



## **Grow your own naturally blight resistant potato and tell us how you got on.**

We would like you to try out these new varieties of potato that are easy to grow and require no spraying with pesticide. The research sheet allows you to tell us how you found them. Naturally blight resistant potatoes are bred conventionally to be resistant to late-blight and virus diseases. They have vigorous, weed suppressing foliage and the tubers will keep easily into the spring if stored in a dry, frost-free shed.

The objective of this project is to engage as many people as possible in action-based research and to learn from each other why we prefer to grow, buy and eat certain varieties of potatoes on this island.

Why not grow your potatoes in a place where they can be seen and hopefully encourage others to do the same. Share your experience and make the research fun: organise a potato-tasting party for family and friends to invite comments, start a potato blog, try growing several varieties in your community garden to compare the results...

We welcome additional documentation of your research project using the medium of your choice (stories, photography, video, artwork, etc.).

### **Basic advice about how to grow potatoes**

You have been supplied with certified seed potatoes that are as free of pests and diseases as possible. Best results are usually obtained by growing potatoes on a well cultivated soil that has not grown potatoes recently (within the last 3-4 years). Organic matter (muck, compost, seaweed, etc) added to the soil will help to increase nutrients and help to conserve soil moisture.

Traditional methods can be used: weed and cultivate the ground and dig in any organic matter and add any nutrients. Dig a shallow trench (10cm or 4 inches deep) and place seed potatoes in the trench about 35cm (14 inches) apart. Rows should be spaced about 75cm (30 inches) apart. Fill in the trenches and as the plants grow, heap up the soil around the plants to produce a ridge from the furrow between the rows. Alternatively, the plot can be left unridged and a mulch applied around the plants to prevent the new potatoes poking out of the soil and getting green. Keeping the plants moist by watering in dry weather prevents the new potatoes from getting scab disease on the surface of the potato.

Naturally blight resistant will be ready to harvest from August onwards but plants will grow into September and October. The potatoes can grow too large and develop cavities (hollow heart) so dig up one or two plants in late August and if size is big enough for your uses, then carefully pull out the foliage and leave the potatoes in the soil to form a thicker skin for three weeks. Then you can harvest on a dry day. Dried off potatoes should be stored in Hessian or paper bags to keep out the light and keep them from becoming green when they are dangerous to eat because of the production of toxic substances. Potatoes hate polythene bags.



**Details of research team**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**How did you hear about SPUDS?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Why are you interested taking part in this research project?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**What type of potato grower are you?**

Newcomer

Experienced  If yes, how many years? \_\_\_\_\_

**Are you growing for:**

Yourself/family

Commercial

**Fill in as much of this sheet as you can but any information is important to us**

**Which blight resistant variety did you grow:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of planting** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Were the potato seed chitted indoors before planting?** \_\_\_\_\_

**For those growing in containers:** \_\_\_\_\_

**What were the approximate sizes of the containers?** \_\_\_\_\_

**How many seed tubers were planted per container?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Were containers filled with:**

Garden Soil

Commercial Compost

Other  \_\_\_\_\_

**Did you dig in soil improvers like:**

Animal manure

Garden compost

Fertilizer – what kind?

Other  \_\_\_\_\_

**Photographic documentation:**

Take a photo of you and your family/friends at planting



For those growing in a plot in the garden:

**Where is your plot located?**

County  Town

**What type of plot is it?**

Farm field

Backyard

Community garden

Allotment

Other  \_\_\_\_\_

**Is the plot close to sea?**

Approximate distance \_\_\_\_\_

**When was the last time potatoes were grown in this plot?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Did you dig in soil improvers like:**

Animal manure

Garden compost

Fertiliser – what kind?  \_\_\_\_\_

Other  \_\_\_\_\_

**CULTIVATION and PROGRESS**

**Actions**

**Did you add a mulch after plants had started to grow? What type?**

Earth  April  May  June  July  Aug  Sept  Oct

Compost  April  May  June  July  Aug  Sept  Oct

Straw  April  May  June  July  Aug  Sept  Oct

Other \_\_\_\_\_  April  May  June  July  Aug  Sept  Oct

**Did you fertilize?**  April  May  June  July  Aug  Sept  Oct

**What type?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Did you water?**  April  May  June  July  Aug  Sept  Oct

**How much?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Did you have to remove weeds?**  April  May  June  July  Aug  Sept  Oct

**Did you note any blight on the foliage?**  April  May  June  July  Aug  Sept  Oct

**Did you note any other diseases or damage from slugs or wireworm (holes in the tubers)?**  April  May  June  July  Aug  Sept  Oct

**What type?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Were there blight warnings?**  April  May  June  July  Aug  Sept  Oct

**What were the weather conditions?** \_\_\_\_\_



## Details of Harvest(s)

Date of harvest \_\_\_\_\_

Number of plants (of each variety harvested) \_\_\_\_\_

Total weight (of each variety) \_\_\_\_\_

Weight of good quality edible potatoes in each batch \_\_\_\_\_

Weight of rejects? \_\_\_\_\_

### What was main reason for rejection:

Greens  Rots  Cracks  Too small

Other  \_\_\_\_\_

## TASTE TEST

### Description of Taste:

Cook your potatoes however you want: boil, steam, roast, mash, bake, or fry. If you have problems with them falling apart when boiled, try boiling them in their skins or steaming them. You can make fine mashed potatoes in the microwave: when the potato is soft, cut in half and squeeze through a potato ricer. Skins are left in the ricer! Cooking assessments: potatoes will cook differently after various lengths of storage

How long after harvest did you do your cook tests? \_\_\_\_\_

What method did you use to cook them and did you cook a non blight resistant potato variety at the same time for comparison? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### How did they taste?

Poor  Grand  Yummy

Did tasters disagree about these taste scores? \_\_\_\_\_

Give reasons your score. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Would you grow these varieties again? \_\_\_\_\_

Give reasons your answer. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

For further information and support please check out:

[www.spuds.ie](http://www.spuds.ie)  
[www.sarvari-trust.org/](http://www.sarvari-trust.org/)  
[www.gjireland.com](http://www.gjireland.com)

Completed SPUDS data sheets should be returned to:

SPUDS, c/o The Lifeline Project, 44 Sitric Road, Dublin 7



**Additional Information / Comments**

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