

## Potatoes in a Bag

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**Overview:** Growing potatoes in a shopping bag or laundry basket is a garden activity that invites children to explore the wonders of growing food and also of repurposing a bag or basket. Young children enjoy the garden and there are many opportunities to make connections to a variety of topics that young inquiring minds want to know. This lesson is a productive way to incorporate gardening into the curriculum.

**Targeted Grades:** Pre-K & K

**Materials needed:** space, sun, woven material shopping bags or laundry baskets (used or dollar store are fine!), potting soil, seed potatoes or sprouting potatoes from the kitchen, water.

1. Fill bottom of bag or basket about 6 inches deep with potting soil.
2. Add seed or sprouting potatoes (4-6).
3. As the potato plants grow, add 3-4 inches of soil. Keep adding soil over time as the plants grow, until your container is full.
4. Water the container well every 3-5 days.
5. A container should yield 8 – 10 pounds of potatoes. Harvest by emptying the bag or basket and sorting the potatoes out of the soil. Even tiny potatoes are great pan-fried!

**Standard- Based Curricular Connections:** *There are many potential connections, based on your grade-level and curricular goals. Check your grade-specific standards for others. Navigate the Next Generation Science Standards (<http://www.nextgenscience.org/search-standards>) and Common Core State Standards (<http://www.corestandards.org/>)*

**Science** – Students could identify the different parts of plants, understand how to grow food, and practice diagramming.

**Math** – Students could practice measuring, counting, and ordering data.

**ELA** – Students could conduct research using picture books about plants and gardening. Students could practice oral language and enhance their vocabulary. Students could collect potato recipes from families and create a class recipe book.

**Social studies-** Students could discover the ways in which different cultures use potatoes. (in a multi-cultural community, your students might connect to the practices of their community)

**Art** – Students could create crafts like potato printing/stamping.

**Other-** Students could help to prepare a meal of the harvested crop.

**Additional Resources:**

- Using Reusable Grocery Bags to Grow Potatoes: <http://www.hometalk.com/1385654/use-reusable-grocery-bags-to-grow-potatoes>
- How to grow potatoes in bags: <http://www.thompson-morgan.com/how-to-grow-potatoes-in-bags>
- Basket instructions: <http://www.vegetablegardener.com/item/5215/growing-potatoes-in-a-laundry-basket>



Above left, photo from: <http://www.thompson-morgan.com/static-images/tandm/how-to-grow/potato-bag-click.jpg>

Above right, Basket Image from <http://www.vegetablegardener.com/item/15194/creative-places-to-grow-potatoes> and instructions at <http://www.vegetablegardener.com/item/5215/growing-potatoes-in-a-laundry-basket>

*These suggestions are examples only, and may require adaptation. Check your grade-specific standards to determine whether or not the suggestions provided meet your individual curricular needs.*

*For more information, contact [ctgreenleaf@ctgreenschools.org](mailto:ctgreenleaf@ctgreenschools.org)*

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