

# »How to grow potatoes in straw«

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Due to increasing population worldwide, urban gardening is on the rise hence potatoes can be grown in straw.

The first step in growing potatoes in straw is collecting the straw that you will use to grow the potatoes. Avoid using hay if you can because it may contain weed seeds that can sprout in your garden when used to plant potatoes.

## Other considerations

Buy certified disease free sweet potato seed and plant. If you are experiencing a short season, plant the fast growing determinate potato varieties that produce one smaller harvest in 60 to 90 days.

If you have a longer season, choose indeterminate potato varieties that give higher yields but will take a little longer to mature.

It is important to first bring the potatoes out of dormancy before planting them because planting them whilst they are still in the dormancy state may cause them to rot.

To break the dormancy, place the potatoes in a warm dark location for 2 to 3 days and then put them where the temperatures are between 15 to 21 degrees celsius , where they are exposed to light.

## Planting

After the potatoes have sprouted, you can cut them into pieces if they are larger than an egg. When its time to plant, plant only the potatoes with the sprouted eyes.

Prepare your soil by ensuring that your it has a pH of between 5 to 6 and has adequate calcium, potassium and phosphorous but not too much nitrogen because excess nitrogen leads to vegetative growth and delays tuber formation.

Plant one potato per hole and cover using a thick layer of mulch. Sprouts appear through the straw. Water about once a

week incase there are no rains.

Take off the plants and the straw to harvest the straws and cure them.