



**Aylett Nurseries**  
*The Complete Garden Centre*

# Seed Potatoes, Onion & Shallot Sets 2019



## Information Leaflet No. 28

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**Please call us on 01727 822255 to check availability before you visit if there are particular varieties you are hoping to purchase.**

**The majority of our seed potatoes are sold 'loose' for our customers to fill a 'fill-a-bag' with their chosen varieties. The varieties underlined are only available as pre-packs, either 2kgs or as small taster packs.**

## **FIRST EARLY VARIETIES**

**ACCORD** – Nice crop of salad potatoes or can be grown out for a baker crop. Produced tasty cream and bright skinned tubers. Good resistance to both golden and white Potato Cyst Nematode. Also has good resistance to scab allowing for healthy skin finish making them ideal for showing.

**ARRAN PILOT** – An old favourite. Kidney shaped; white flesh and skin. Matures early and rapidly but produces high yields if left later. Succeeds best in light soils. Waxy texture and good flavour. Moderate resistance to disease.

**CASABLANCA** - A new high yielding variety with clean smooth white oval tubers with shallow eyes. Good flavour. Ideal for chipping, baking and boiling.

**DUKE OF YORK** –Long, oval – shaped potato with pale whitish-yellow skin, and light yellow flesh. Firm cooked texture, and a rich, sweet flavour. Best eaten when young. It will succeed in nearly all areas and soil types amongst the first earlies.

**FOREMOST** - Oval shaped; white flesh and skin. This cultivar has an excellent reputation for high yields with a good flavour and slightly waxy texture. It is ideal for boiling and mashing.

**HOME GUARD** – Round to oval, white skin and creamy white flesh. Quite a floury dry texture and good almost bitter flavour, best eaten early. A World War II favourite which although has lost some of its vigour, is still a good choice for heavy soils. Good for boiling, chipping and roasting.

**INTERNATIONAL KIDNEY** –Long oval shaped tubers, with very flaky, white/yellow skin and creamy white flesh. Famous for being waxy with a delicious buttery flavour. Excellent for boiling / salads.

**LADY CHRISTL** - Good yields of very early, firm, oval, smooth, pale yellow-skinned tubers. Easy to grow and well suited to growing in containers and potato bags, with good disease resistance, including golden eelworm. Good for boiling, steaming and sautéing.

**MARIS BARD** - Oval shaped; white skin, white to cream flesh, soft yet waxy with an earthy taste. One of the most widely grown earlies, producing heavy crops of well-flavoured tubers. Suitable for boiling and most other methods but can disintegrate on cooking late in the season and lose its taste. Scab resistance is slight but resistance to virus is high.

**PENTLAND JAVELIN** – Medium sized oval, with a white skin and white flesh. It has a soft waxy texture. A good new potato, but also bakes well later in the season. This cultivar is later than most first earlies. Produces heavy crops which are resistant to scab and some strains of eelworm.

**RED DUKE OF YORK** – Large tasty oval tubers, deep red skin with pale yellow flesh. Suitable for new, roasting, summer bakers.

**ROCKET** – Uniformly round; white-skinned, white flesh. It is firm, waxy and well-flavoured. One of the earliest croppers. Ideal for baking, boiling, chipping, mashing, roasting and for use in salads.

**SHARPES EXPRESS** –Oval – pear-shaped, with white skin and creamy flesh. Quite good all round, but this potato needs careful cooking, especially when boiling. This cultivar is later than most, but tubers store well. A good choice for heavy soil.

**SWIFT** - Earliest potato to crop. Oval shaped, skin is pale yellow with creamy white flesh. Produces small tops and is excellent for planting in plastic tunnels and pots. Excellent for boiling and putting into salads.

**WINSTON** – Oval shaped, cream colour flesh. Excellent for boiling and putting into salads. Large, uniform tubers. Drought resistant. A showbench favourite.

## **SECOND EARLY VARIETIES**

**BELLE DE FONTENAY** – Maincrop, also grown as first early. Long slightly bent shaped tubers with pale yellow skins. Yellow flesh; firm and waxy with an excellent buttery flavour. Improves with storage. Good eaten with the skins on. Suitable for boiling, mashing and for use in salads.

**BRITISH QUEEN** –Short oval tubers with white skins and shallow eyes. White flesh. Great flavour with dry, floury texture. This variety also has a Royal Horticultural Award of Garden Merit.

**CHARLOTTE\*** – Pear or oval-shaped; with pale yellow flesh, firm waxy texture, and a hint of chestnut flavour. A popular salad variety with good cooking qualities - excellent steamed.

**ESTIMA** – Uniform oval shape with shallow eyes. Light yellow skin and flesh is firm. It has a moist texture and mild flavour. A popular cultivar because of its attractively shaped tubers and heavy crops. It has an exceptionally long season. Scab can be a problem. Ideal for baking, boiling and chipping.

**KESTREL** - Long oval shaped; white/blue skin, pale yellow flesh and purple eyes. A new Scottish variety reputed to have an excellent flavour. In recent trials this cultivar produced one of the highest yields of medium sized tubers. Ideal for baking, roasting and especially for chipping.

**MARFONA** - Oval shaped; yellow skin; pale yellow flesh. A high yielding variety which produces large uniform tubers and has good drought resistance. Ideal for boiling, baking, mashing and roasting. Good all round with no discolouration.

**MARIS PEER** – Round to oval-shaped with cream flesh and skin, eyes shallow to medium. Firm good texture ideal to use when young as new potatoes – they do not break up; later in the season they are good to bake. Good yields and some resistance to both scab and blight. It is drought sensitive and requires moist soils and ample irrigation in dry conditions.

**NICOLA** – Oval to long oval-shaped tubers. Smooth yellow skin and deep yellow flesh. Shallow eyes. The texture is waxy with an excellent buttery taste. Good resistance to scab. Use at early maturity for salads / boiling.

**RATTE** - Second Early. Long oval shaped tubers with yellow skin and cream flesh. Very like the better known Pink Fir Apple but earlier. Great hot or cold. Good for boiling, steaming and sautéing.

**WILJA** - Oval shaped; pale yellow flesh. It is a very popular cultivar due to its excellent flavour, cooking qualities, high yields and reliability. Ideal for boiling, baking and chipping.

\*These varieties are classed as 'Salad' varieties, **renowned for their firm, waxy flesh and superbly intense flavours** which make them perfect for potato salads. They are **delicious eaten warm as new potatoes** and lend themselves perfectly to dishes such as gratin dauphinois or even grated rosti.

## **MAINCROP VARIETIES**

**CARA** - Round or oval shape; white skin with pink eyes, cream flesh. Mild flavour and moist waxy texture. High yielding late maincrop cultivar. Sprouted seed will ensure an earlier crop. Susceptible to slug damage. Resistant to some forms of eelworm. Ideal for all methods, especially wedging.

**CAROLUS** – Smooth-skinned uniformly oval tubers with pale yellow flesh and attractive shallow red eyes. Slightly floury texture once cooked with excellent flavour. Suitable for boiling, frying, mashing and makes superb roast potatoes. Blight resistant.

**DÉSIREE** - Oval shape with shallow eyes, smooth red skin, and pale creamy yellow flesh. A very popular cultivar due to its heavy cropping, consistent performance, and success in most soil types. It is tolerant of dry conditions and the firm textured tubers have an excellent flavour. Good all-round cooking qualities – holds its shape well when cooked. Said to be the world's most popular red potato.

**GOLDEN WONDER** –A well-known maincrop variety with russeted skin and pale mauve tipped white flowers. The floury flesh of Potato 'Golden Wonder' makes it one of the best varieties for baking, frying and roasting, with a rich flavour that improves on storage.

**KING EDWARD** – Oval shaped tubers with attractive red splashes over the eyes. Cream to pale yellow flesh and a floury texture. One of the best-known potatoes. A moderate yielding cultivar with excellent cooking qualities, especially for mashing, roasting and baking.

**LIBERTIE** – Brand New for 2018. Produces big crops of attractive bright and uniformly shaped tubers. It has a good resistance to Common and Powdery Scab which helps to maintain its naturally blight resistant tubers. Boiled or baked has good cooking qualities.

**MARIS PIPER** - Oval shaped; cream skin and flesh, with a pleasant floury texture and taste. This cultivar produces an excellent yield and its cooking qualities are rated very highly. However, its resistance to scab and slugs is low. Excellent for baking, boiling and roasting, but breaks up easily if overcooked. Popular in fish and chip shops.

**PENTLAND CROWN** - Oval to round-shaped; with white skin and creamy white flesh. This late maincrop is claimed to produce higher yields than other popular cultivars. It is grown for its good resistance to blight, scab and virus, but its keeping qualities are only moderate. Ideal for baking, boiling or roasting.

**PICASSO** – Oval-round-shaped tubers with quite deep red eyes. Pale skin with white waxy flesh. Very high yielding variety with attractive tubers. Suitable for boiling / salads.

**PINK FIR APPLE\*** - Long knobbly, misshapen potatoes with a pink blush on white skins and creamy yellow flesh. Firm and waxy with a delicious nutty flavour. This unusual cultivar is over a century old and is worth trying. They are delicious boiled as new potatoes or used cold in salads.

**SARPO AXONA** – Late main crop. Regular shaped tuber with red skin and creamy flesh. Ideal for roasting, baking, mash and chipping. High yield with outstanding blight resistance.

**SARPO BLUE DANUBE** –Early main crop. Bright white flesh and blue skin. Excellent for roast potatoes. Blight resistant.

**SARPO MIRA** – Late main crop. Long oval tubers with red skins and shallow eyes. Cream flesh. A vigorous variety capable of growing in a wide range of conditions. Extraordinarily disease (blight) resistant.

**SETANTA** – Almost completely resistant to foliar blight. Has a red skin with contrasting yellow flesh. Produces large oval tubers with a good flavour. With a high dry matter, they make a great all-round potato. Great for mashing, roasting, chipping and boiling.

## **PRE-PACKED VARIETIES**

Smaller packs of Potatoes are available in the following varieties.

These are not included in our 'fill-a-bag' section.

**ANYA** – Second Early

**BONNIE** – Second Early

**CARA ORGANIC** – Maincrop

**CARLINGFORD** – Second Early

**COLLEEN ORGANIC** – First Early

**GEMSON** – Second Early

**JAZZY** – Second Early

**PURPLE EYED SUSAN** – Second Early

**ROOSTER** – Maincrop

**SARPO UNA** – Maincrop

**SHETLAND BLACK** – Maincrop

**VIVALDI** – Second Early

## **PLANNING THE CROP**

Potato cultivars fall into three main categories, First Early, Second Early and Maincrop. First Earlies form potatoes and bulk up very early, and are usually harvested in June, July and August, when the haulm is still green. Maincrop cultivars are lifted in the autumn when the haulm has died down. It is the Maincrop cultivars that are long keeping, and are relied upon for winter storage.

Potatoes grow best in an open position, which must not be a frost pocket. If grown in shade, the haulm, or green top, becomes lank and spindly as it reaches upwards for light.

Potatoes grow reasonably well in most soils, but the best results are obtained from land that has been well manured. Dig the ground in autumn or winter, working in compost or well-rotted manure at the rate of a bucketful to the square yard.

A fortnight before planting, dress the ground with a mixture of 2 parts superphosphate, 1-part sulphate of ammonia and 1-part sulphate of potash, using the mixture at the rate of 4oz per square yard (120g per square metre). Alternatively, apply a general fertiliser Such as Fish, Blood and Bone at 2-3 oz per square yard (60-90 g. per square metre).

## **SEED**

When choosing potato "seed", it is important that "Certified Seed" is planted. Such seed has been inspected and grown under rigid conditions, so that it is certified virus-free. All seed potatoes sold at Aylett Nurseries are certified.

## **PREPARING SEED POTATOES FOR PLANTING**

Having bought your seed potatoes take them from their bags and put in a cool, well-ventilated room. Set them in seed trays with their 'eyes' uppermost. It is from here that the sprouts will grow, this is known as "chitting". Chitting is vital for earlies and is useful for maincrop up until early March.

Place the trays in a cool room or greenhouse. In four or five weeks the sprouts should be sturdy and ideally, ½ -1" (12-25mm) long. Sprouted in this way, the potatoes have a longer growing season and produce a heavier crop.

## **GROWING POTATOES**

Plant First Early potatoes between mid-March and early April. Plant Second Earlies in early April and Maincrop cultivars towards the end of the month. Use a draw hoe to make drills 4" deep and set the potatoes at the bottom of the drills so that the sprouts are upper most. Plant First Earlies 12" apart and 2ft between the rows. Main crops will need more room to develop – 15" between the tubers, and

36" between the rows. If some of the tubers are on the large side, they can be cut in half providing there are two or three healthy shoots on each half. The ideal size of a seed potato is about the size of a hen's egg.

When the first shoots appear draw soil over them with a hoe, increasing the height of the ridge, as protection from late frosts. Earth up the plants again when they are about 9" (230mm) high, and again a fortnight or so after that. Continue earthing at intervals until the foliage meets between the rows.

Early Potatoes may be grown in containers, large pots or tubs that are at least 40cm deep are ideal. Rest two chitted tubers on 10-13cm of compost in your chosen container, and then cover with 10cm of compost. Water them in and stand in a light sheltered spot. When the stems are 15cm tall add a further 10cm of compost, repeat until the plants have grown to 5cm over the top of the container.

## **PEST AND DISEASES**

Many diseases, pests and disorders can attack potatoes and reduce yields, but only 4 are likely to be a serious threat: potato cyst eelworm, slugs, wireworm and blight.

An attack of **potato cyst eelworm** will make the plants appear weak and stunted. Lower leaves wither away; upper leaves are pale green and wilt during the day. Haulm dies down prematurely. Marble-sized tubers are produced.

Prevention: Practice crop rotation, especially in light soils. Do not grow potatoes or tomatoes on infected land for at least 6 years.

**Slug** attacks occur in damp conditions - slugs can ruin maincrop potatoes grown in heavy soil. Prevention: Avoid over-manuring. Apply a slug control in July. Lift the crop as soon as the tubers are mature.

**Blight** is the most serious potato disease, capable of destroying all the foliage during August in a wet season. The first signs are brown patches on the leaves. Look on the underside of the leaflets - each blight spot has a white mould fringe in damp weather.

### **Always read the label!**

When using Fungicides, Pesticides and Fertilisers always follow the manufactures instructions.

## **HARVESTING AND STORING**

Potato-lifting time varies considerably from one part of the country to another, depending on prevailing climatic conditions. As a rough guide, you should be able to gather a few new potatoes when about 12-14 weeks have elapsed since planting.

To gather a few early potatoes before the crop as a whole is ready for digging, brush away a little soil from the sides of a ridge and remove any potatoes that have grown to the size of a hen's egg. Replace the soil over the smaller tubers and leave them to grow. They should at least double in size during the next two or three weeks, after which the crop can be lifted as required.

When lifting potatoes, insert the fork at least 6" (150mm) away from the stems to avoid impaling the tubers. Push it well into the side of the ridge so that the plant can be lifted and thrown between the rows in a single action.

Maincrop potatoes take at least 20 weeks to come to full maturity - that is, to be ready for storing. Some may be dug a few weeks earlier, but they will have to be used immediately since the skins will not yet have set.

Before lifting the entire crop, test one or two potatoes by rubbing the skin with your thumb. If the skin of the tuber does not rub off, the crop is ready for storing. Store potatoes in a dry, cool, but frost-free place. Place them in lightproof but ventilated containers such as boxes or hessian sacks, or pile them on a dry floor and cover with straw.

Even though the potato was being grown in England at the time of the Armada it was not until the Irish and Scottish famines of the 18th century when the potatoes true value was realised.

Since then it had become the 2nd most important food crop in Britain.

Home-grown potatoes have unequalled flavour, not to mention the satisfaction of eating your own produce!

Today there are numerous varieties from which to choose, to match variables such as soil type, required harvesting time, pest and disease infestations and your preference of flavour, texture and cooking uses.

## **ONION & SHALLOTS SETS**

There are several advantages in using sets rather than seed when growing onions and shallots. Firstly, they are quick maturing and secondly, less skill and less soil fertilising is required.

Plant onion sets 4" apart in mid March - mid April, in rows 9" apart. Shallots require more space and should be planted 6" apart in mid February - mid March.

### **ONION SETS**

**CENTURION – AGM-** Good flavoured round onion with very early high yield. Medium term storage. A very popular variety.

**HERCULES – AGM** - Mid season yellow / brown round bulbs. Strong flavour.

**KARMEN** - Provides a heavy crop of attractive red-skinned, flattened-globe-shaped onions.

**PICKO BELLO** – Early main crop with high yield and which stores very well.

**RED BARON – AGM** - Very dark coloured flat-round onion with rings right to the centre. Best planted late 3cm deep 13cm apart. Sunny site. Good soil. Improved form of Comred.

**SNOWBALL** – Deep round bulbs with white skins and flesh. Excellent storing potential.

**STUR** – Slow to sprout giving a long storage life.

**STURON – AGM** - Excellent rounded shape. It is a much higher yielding cultivar than Stuttgarter. Very good skin quality. Early to mid season maturing.

**STUTTGARTER GIANT** - A straw-yellow flat cultivar with good yield and keeping qualities. It has a very early maturing so plant early. An old favourite.

### **SHALLOTS**

**BIZTRO** – A very tasty pale red shallot. Highly resistant to bolting.

**GOLDEN GOURMET – AGM** - This improved yellow shallot can be planted in very early spring. Its mild taste makes it excellent for pickling. Particularly well suited for environment friendly cultivation due to the very low susceptibility to fungus diseases. It has a yield greater than most other yellow shallots in cultivation. Have a very long shelf life when stored in a dry and cool place.

**RED GOURMET** - A very aromatic shallot with a lovely sweet taste. Superb for cooking where it adds great flavour to many dishes. It has attractive coppery-brown skin and sweet pink flesh.

**RED SUN** – This mild shallot is round in shape and recognised for its good storage characteristics. Perfect for salads.

**YELLOW MOON** - A good, round shallot with an attractive yellow colour. Produces a very healthy and uniform crop with good skin quality. High resistance to bolting and disease.

## **FRENCH SHALLOTS**

**LONGOR – AGM** - Very long bulbs, highly praised for their robust flavour. Good storage potential.

**VIGARMOR** - Grey skin with pink flesh.

**MELOINE** – Subtle sweet flavour. Stores well.

## **GARLIC**

**MARCO** - Distinctive strong flavour.

**SOLENT WIGHT – AGM** - Strong flavour with large cloves – stores well.

## **FRENCH GARLIC**

**ARNO – AGM** - A softneck garlic with ivory-white skins containing attractive pink cloves with a medium garlic flavour.

**CRISTO – AGM** - Round bulbs with white skin and pink cloves.

**FLAVOR** – Each bulb contains 9-16 pink cloves. These will store for a long time once ripened.

**This leaflet is available in  
alternative formats**

Please ask a member or staff or  
Tel: 01727 822255  
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Last updated 17.01.19