This Business Called Agriculture
Wisconsin Potatoes

How Do They Grow?

Potatoes are tubers and grow underground from cut-up pieces of potatoes called a seed potato. Each piece has to have at least one “eye” to sprout. Potatoes emerge from the ground 4-6 weeks after planting. The plants grow quickly and will begin to grow tubers, called potatoes. The potatoes must be thoroughly watered and monitored for their essential plant nutrients and any disease or insects. In Wisconsin, potatoes are harvested from August to October. Potatoes can be stored in a cool, dark, well ventilated place for several months.

Potato History

The Western world was not introduced to the potato until the late 1540's when the Spanish conquistadors tramped through Peru in search of gold. It took nearly four decades for the potato to spread to the rest of Europe.

Eventually, agriculturalists in Europe found potatoes easier to grow and cultivate than other staple crops.

Potatoes had been introduced to the United States several times throughout the 1600's but were not widely known until 1719 when they were planted in New Hampshire by Scottish-Irish immigrants and from there spread across the nation.

In the 1850's most Americans considered the potato as food for animals rather than for humans until an effective fungicide against potato blight was found in 1883.

Today, the potato is so common it is taken for granted. We forget that it has only been with us for a few hundred years.

For more potato history visit —
www.wisconsinpotatoes.com/consumer/history.

Grow Your Own Potato

Leave a potato in a warm, dry, well lit place to sprout. Once sprouted, cut potato into pieces making sure there is an “eye” or sprout for every piece.

In a 10-12 inch pot, with a small hole in the bottom, place a saucer or plate under the pot. Fill the pot with about ½ inch of small stones for drainage. Fill the pot with soil about half-way up the pot.

Bury the potato piece (1 per pot) about 6 inches down with the sprouts pointing upwards. Cover with soil. Water thoroughly.

Place pot on a sunny windowsill or table. Keep moist. Watch potatoes grow!
Wisconsin Crops - Potatoes

Get Potato Power! With Healthy Mr. Potato Head™

Hey Kids!

Did You Know Potatoes?
- Only Have 100 Calories
- No Fat or Sodium
- Good Source of Potassium
- High in Vitamin C
- Good Source of Fiber

NUTRITION KNOW-HOW CROSSWORD

WORD BANK
Calories
Calcium
Grams
Nutrition
Daily
Potassium
Serving
Mineral
Fats
Healthy
Sodium
Fiber

ACROSS
1. Too much of this can aggravate high blood pressure.
3. DV stands for ______ Value.
6. One 5.3 oz. Potato equals 148 ______ of this metric measure.
9. How much energy we get from food is measure by these.
10. Calcium is not a vitamin. It’s a ______.
11. The ______ Facts Label is on all packaged food.

DOWN
1. This tells the amount of food typically eaten at one time.
2. Health experts recommend we eat less than 30% of calories from these.
4. ______ builds strong bones and teeth.
5. This mineral, found in potatoes, can help maintain a normal blood pressure.
7. With the skin on, a potato is packed with ______ that aids in digestion.
8. Eating foods low in refined sugars and high in vitamins and minerals is a ______ choice.

Easy & Delicious Potato Recipe
To Make at Home (with and adult)

POTATO PIZZA
You’ll need a Baking Potato such as Wisconsin Russet or white potato. Scrub and rinse.
MICROWAVE DIRECTIONS:
Pierce potato with fork to allow steam to escape. Microwave on High for about 5 minutes. Let stand for 3 minutes.
Potato will be very hot. Use oven mitt to remove.
OVEN DIRECTIONS:
Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
Pierce potato with fork to allow steam to escape.
Bake 45 to 60 minutes, or until potato is easily pierced with fork.
Potato will be very hot. Use oven mitt to remove.
TO SERVE:
Cut potato into half inch slices
Cover with favorite toppings such as tomato sauce, cheese, mushrooms, green pepper, onions, black olives, pepperoni or other cooked meat.
ENJOY!
Wisconsin Crops

Not all crops are food! What do you see growing around your house, on golf courses, in parks, at school, on ball fields and just about everywhere you look?

You can call it grass, lawn, turfgrass, or turf. It is made up of the green leaves above the ground and the root system below the ground. Turf not only looks nice, but provides many healthy benefits to us and our environment.

Like trees, turf absorbs carbon dioxide and releases oxygen which people and animals need to breathe.

Turf also catches rainfall. This is good for two reasons. First, the turf holds the water in place so it doesn’t runoff or cause erosion. Secondly, as water flows through the grass and its roots it is cleaned before it reaches the underground aquifer. This is important as many of us get our drinking water from these aquifers.

Lawns also act like air conditioners and filters, cooling us down in the summertime and catching dust and dirt released in the air.

In Wisconsin, we have 350,000 acres of turfgrass. Over 33,000 people work in Wisconsin’s turf industry growing and caring for our green space.

1. Draw a community in the grid below. Your community must have:
   ~ a school
   ~ 5 houses
   ~ a park
   ~ a cemetery
   ~ a store
   ~ a hospital
   ~ a farm

2. Color in green all the areas where turf would be.

3. What fraction of your community is turf:
Wisconsin Crops

Complete this tree maze by following the sap from the roots to the collection pail.

Bu-z-z-z-y
Honey Bees!
Wisconsin beekeepers have 70,000 colonies of honeybees. Each colony has one queen bee and up to 50,000 worker bees. During the summer, honeybees travel about 55,000 miles back and forth to the hive to gather enough nectar for one pound of honey. An entire colony will produce up to 200 pounds of honey each year. Bees are very important because during their travels they pollinate farmer's crops. Some crops need to be pollinated before they can produce fruit, seeds, or grain.

Mmm, Mmm ... Pancakes and maple syrup! Maple syrup is made from sap. The sap is the liquid inside of plants which carries food to the leaves and branches. In the spring sap travels or runs from the roots up into the trunk and branches of trees. At this time, farmers tap the maple trees. The tap is a small spigot or faucet which is pounded into the trunk. The sap then runs out of the tap and is collected in a pail, bag or hose. Farmers then cook the sap, boiling away the water, to make maple syrup. It takes about 40 gallons of sap to make one gallon of maple syrup. Wisconsin ranks 4th in the U.S. in maple syrup production.
Wisconsin Crops

Wisconsin's forests are another important crop to our state. Wisconsin trees provide us with toothpicks, postage stamps, apples, walnuts, medicine, rayon, phonograph records, sponges, and much more. In fact, we are the #1 producer of paper in the United States.

Wisconsin has two types of trees. We have trees which grow leaves in the warm months and drop their leaves in the winter, as well as trees that keep their green needles all year round. Can you guess which ones are called "evergreens"?

Be a tree detective. Use the pictures below to identify which trees are around your home and school. Circle those that you find. Write a conclusion sentence from your observations.
Wisconsin Crops

Christmas trees are an important crop for many Wisconsin farmers. Over 70,000 acres are planted in trees. The most common species include Balsam Fir, Fraser Fir, White Pine, Scotch Pine, Blue Spruce, White and Black Hills Spruce, Canaan Fir and Concolor Fir.

Growing a Christmas tree takes years of care. The planning begins in the winter, when the farmer decides where he will plant his new trees, and orders the seedlings.

When spring comes, growers prepare fields for planting. They also dig trees to put in people's lawns. The trees must grow from 8 to 15 years before they are ready to be cut as a Christmas tree.

Each year, the growing trees are fertilized, and protected from weeds, insects, and animals. The new branches grow to different lengths, so they are cut to a lovely shape, which is called shearing. If the summer is dry, some farmers may use irrigation to water their trees.

As autumn nears, the best trees are tagged with a special colored ribbon and then later cut for customers. After they are cut, shaking the tree on a special machine removes the 2-year-old needles inside. If the tree goes to a retail lot, the trees are first baled, then loaded on a truck, and shipped to the tree lot. They are set up for you to come and pick one out to buy, take home and enjoy!

Some farms are choose and cut farms where you go out in the field and cut your own tree. This may be your family tradition and a way to have fun.

One acre of trees produces oxygen for 18 people and gives a home to many kinds of wildlife and birds. The tree roots keep the soil from eroding, or washing away. Trees are a renewable resource that we all can enjoy!

Use the timeline below and add what activities Christmas tree farmers do each year – activities are underlined in the story.

Jan------------------April------------------July-------------------October-------------------December