

Sweet Potatoes

GROWING INSTRUCTIONS

On receipt of plug plants, plant into 10cm (4") pots and grow on the plants in a warm greenhouse or indoors until the roots have developed to fill the pot and hold the compost together, this should take approximately 3 weeks.

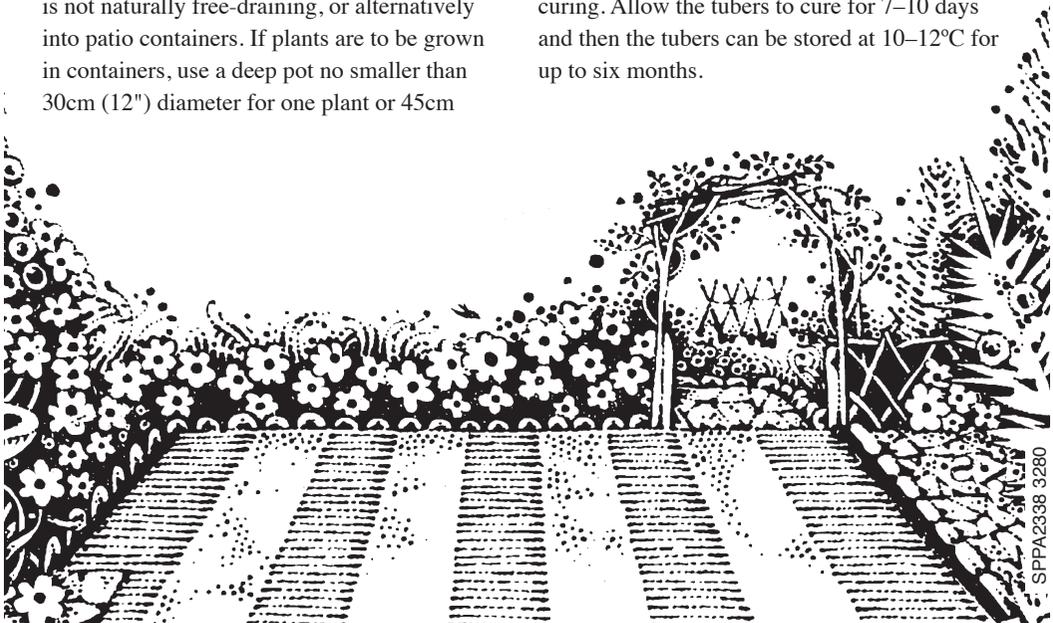
Sweet potatoes are best suited to greenhouse or tunnel growing (recommended for northern regions) but will thrive outdoors in warm summers further south. Ideally plant under a cloche or fleece and through a black plastic mulch laid on the ground to suppress weeds and retain the sun's warmth.

Sweet potato plants are ready for planting in the greenhouse or outside from late May–June (when danger of frost has passed), they will crop best when kept at temperatures between 10–30°C. The plants prefer a light sandy soil, planting at a spacing of 30cm (12") apart; however they can be planted into ridges 15–30cm high if your soil is not naturally free-draining, or alternatively into patio containers. If plants are to be grown in containers, use a deep pot no smaller than 30cm (12") diameter for one plant or 45cm

(18") diameter for 3 plants. Vigorous growth can be expected and care should be taken to prevent plants drying out with moderate regular watering, increasing in frequency from August onwards when you should commence feeding using a high-potassium plant food.

Very little aftercare is needed, other than feeding and watering. Keep an eye out for pests and remove any diseased leaves. Tubers take 4–5 months to mature. They can be lifted from late September, however, better to leave the tubers until the leaves begin to yellow and die back but be sure to lift before the first frosts.

Once the tubers have been lifted they should be cured to set the skins and allow the sweet flavour to develop further. Place the tubers in trays and keep them in a warm area at between 25 and 30°C and if possible with a humidity around 85% which will help to prevent weight loss during curing. Allow the tubers to cure for 7–10 days and then the tubers can be stored at 10–12°C for up to six months.



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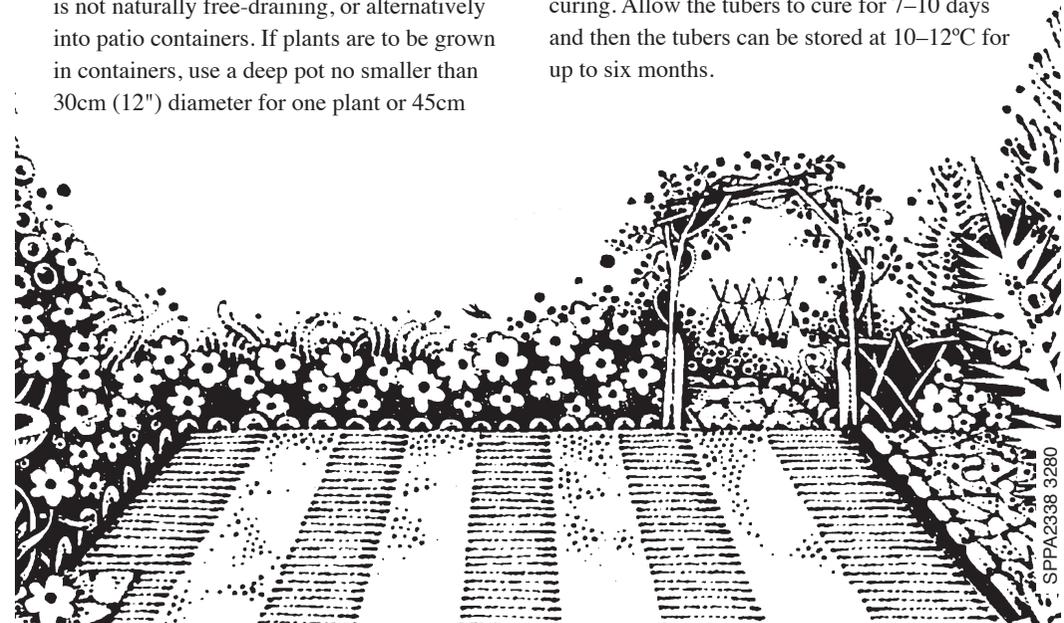
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