

# Unlock the Sweetness: Urban Farming – How to Grow Exceptional Sweet Potatoes



Embark on a delectable journey as we delve into the art of urban sweet potato farming. This comprehensive guide will empower you to cultivate

your own sweet, nutritious, and sustainable source of nourishment right at home, regardless of the limitations of urban living.



## Urban Farming: How to Grow Sweet Potatoes

by Ellen de Casmaker

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

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### Choosing the Right Variety

Select sweet potato varieties well-suited to urban environments.

'Beauregard' and 'Jewel' are compact cultivars ideal for smaller spaces, while 'Hannah' and 'Covington' offer exceptional yields.

### Optimal Growing Conditions

Sweet potatoes thrive in warm, well-drained soil with a pH between 5.5 and 6.5. They require ample sunlight, receiving at least 6 hours per day. In shady conditions, consider using grow lights to supplement natural light.

### Propagation: Slips or Seedlings

Propagate sweet potatoes either through slips (stem cuttings) or seedlings. Slips can be obtained by purchasing them from nurseries or by sprouting

your own from sweet potato tubers. Seedlings can be started indoors 6-8 weeks before the last frost.

## **Planting and Spacing**

Plant slips or seedlings 12-18 inches apart in rows spaced 3 feet apart. Bury the slips or seedlings at least 4 inches deep, leaving only the top leaves exposed.

## **Soil Management**

Maintain loose and well-aerated soil by regularly tilling or using a hoe. Add compost or manure to improve soil fertility and water retention. Mulch around the plants to suppress weeds, conserve moisture, and regulate soil temperature.

## **Watering**

Water sweet potatoes deeply and regularly, especially during hot and dry weather. Avoid overwatering, as it can lead to root rot. Mulching helps retain moisture and reduce the need for frequent watering.

## **Fertilization**

Fertilize sweet potatoes monthly with a balanced fertilizer, such as 10-10-10. Alternatively, use organic fertilizers like compost tea or fish emulsion. Avoid excessive nitrogen fertilization, as it can promote excessive vine growth at the expense of tuber production.

## **Weed Control**

Regularly remove weeds by hand-pulling or using a hoe. Mulching around the plants can also help suppress weed growth.

## **Pest and Disease Management**

Sweet potatoes are susceptible to a few pests and diseases. Common pests include sweet potato weevils, aphids, and spider mites. Common diseases include fusarium wilt, black rot, and southern blight. Monitor your plants regularly for signs of infestation or disease and take prompt action to prevent spread.

## **Harvesting**

Sweet potatoes are ready to harvest approximately 100-120 days after planting. Dig the tubers carefully with a garden fork or shovel, avoiding damaging them. Cure the sweet potatoes in a warm, dry place for 7-10 days before storing them.

## **Storage**

Store cured sweet potatoes in a cool, dark place with a temperature of 55-60°F (13-16°C) and relative humidity of 80-90%. Proper storage can extend their shelf life for several months.

## **Nutritional Value**

Sweet potatoes are a nutritional powerhouse, rich in vitamins A, C, and B6, as well as minerals like potassium, manganese, and fiber. They are an excellent source of antioxidants and have a low glycemic index, making them a healthy choice for people with diabetes.

## **Sustainable Urban Farming**

Urban sweet potato farming promotes sustainable practices by reducing food miles, minimizing pesticide use, and encouraging local food

production. It also contributes to urban绿化, provides food security, and fosters a sense of community.

Embracing urban sweet potato farming is a rewarding endeavor that allows you to cultivate fresh, nutritious, and sustainable produce in the comfort of your urban surroundings. By following these guidelines, you can unlock the sweet



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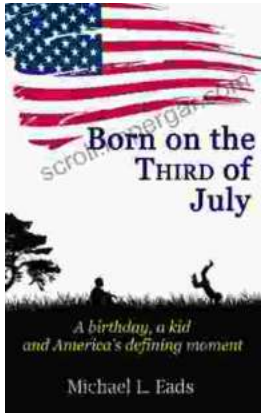
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