

Easy Way To Grow Potatoes

Neil McKerracher of Calmar, Alberta has come up with a clever new way to grow potatoes that eliminates hilling and weeding and makes harvest easy.

He plants potatoes in a "crib" measuring 3 by 6 ft. and about 4 ft. high. The corner posts are 2 by 4's and the sides 2 by 6's which are spaced about 2 in. apart. Sprouted potatoes are planted so that they grow out the side of the crib. At harvest time, all he has to do is take the boards down and sort through the dirt.

"It eliminates a lot of the back breaking work and is also good for people with a small garden because a lot of potatoes can be produced from a small area," says McKerracher, who harvested 60 lbs. of potatoes from his crib last year.

To plant, he covers the bottom of the crib with a mix of soil, compost, peat moss and vermiculite until it reaches the top of the bottom 2 by 6. Then he places sprouted potatoes on top of the soil spaced about 6 in. apart all around the perimeter of the crib, positioning the tip of the spout so it will grow out the side.

Then another layer of soil is added until

the next 2 by 6 is covered and again, potatoes with sprouts are planted around the perimeter. This layering process continues until the crib is filled to the top. On the top layer, potatoes are spaced evenly all across the crib (not just on the perimeter) and then covered with soil for the final time.

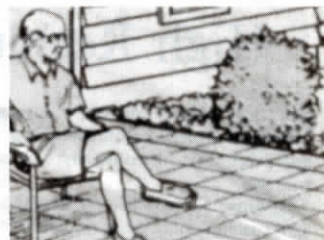
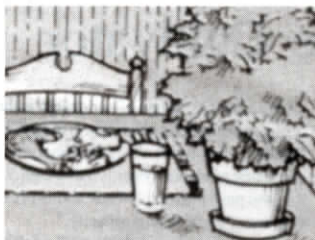
"Some people have asked me where to buy sprouted potatoes. To me, that's like asking how do you grow dandelions in a lawn since I store my potatoes in a basement room and they automatically sprout out by spring," says McKerracher.

He has never planted more than four tiers high but says he doesn't think there's any reason you couldn't go several layers higher. He waters the crib regularly since the elevated soil seems to dry out fast. In mid-September, he opens to harvest. The 60-lb. yield last fall worked out to 3 1/2 lbs. per sq. ft. over on the 18 sq. ft. plot.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Neil McKerracher, Calmar, Alberta, Canada (ph 403 985-3424).

(Excerpted from *Grainews*)

New Products Especially For Women And The Farm, Ranch Home



New Plant Repels Mosquitoes

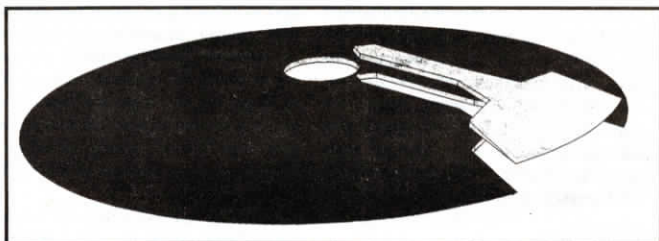
You don't have to "goop up" with expensive mosquito lotions and sprays just to sit on your deck or patio, according to a Michigan nursery that's selling a first-of-its-kind plant that repels mosquitos.

Developed after 13 years of research by a Dutch horticulturist, the company says it's the only mosquito repellent plant in the world. It's a member of the geranium family and somewhat like a citronella plant - a fragrance that's used in mosquito repellent candles. The plant was created by grafting different species together.

You can set one plant next to an outdoor table or place a whole ring of them around

your deck or patio. They grow up to 5 ft. tall and will protect a 10 sq. ft. area. The first year they grow to about 16 in. tall so don't expect much protection right after you receive the young plants from the nursery. They sell for \$9.99 and will be replaced free of charge if they fail to grow in the first three years. In northern climates they must be kept in pots and brought indoors over winter. Down south, they can be planted outside permanently.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Michigan Bulb Co., 1950 Waldorf N.W., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49550 (ph 616 771-9500).



"World's Best" Garden Hoe

"I got the idea when I used a chunk of broken disc welded to a pipe handle to clean out a trench. I carried the idea around in my head for 5 years before I finally went ahead and built a prototype," says Loren Kisby, Munden, Kan., inventor and manufacturer of the "world's best" garden hoe.

"I made a prototype in December 1990. Friends were impressed so we took it to the Small Business Development Center of Kansas which lined me up with three marketing students at Kansas State University. They took our product on as a class project and helped get it off the ground.

"Sales have increased steadily and we now have hoes in six states and are listed in a mail order catalog out of Virginia. We plan to keep exhibiting at trade shows and we're looking for dealers nationwide.

"Here's why we think we have the world's best hoe: The working end of the Rogue hoe is actually a section cut out of an ag disc blade by a plasma cutter with an optical pattern reader. The quality of this steel is at the heart of our success. The section is then



sharpened so that the result is a hoe that's sold sharp and stays sharp.

"We also use only quality 1 3/8-in. dia. oak or ash handles that are joined to the head in such a way to eliminate any possibility of the head turning in the handle. The handle is slotted and is joined to the head by a pressure fitting and bonded with industrial strength epoxy, the same material used by golf club manufacturers to hold club heads on golf club shafts."

Sells for \$22.95 (plus \$4 UPS). Three models with differently shaped blades available.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Loren Kisby, Rt. 1, Box 22, Munden, Kan. 66959 (ph 913 987-5340).

Round Carrots Taste Like The Real Thing

Carrots produced by this new variety are round - about the size of golf balls - yet taste just like any other top quality carrot.

"Thumbelina" carrots were developed by Petoseed in California. "One unique quality about Thumbelina carrots is that they don't have to be scraped or peeled. Just wash them. They're great served raw or they can be baked whole and served like potatoes," says company product manager Margaret Bahns-Jensen, noting that one of the new varieties' biggest benefits is that they're easier to dig than long-rooted carrots.

They can be found in a number of national seed catalogs this year or you can contact the company direct. Petoseeds also just introduced seeds for giant watermelons that average over 200 lbs. and mature in 90 to 95 days.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Petoseed Company, Inc., P.O. Box 4206, Saticoy, Calif. 93007 (ph 805 647-1188).

