



## Chitting & Growing Potatoes

Most gardeners do not aim to be self-sufficient when it comes to potatoes. However, given a little space in the corner of a frost-free greenhouse a healthy crop can be produced in about 100 days.

Today, the potato is the staple food of two-thirds of the world's population, a key source of vitamin C and carbohydrate, second only to the egg as a source of protein, and the most efficient crop in the world, producing more energy per acre per day than any other.

Start your crop by ordering first early types. As soon as they have arrived they require "chitting", a process, which encourages them to produce short, stout, green, shoots from the "eyes" on the dormant tuber.

Place them in a tray lined with paper, then store in a light, frost-free place. Once the shoots are about 2cm long (in about a month's time) the tuber can be transferred to a planter/barrel positioned in the corner of the glasshouse.

Select five/six tubers and plant to the bottom of the container. Then, as the leaves push through the compost surface, cover with more compost.

Continue, until the container has been filled to the top with compost. The result is a very early crop (as early as May) of small firm new potatoes that bustle with rich earth flavours.

We recommend that you try NICOLA variety, a beautiful pale yellow skin, great for salads and general boiling. Don't overlook the award winning variety PICASSO produces lots of uniform-sized round tubers, very resistant to eelworm, exceptional smooth skin, with shallow eyes, perfect for showing.