

# Growing Potatoes



After ploughing, once the soil is dry enough in spring it is ridged up. The machine digs deep and piles up the soil in **ridges**.



This machine then **cultivates** the deep ridges to make the soil a **tilth**, meaning the lumps in the soil are broken up and it is light and loose.



The **destoner** removes the stones so the potatoes can grow freely. The stones drop in the channel between the ridges. It leaves the ridge level to make a **potato bed**.



In April or May **the planter** moves along the beds planting a **potato tuber** every 35cm approx. Each bed is divided into 2 **drills**.



After 3-4 weeks the **new potato plants** emerge from the top of the drills. Now the farmer must watch them carefully for pests and diseases.



When the weather is very dry in summer the potatoes are **irrigated** with water. They need a lot of water to swell the new growing tubers.



The potato plants have small pink or white **flowers**. They also grow a small green tomato-like fruit that is poisonous to eat.



Once the potatoes have reached a suitable size the green stalks (shaws) are **mulched**.



Towards the end of August the main crop potatoes are harvested. The **harvester** lifts and separates the potatoes from the soil. They are carefully loaded into boxes.



The boxes of potatoes holding one ton each are taken to the **potato store** on the farm where they are kept cool and dark until they are needed to eat.