



Aylett Nurseries
The Complete Garden Centre

Seed Potatoes, Onion & Shallot Sets 2024



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.

Kick off your 2024 growing season with our fantastic selection of seed potatoes, onions, shallots, and garlic!

Nothing beats the taste of home grown and with so many different varieties to choose from you can grow the types that suit your taste and cooking preferences.

This year we have seed potatoes available in the following loose and pre-packed options:

LOOSE – Hand pick and ‘fill-a-bag’ with your chosen variety/varieties.

TASTER PACKS – Smaller pre-packed varieties. Perfect for trying something new or for planting in tubs and containers.

2KG CARRIPACKS – Netted pre-packed varieties ideal for the allotment plot or larger planting areas in the garden. An easy grab and go option.

LOOSE 'FILL-A-BAG' VARIETIES

Fill a 'fill-a-bag' with your chosen variety/varieties.

FIRST EARLY VARIETIES

CALEDONIAN PEARL – Excellent shape and size tubers with creamy yellow flesh, shallow eyes, and smooth skin. Great tasting and ideal for roasting, mashing, boiling, baking and chipping.

CASABLANCA - A modern 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 a light-yellow flesh. Best eaten when young when it has a rich sweet flavour. An old variety that is amongst the first of the 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 – A World War II favourite that remains popular with gardeners today due to its early cropping. It produces round to oval white skinned tubers with creamy white flesh.

LADY CHRISTL - A gardeners favourite due to high early yields. Produces smooth, pale yellow skinned tubers. Easy to grow and well suited to growing in containers and potato bags, Good for boiling, steaming, and sautéing.

MARIS BARD - Oval shaped, white skin and 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.

ORLA – Large white fleshed tubers with good resistance to blight and scab. Harvest early or leave in the soil to bulk up. Suitable for boiling and most cooking methods.

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.

RED DUKE OF YORK – Large tasty oval tubers, deep red skin with pale yellow flesh. Great flavour, suitable for chipping, roasting, or makes an excellent summer baker.

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.

SWIFT - Earliest potato to crop. Oval shaped tubers with pale yellow skin and creamy white flesh. Produces small tops making it an excellent choice for planting in containers. For an even earlier crop try planting under polythene or cloches. Excellent for boiling or using as a salad potato.

SECOND EARLY VARIETIES

CHARLOTTE – High yielding waxy salad potato. Oval-shaped with pale yellow flesh, excellent flavour that has good cooking qualities.

KESTREL - Long oval shaped; white/blue skin, pale yellow flesh and purple eyes. A modern Scottish variety with an excellent flavour. A popular show bench variety with medium sized tubers. Ideal for baking, roasting and especially for chipping.

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. A very popular salad potato.

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.

MAINCROP VARIETIES

CARA - Round or oval shape; white skin with pink eyes and creamy flesh. Mild flavour and moist waxy texture. High yielding late maincrop cultivar that is disease resistant. Best used for roasting, baking or for wedges.

DÉSIREE - 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.

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.

MARIS PIPER – Slightly oval shaped with cream skin and flesh. Pleasant floury texture and taste. This cultivar produces an excellent yield, and its cooking qualities are rated very highly making it excellent for baking, boiling and roasting. It is especially popular for chipping.

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 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. The first of the Sarpo varieties developed by the Hungarian Sarvari family, very disease (blight) resistant.

TASTER PACK VARIETIES

Smaller pre-packed varieties. Perfect for trying something new or for planting in tubs and containers.

FIRST EARLY VARIETIES

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

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

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.

LADY CHRISTL - A gardeners favourite due to high early yields. Produces smooth, pale yellow skinned tubers. Easy to grow and well suited to growing in containers and potato bags, Good for boiling, steaming and sautéing.

MARIS BARD - Oval shaped, white skin and 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.

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.

RED DUKE OF YORK – Large tasty oval tubers, deep red skin with pale yellow flesh. Great flavour, suitable for chipping, roasting, or makes an excellent summer baker.

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 with white skin and creamy flesh. A good-flavoured potato that needs care when boiling. This cultivar is later than most, but tubers store well. A good choice for heavy soils.

SWIFT - Earliest potato to crop. Oval shaped tubers with pale yellow skin and creamy white flesh. Produces small tops making it an excellent choice for planting in containers. For an even earlier crop try planting under polythene or cloches. Excellent for boiling or using as a salad potato.

SECOND EARLY VARIETIES

BRITISH QUEEN – White skins and white flesh and a great flavour. Floury texture, making it ideal for boiling. This variety has a Royal Horticultural Award of Garden Merit.

CHARLOTTE – High yielding waxy salad potato. Oval-shaped with pale yellow flesh, excellent flavour that has good cooking qualities.

ESTIMA – Drought-resistant and some resistance to slugs and diseases. Chips, bakes, boils and roasts.

NICOLA – Plentiful small tubers. Flavoursome, perfect for salads. Eelworm and blight resistant.

SARPO UNA – Red skinned salad, delicate taste with pure white flesh. Perfect for container growing, harvest early as a waxy salad or leave longer in the ground for a heavy crop of baking potatoes.

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.

MAINCROP VARIETIES

BLUE DANUBE – Early main crop. Bright white flesh and blue skin. Excellent for roast potatoes. Blight resistant. Developed by the Sarvari research trust and is the first variety without the Sarpo prefix.

CAROLUS – Oval tubers with yellow flesh. Ideal for boiling, frying, mashing and roasting. Blight resistant.

DÉSIRÉE - 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.

KERR'S PINK - Maincrop. Irregular shaped tubers with pink skin and deep eyes. Floury texture with good flavor. Suitable for baking, boiling, and chipping.

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.

MARIS PIPER – The chip shop potato! Versatile, high yielder that stores well. Eelworm resistant.

PICASSO – Good disease and drought resistance. Eelworm resistant. High yielding.

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 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. The first of the Sarpo varieties developed by the Hungarian Sarvari family, very disease (blight) resistant.

2KG CARRIPACK VARIETIES

Netted pre-packed varieties ideal for the allotment plot or larger planting areas in the garden.

FIRST EARLY VARIETIES

ACCORD – A high yielding variety producing tasty cream and bright skinned tubers. Disease resistant.

ARRAN PILOT - An old favourite. Kidney shaped tubers with white flesh and skin. Matures early and rapidly with waxy texture and a good flavour. Moderate resistance to disease.

CALEDONIAN PEARL – Excellent shape and size tubers with creamy yellow flesh, shallow eyes, and smooth skin. Great tasting and ideal for roasting, mashing, boiling, baking and chipping.

EPIPURE – High yields and distinctive flavour. Sought after new potato. Best for boiling.

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.

LADY CHRISTL - A gardeners favourite due to high early yields. Produces smooth, pale yellow skinned tubers. Easy to grow and well suited to growing in containers and potato bags, Good for boiling, steaming, and sautéing.

ORLA – Large white fleshed tubers with good resistance to blight and scab. Harvest early or leave in the soil to bulk up. Suitable for boiling and most cooking methods.

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.

RED DUKE OF YORK – Large tasty oval tubers, deep red skin with pale yellow flesh. Great flavour, suitable for chipping, roasting, or makes an excellent summer baker.

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 with white skin and creamy flesh. A good-flavoured potato that needs care when boiling. This cultivar is later than most, but tubers store well. A good choice for heavy soils.

WINSTON – Smoothed skinned Oval shaped tubers with cream colour flesh. Excellent for boiling and using in salads. Disease resistant. A very popular successful show bench variety.

SECOND EARLY VARIETIES

ACOUSTIC – Great all-rounder, easy-to-grow and excellent blight resistance. Round potatoes with a pale-yellow flesh and delicious taste. If lifted early the texture is waxier and the potatoes are good for salad and boiling. If lifted later the texture becomes floury making the potatoes good for chips, mashing and roasting.

BRITISH QUEEN – white skins and white flesh and a great flavour. Floury texture, making it ideal for boiling. This variety has a Royal Horticultural Award of Garden Merit.

CHARLOTTE – High yielding waxy salad potato. Oval-shaped with pale yellow flesh, excellent flavour that has good cooking qualities.

ESTIMA – Drought-resistant and some resistance to slugs and diseases. Chips, bakes, boils and roasts.

KESTREL – Early and high-yielding. Resistant to slugs. Good all-rounder.

MARFONA - Oval shaped; yellow skin; pale yellow waxy flesh. A high yielding variety which produces large uniform tubers which has good drought resistance. Ideal for boiling, baking, mashing and roasting.

MARIS PEER – oval-shaped, white skinned with creamy flesh. Good texture ideal to use as new potatoes – they do not break up. Attractive scented purple flowers. Best planted close and kept earthed up.

SARPO UNA – Red skinned salad, delicate taste with pure white flesh. Perfect for container growing, harvest early as a waxy salad or leave longer in the ground for a heavy crop of baking potatoes.

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.

MAINCROP VARIETIES

BLUE DANUBE – Early main crop. Bright white flesh and blue skin. Excellent for roast potatoes. Blight resistant. Developed by the Sarvari research trust and is the first variety without the Sarpo prefix.

DÉSIREE - 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 late maincrop variety Very tasty floury flesh that improves with storage. Long oval shaped tubers with a russet skin. Suitable for baking, frying and roasting.

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.

MANITOU – Red skin, yellow flesh. Good for boiling, roasting, chips and mash. Resistant to pests and diseases.

MARIS PIPER – The chip shop potato! Versatile, high yielder that stores well. Eelworm resistant.

PICASSO – Good disease and drought resistance. Eelworm resistant. High yielding.

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 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. The first of the Sarpo varieties developed by the Hungarian Sarvari family, very disease (blight) resistant.

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 (stalks/stem) 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, frost free, 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 wide and 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 adding compost 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 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 1” deep, 4” apart in mid-March - mid April, in rows 9” apart. Shallots require more space and should be planted 1” deep, 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.

PINK PANTHER - A flat shaped pink skinned set with good yield & keeping qualities. Plant early.

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.

STUR BC 20 – 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

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 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 (Pre-Packed)

HERMINE – Mild, gentle flavour. Stores well. White skinned and white fleshed.

LONGOR – AGM – Banana shallot. Highly praised for their robust flavour. Good storage potential.

MEHNIR – Banana shallot. Copper skin with mild sweet flavour.

MELOINE – Subtle sweet flavour. Stores well.

MIKOR – Long in shape, red in colour, perfect for cooking.

GARLIC

Break bulbs into individual cloves and plant each clove 4” apart and 1” deep.

GARLIC (Pre-Packed)

GARCUA – Softneck. Strong flavour, use fresh or can be stored up to a year.

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

FRENCH GARLIC (Pre-Packed)

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

EDENROSE – A high yielding hardneck variety. Rosy skinned cloves with a strong flavour.

FLAVOR – Mild flavour. 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
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