

Washington State University, May 2025

<https://vegetables.wsu.edu/sweetpotato>

Welcome to the second sweetpotato newsletter of 2025! It's almost planting time! We will be planting our trials at WSU NWREC in Mount Vernon on June 3 and 4 and distributing slips to farmers in the following weeks. You should have received an email about when your slips will be available for pickup or mailed, but feel free to contact us with additional questions!

- Sammi Grieger: samantha.grieger@wsu.edu (Olympic/Kitsap Peninsula)
- Laura Schulz: laura.schulz@wsu.edu (Other areas in WA/OR)



Wilting or dieback of slips is very common in the first couple weeks after transplanting (left). Slips usually regrow from a node near the soil surface within about 3 weeks (right).

Handling Slips Before Planting

Ideally, plant slips right after receiving them. If you receive slips and can't plant them immediately:

- **For 1-4 days**, place the ends in a container of water or wrap the ends loosely with a wet paper towel (great option for slips you received in the mail)
- **Freshly cut slips** can be stored without additional water in a **cool shady location for 1-4 days** before planting (*don't do this with slips you received in the mail!*)
- **For up to a few weeks**, place slips loosely together in a large pot with potting mix, burying only the bottom inch of the slips, and recut ends before planting
- Slips should **never be refrigerated**

Planting Slips

Follow these tips to increase slip survival and sweetpotato yield!

- **Warm soil temperatures** are essential for slip survival; wait to plant until soil is at least 65°F at a 4-inch depth for 4 days in a row, typically 3 to 4 weeks after the frost-free date
- **Do not strip leaves** from lower nodes before planting
- Plant slips at least **3 nodes deep**, leaving only 2–3 nodes above the soil surface
- **Irrigate deeply within one hour** of planting to minimize transplant shock
- Continue to irrigate regularly (approximately twice a week) for the first few weeks
- It is **very common for slips to wilt and lose leaves** shortly after transplanting; if soil is significantly warm and moisture is maintained, **slips will recover** within a few weeks

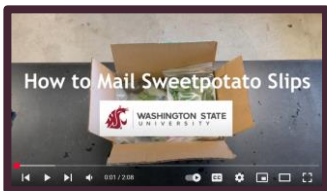


Note: Our sweetpotato research is grant funded, however we did not receive funding to provide slips to others. If you would like to support our project, [consider making a donation to our Horticulture Program](#) at WSU Mount Vernon NWREC.

Watch



Watch how to plant sweetpotato slips in our video [How to Plant Sweetpotato Slips!](#)



Curious how we prepare sweetpotato slips to mail? Watch our video [How to Mail Sweetpotato Slips!](#)



Fun Fact!

Did you know: Researchers and industry groups write “sweetpotato” as one word to avoid confusion with potatoes that are sweet and to emphasize that potatoes and sweetpotatoes are completely unrelated species. The [North Carolina Sweetpotato Commission even has a petition](#) to get dictionaries to change the official spelling of “sweetpotato” to one word!

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