

Meopham and
District
Allotments
Southdown
Shaw



Growing Potatoes - Pests and Diseases

Common problems

Potato blight

- Most common disease in wet, warm summers.
- First symptoms - rapidly spreading brown watery rot, affects leaves & stems.
- Tubers can be affected - reddish-brown decay below skin, firm at first but soon developing into a soft rot.

Remedy

- Not easy to control
- Remove blight-affected leaves
- Removing too many leaves will reduce growth • Earthing up potatoes provides protection to tubers.
- Grow blight resistant cultivars
- Select earlies - usually harvested before blight strikes.

Potato blackleg

- Bacterial disease causing black rotting at stem base.
- Initial infections cause stunted growth and yellowing stems.
- Tuber flesh may be grey or brown and rotten.

Remedy

- Remove and destroy infected plants.
- Rotate crops.
- Buy resistant varieties such as 'Charlotte', 'Pixie' and 'Saxon'.

Potato scab (Disease) - Evidence of scab not obvious till harvest time

- Raised scab-like lesions on the potato surface.
- Does not affect the taste of the potato- easily removed when peeled.

Remedy - No control for scab

- Can be worse in dry weather - keep potatoes well watered.
- Don't store potatoes with scab.

Potato rot

Significant problems often follow a wet growing season, particularly if the tubers are lifted from wet soil.

Remedy

- Use good quality, resistant certified seed tubers
- Harvest when the soil is neither wet nor very hard and dry.
- Store in cool, dry conditions

RHS Suggested varieties

'Picasso' AGM: Heavy-cropping maincrop potato, creamy skin, pink eyes. good disease resistance to scab.

'Accent' AGM: First early, creamy waxy flesh, good scab resistance.

'Desiree': Rosy skin and pale yellow flesh. Versatile maincrop potato.

'Charlotte' AGM: This is a salad potato, with yellow-skinned waxy tubers. Treat as an early potato.