

Potato Tower – Does it Grow More Spuds?



We are growing potatoes in a potato tower. Growing in a potato tower may be the answer to mold and insect damage. We have grown potatoes before, on the farm, using conventional farming methods. Many people with larger gardens and farms plant directly in the ground, cutting the seed potatoes up and planting in hills spaced along long rows. But usually we had disappointment in the harvest using this method. We would receive enough potatoes for a few dinners, but not the amount we had hoped to see from our efforts. Everything from voles, mold, weeds, and too much rain contributed to our failure as potato farmers.

Growing Potatoes Above Ground Using a Pallet Style Potato Tower

This year we decided to try a container garden style of growing potatoes. Some newer methods allow you to grow potatoes in a raised garden, large pots, burlap bags or other space saving containers. There are many ways to attack this type of gardening. A friend of mine made a potato tower from chicken wire and metal posts. Our choice was to make a box garden potato tower from four used pallets.



To make a potato tower like we did you will need the following materials:

- four wooden pallets
- 2 to 3 cubic yards of composted soil
- 1 bale of straw

seed potatoes

The first step is to cut the seed potatoes into pieces, making sure there is at least one “eye” in each piece. It is important to use seed potatoes, or organic potatoes, that are untreated for this purpose. Using grocery store potatoes may result in introducing blight into your garden and many potatoes sold in the grocery store are sprayed with something to keep them from sprouting eyes.



Allow the potatoes to dry out for a few hours to a day to reduce the moisture even more and keep the threat of mold, lower.

Begin adding composted soil mixture into your container. Put about 8 to 12 inches in before dropping in the first pieces of potatoes. Cover with soil and straw.



Continue making layers of potatoes, soil and straw until you have made 4 to 5 layers.



Add Straw to the top to keep moisture in and hopefully deter

some weeds from growing.

The plan for the future harvesting is to take one pallet panel off and begin digging through the soil for the potatoes.

Now we wait! I hope this method will give us a better potato yield from the garden.

Have you planted potatoes? What method did you use. Please share your story in the comments below.

Update on Growing in a Potato Tower

UPDATE August 18, 2014 I harvested the potatoes this week. While it was not a huge harvest of potatoes, I was encouraged by the results. This was the first time we tried to grow potatoes in a tower. I think we learned a few things about using this growing method.

1. It takes more dirt than we thought it needed. The dirt settled a lot and I think that is why the harvest was sort of small.
2. We still had insect problems, including the Colorado Potato Beetle but we did not have rot like we have had in the past.
3. I would use this method again, but add more soil/compost and fill the entire tower with the dirt and straw.



We did receive enough potatoes for a few dinners. Unfortunately, I will still have to purchase potatoes. If you tried the potato tower method this year, please let me know how it worked out for you.

For more on Potato Gardening, I recommend this post by a blogger I trust.

Pixie's Pocket

