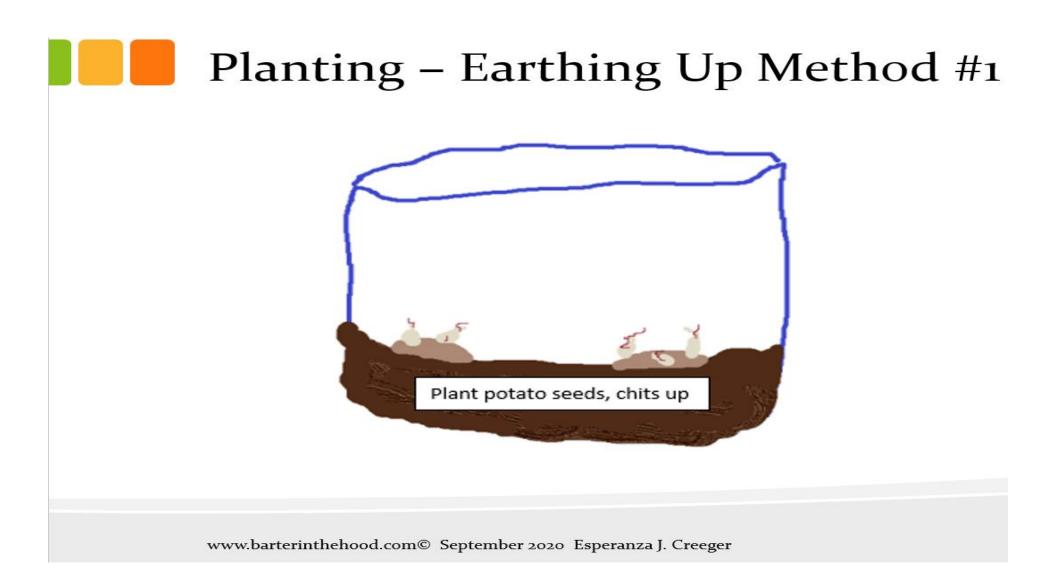
Depending on the dimensions of your container, plant potato seeds, spaced 8" apart, chits facing up, in the soil. **Refer to the diagram on the next page**.

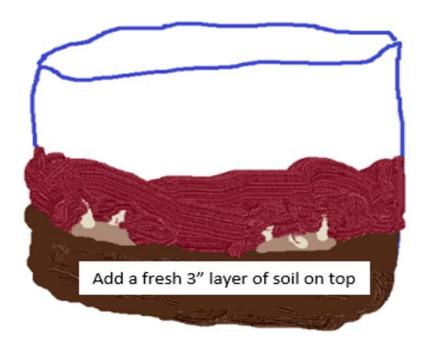
Carefully cover the potato seeds with 3" soil. Be gentle – do not break off the chits. Water heavily. Then, water every 1-2 days (hot weather) or 2-3 days (cooler days).

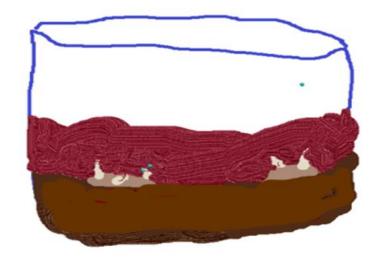


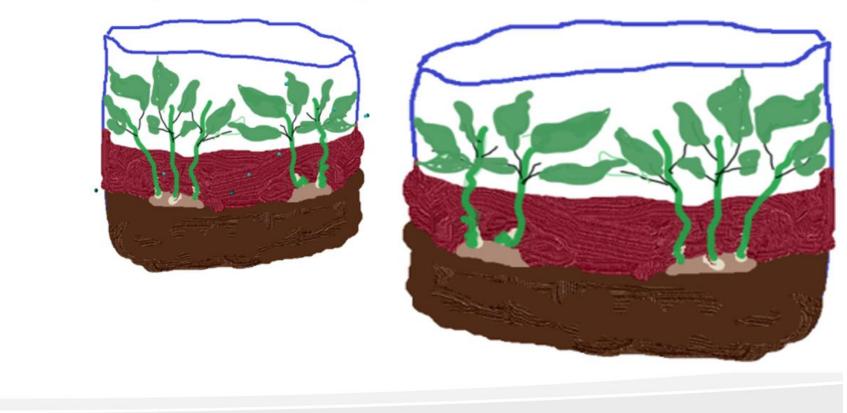
Earthing Up

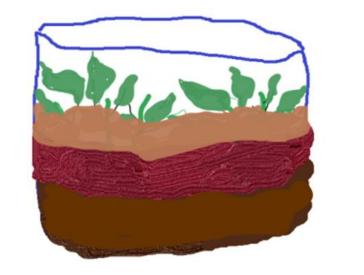
- 1) Gives tubers space to produce more tubers
- 2) Increases the length of the potato stems
- Protects developing potatoes from light (which can turn the potatoes green – poisonous).

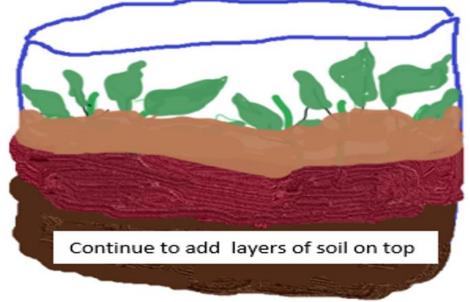








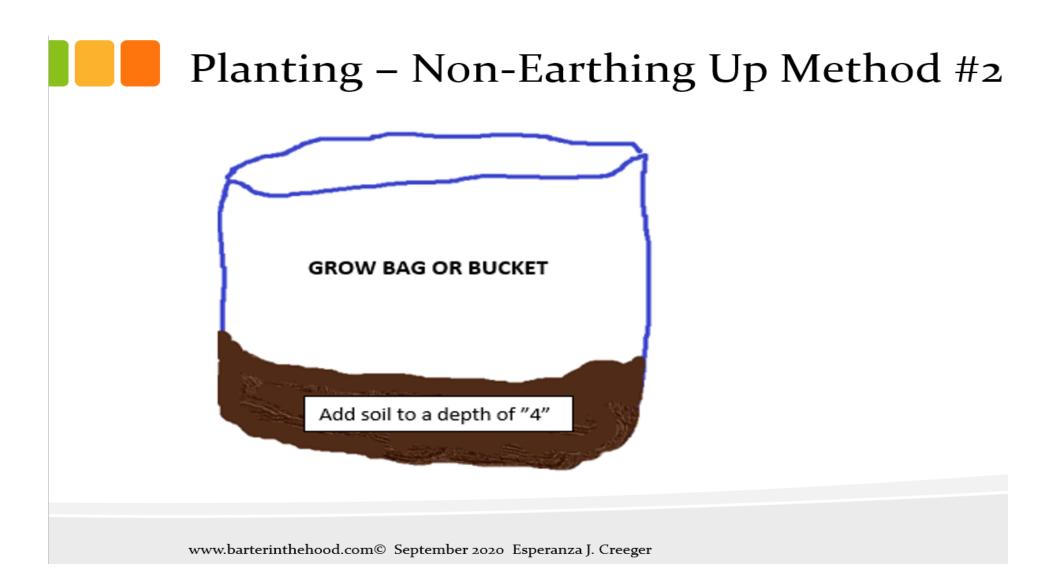


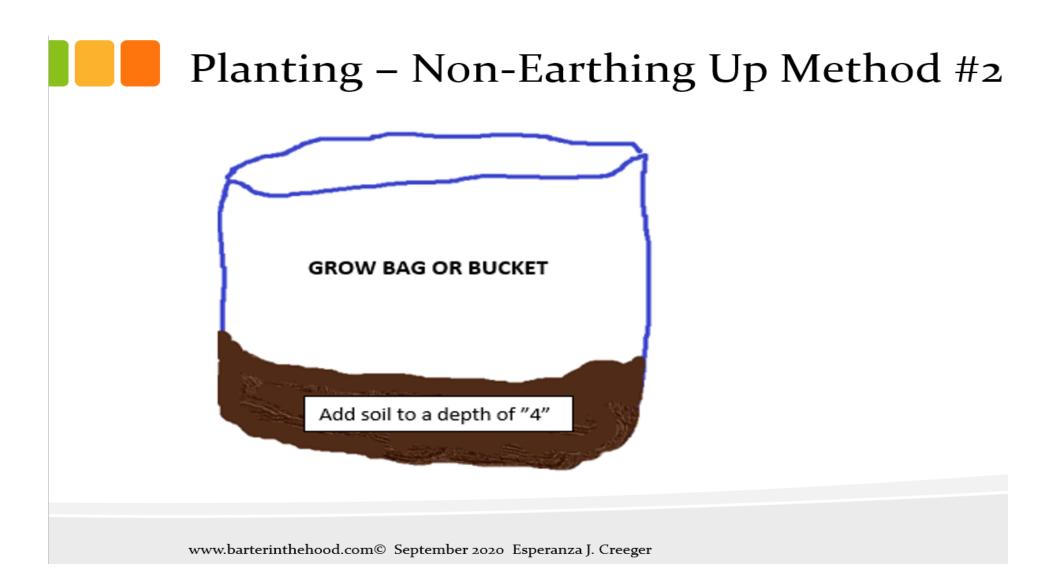


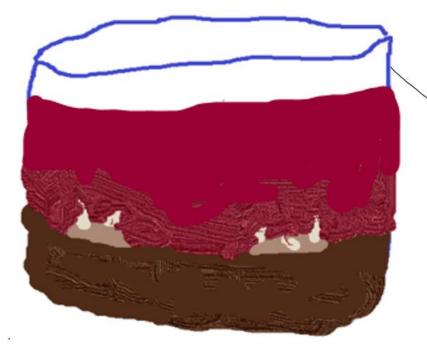


Once the top is reached, cover with straw to prevent sunlight from reaching the tubers, lest they turn green (poisonous).

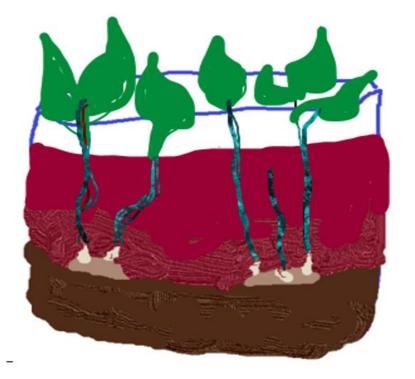
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After planting the potato seeds, add more soil to fill the container but leave a 4-inch space between the <u>top soil</u> level and the container rim.



Once the top potato leaves break through the surface, and grow to a height of approx. 8", add more top soil, then add a thick layer of rape straw to protect the surface level tubers from sunlight. Light will turn the tubers green (inedible).



Set the filled containers on **raised platforms**, like wooden crates. Do not allow the container bottom to touch the ground to avoid bug and other critter infestation.





Set the filled containers on **raised platforms**. Do not allow the container bottom to touch the ground to deter bug and other critter infestation.



Maintenance

- Regular heavy watering to moist soil, not sodden, (up to 1-2" water/wk) every 1-2 days in hot weather or every 3-4 days in cooler weather. Drain well.
- Water from the base of plant do not water upper leaves.
- **Do NOT allow sunlight to reach the tubers**; sunlight will turn the potato green, TOXIC, and thus, inedible.
- **Remove early flower blooms** to ensure plant focuses its energy on growing the tubers and not propagating itself.
- Discard Seed Pods (look like small green tomatoes) for they are poisonous to humans and animals.

Maintenance

- Feed every two weeks with a Fish/Kelp Seaweed liquid fertilizer.
- Insect Control Use natural 100% cold-pressed Organic Neem Oil watered down. Recipe: 2 Tbls Neem Oil, ¼ tsp dishwashing soap, <u>1</u> gallon water. Combine in plastic sprayer. Spritz under-foliage (underneath leaf), then spritz leaf tops.
- Blight Control In a blender, add 600 mg of <u>uncoated</u> aspirin tablets to 1-gallon water. Spritz the lower and upper leaves every two weeks. Some potato varieties are blight resistant (Sarpo Mira, for example).
- Scab Control After planting, add two Tablespoons Pelletized Sulfur to the top-soil to combat scab.

My Potato Patch (if I can do this, so can you).



Harvesting (16 – 20 Weeks/4-5 Months)

- Harvest when the vines begin to droop and have died back. The tops will look sickly.
- **Cut off the haulms**, wait 2 days, then harvest/dig out the potatoes. Haulms that are free from disease/mildew may be shredded then added to your compost bin.
- **Tip over container** and pick out the potato tubers.
- Green Potatoes unfortunately, light reached the potatoes; discard for they are poisonous. Throw out – do <u>not</u> add to compost pile.
- Cure the potatoes Leave unwashed potatoes on the dry ground to harden off for a few hours. Move to a shed or cool, dark place, place on a wire rack to cure off the skin a little more (for long-term storage).
- NEVER WASH POTATOES DESTINED FOR BARTER OR WINTER/ LONG-TERM STORAGE. Dust off the dirt by hand. Water wash only when ready to eat.

Harvesting

- Collect the egg-sized potatoes, wrap each one in newspaper, set on a rack or carton, cover with burlap, then store for next year's seed potatoes in a cool, dry place. OR, place in a 5-gallon bucket filled with slightly moist sand. Store in a cool place (50 degrees Fahrenheit / 10 degrees Celsius) until next year's planting.
- Add shredded haulms (disease and mildew free) to your compost pile
- Reuse the soil

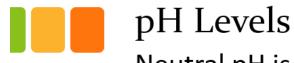
Cutting branches and haulms into smaller pieces for your compost bin can be a chore and quite hard on your hands. I use a mini-wood chipper to make quick work of it, then dump the shredded material directly into my compost bin.

pH Levels

Potatoes prefer a soil pH between 4.8 to 6.5 (more acidic). Neutral pH is 7.0.

My store-bought soil is typically on the more alkaline side (sweet). If your soil is too sweet, you may use natural methods to lower the pH. **This process takes <u>time</u> and you may not see the full results for 1-2 seasons.** The ideal time to amend soil is in the Fall.

- Rainwater
- Vinegar
- Compost Tea
- Coffee/Tea Water
- Lemon Juice
- Sphagnum Peat
- Aged Compost
- Potassium Alum Sulfate (5-10 grams per Liter water, once a month)



Neutral pH is 7.0.

If your soil is too sour (acidic pH < 6.5), you may add finely ground limestone, or wood ash (work a thin layer into the soil 2-3 months prior to planting or in the Winter).

- Limestone
- Wood Ash

About ash, be sure to use natural wood ash, not coal ash. Coal ash is toxic.



pH levels range from 0 (highly acidic) to 14 (highly alkaline). Most vegetable garden plants prefer a slightly acidic soil pH, anywhere between 5.5 to 6.5.

Buy a pH meter to test your soil **PRIOR TO** planting! pH test kits may be purchased from your local garden store and online. Amend the soil to either acidy or alkalize the soil to the ideal pH, then plant your goodies. Be sure companion plants share the same pH requirements!!! For example, tomatoes and peppers share similar pH profiles (next page).

The soil pH match to your plant variety can mean the difference between a SPINDLY

FAILED harvest and a **BOUNTIFUL BEAUTIFUL** one to make you smile.

CROP	Ideal pH Range	CROP	Ideal pH Range
Asparagus Beans (Pole) Beets Blueberries Broccoli Cabbage Carrots Cauliflower Chive Corn (Sweet) Cucumber Garlic	6.0-8.0 6.0-7.5 6.0-7.5 4.0-6.0 6.0-7.0 6.0-7.0 5.5-7.0 5.5-7.5 6.0-7.0 5.8-7.0 5.8-7.0 5.5-7.0 5.5-7.0	Kale Lemon Lettuce Melons Peppers (Sweet) Peppers (Habanero) Potatoes Pumpkins Spinach Strawberries Sweet Potatoes Tomatoes	6.0-7.5 6.0-7.5 6.0-7.0 6.0-6.5 5.5-7.0 6.2-7.0 4.8-6.5 5.5-7.5 6.0-7.5 5.5-6.5 5.5-6.5 5.5-7.5 5.5-7.5

Source: The Old Farmer's Almanac, article SOIL PH LEVELS FOR PLANTS by Catherine Boeckmann, August 13, 2019

Ideal pH Range	CROP	Ideal pH Range	CROP
4.0-6.0	Blueberries	6.0-6.5	Melons
4.8-6.5	Potatoes	6.0-7.0	Broccoli
5.5-6.5	Strawberries	6.0-7.0	Cabbage
5.5-6.5	Sweet Potatoes	6.0-7.0	Chive
5.5-7.0	Carrots	6.0-7.0	Lettuce
5.5-7.0	Cucumber	6.0-7.5	Beans (Pole)
5.5-7.0	Peppers (Sweet)	6.0-7.5	Beets
5.5-7.5	Cauliflower	6.0-7.5	Kale
5.5-7.5	Pumpkins	6.0-7.5	Lemon
5.5-7.5	Tomatoes	6.0-7.5	Spinach
5.5-8.0	Garlic	6.0-8.0	Asparagus
5.8-7.0	Corn (Sweet)	6.2-7.0	Peppers (Habanero)

Source: The Old Farmer's Almanac, article SOIL PH LEVELS FOR PLANTS by Catherine Boeckmann, August 13, 2019

My pH Planting Planner

Crop	рН	Lighting	Temperature	Misc. Notes
Sweet Corn	5.8 -	Full	Avg Soil	Needs 110-120 growing days
Corn	7.0	Sun	Temp =>60 F	Plant Date: Harvest Date:

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"All Things Old will Become New Again"



About Composting...in General

Create your own organic compost (aka, "Black Gold"). Compost is a great soil <u>conditioner</u> and your plants will LOVE the nutrient rich, sweet-smelling earth, chock-full-of microorganisms. Listen closely to hear your plants "cheer"! Well-aged compost is an absolute must ingredient when building your new garden. I produce my own compost in a closed compost bin; follow these hard and fast rules:

- Balance the Greens to the Browns (2:1 Ratio Greens to Browns)
- Cut large items into smaller pieces for greater surface-area contact to accelerate the fermenting process
- Turn your compost bin daily or use a pitchfork to toss/turn to ensure adequate aeration
- Smell your compost regularly. If it smells sweet, yer' gooood. If it smells slightly rank, adjust your green to brown ratio by adding more browns. If too dry, add more greens and water to a damp texture (like a damp sponge not sopping wet)
- Be knowledgeable about items appropriate to add to your compost bin. The wrong "adds" can ruin it all.



Kitchen Scrap / Coffee Grounds Collector



Raw Fruits Raw Vegetables Coffee Grounds Loose Tea Grounds Crushed Egg Shells



THE GREENS - NJTROGEN

Kitchen Scraps like Raw Fruit and Vegetable detritus, coffee grounds, loose tea grounds, green grass clippings, finely crushed egg shells, chicken manure

THE BROWNS - CARBON

Garden Trash like plant cuttings, twigs, and branches that have been run through a compact <u>wood chipper</u>, dried fallen leaves, dried grass clippings, straw, wood chips (untreated), used potting soil, wood ash (<u>not</u> charcoal ash)

Other Items like horse bedding sawdust pellets, shredded paper (not glossy or colored), cardboard that has been run through a micro-shredder (be sure to remove any plastic or tape from the cardboard prior to shredding)

Ratio: use 6" Browns for every 2" Greens

The Superstar in my Garden – Mini. Wood. Chipper.



This Workhorse Tool makes quick work of

Garden Trimmings Small to Medium Sized Tree Branches Dried Haulms Cornstalks Charred Natural Wood

Not ideal for wet Kitchen Scraps

If composting, do not shred pernicious weeds, diseased plants, blighted plants, or Black Walnut tree bark/branches.

It Smells Like. . . Victory. Sweet!





About Composting...the <u>Do Not Add</u> List

- black walnut tree stems or branches
- bread
- charcoal ash •
- cheese •
- citrus peels
- colored paper
- commercial fertilizer
- cooked food
- diseased/blighted plant detritus
- fish
- garlic
- glossy paper
- humán or pet poop
- kitty litter
- meat
- milk
- newspaper
- oils
- onions
- plastic
- produce labels (fruit/veggies)
- walnuts
- weeds or other invasive, pernicious plants •





A Must Have: Garden Gnome



Just a Little More Garden Magic ...



Recipes Old-Timey Potato Irish Bread

Ingredients

- 3/4 cup cooked mashed potatoes boil potatoes, mash them to a mashed potato consistency
- 3/4 cup raw grated potatoes peel the skins, then grate, drain grated potatoes of liquid
- 1 egg
- 1 egg white
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 3/4 cup milk
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan
- 1/2 Teaspoon garlic powder
- 3 1/4 cups flour
- 1 1/2 Tablespoons baking powder (I prefer "aluminum-free" baking powder)
- 1 Teaspoon salt

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Source: https://bunnyswarmoven.net/irish-potato-bread/

Instructions

•Place the mashed potatoes and raw grated potatoes in a large mixing bowl, whisk together until well combined. Add the egg, egg white, grated Parmesan cheese, garlic powder, milk and oil to the bowl, whisk until completely incorporated.

•In a separate large bowl, combine the flour, baking powder and salt, stir to combine. Stir the dry ingredients, into the wet ingredients until a soft dough is formed. Lightly flour your <u>counter top</u>, place the soft dough on the floured counter top and kneed 6 -7 times. Gather the dough up and form a ball, place it in an oiled <u>8 inch</u> cast iron pan. Using a serrated knife (a steak knife worked well) cut an x on the top of the dough. Bake at 375 degrees for 45-55 minutes. It should be golden brown on top. Cool on a wire rack about 10 minutes. Run a butter knife around the edges of the pan to release the bread , remove from pan, place on a cooling rack to cool completely before slicing.





Recipes Smashed Parmesan Potatoes

Source: <u>https://bunnyswarmoven.net/irish-potato-bread/</u>

- 2 1/2 pounds small potatoes (about 12)
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 tablespoons freshly grated Parmesan Cheese

Instructions

Place the small potatoes in a <u>large saucepan</u>. Fill the pan with enough water to cover the potatoes. Place the pan on the stove over high heat. Bring the water in the pan up to a boil, once the water has boiled, reduce the heat to medium and cook the potatoes for about 20 minutes or until the potatoes are tender. Remove the pan from the stove and drain the water from the pan and let the potatoes cool slightly.

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Instructions

Preheat your oven to 450 degrees. Coat two cookie sheets with vegetable oil or spray them with non-stick cooking spray. Place the cooked potatoes on the baking sheets, six potatoes to a sheet. Smash each potato with the back of a large spoon. Gently press down on each potato until it's smashed and about 1/2 inch thick, but not in pieces. You want the potato to still be in one piece after you smash it.

Combine the melted butter, garlic, parsley, salt and pepper in a small bowl. Mix the ingredients together with a spoon until they are well combined. Brush the butter mixture over each potato with a pastry brush. After each potato is coated with the butter mixture, sprinkle the potatoes with grated Parmesan Cheese. Place the cookie sheets in your preheated <u>450 degree</u> oven and bake for about 20 minutes or until the potatoes are golden and crispy. Serve immediately. Place any uneaten potatoes in a covered container and store them in the refrigerator.



Resources – My Faves!

Props to these amazing Teachers:

- EPIC Gardening: <u>https://www.youtube.com/user/EpicGardening</u>
- Hollis and Nancy's Homestead: <u>https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPVn9bDOp3DfMMKjPrEsIOw</u>
- Home Grown Veg: <u>https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPrZIwOWNvem_IAuGgmIWlg</u>
- Learn Organic Gardening at Growing Your Greens: <u>https://www.youtube.com/user/growingyourgreens</u>
- MI Gardener: <u>https://www.youtube.com/user/MIgardener</u>
- Next Level Gardening: <u>https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCcJceGUaevGIP7s2xzL9akA</u>
- Self-Sufficient Me: <u>https://www.youtube.com/user/markyv69</u>
- Simplify Gardening: <u>https://www.youtube.com/user/knightreplica</u>
- The Gardening Channel with James Prigioni: <u>https://www.youtube.com/user/ThePermaculturGarden</u>
- The Rusted Gardener: <u>https://www.youtube.com/user/pilarchik</u> Book: Grow Food for Free by Huw Richards

https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/617484/grow-food-for-free-by-huw-richards/

Resources – My Faves!

Just for Fun

Check out my friend's new YouTube Channel

Casa Con Migo

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPj-K2knbLpSO28BkJbZWqQ

(and yes, some gardening is involved)

Resources – U.S.

Cloth Grow Bags



VIVOSUN 5-Pack 10 Gallon Plant Grow Bags, Premium Series Thichkened Non-Woven Aeration Fabric Pots w/Handles - Reinforced Weight Capacity & Extremely Durable (Black)



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End of Day Reflection and Contemplation





Thank you

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grow!



Namaste,

Esperanza J. Creeger