

Where do potatoes come from?



So now we know that milk comes from a cow and that the whole process starts at the farm, we're beginning to wonder where other food and drinks that we consume come from. Does all food come from animals? What does it mean to grow food? How and where is this

done? Throughout this project, we will be expanding and developing our knowledge of food produce and its origin by, this time, focusing on crops, plants, fruits and vegetables. We will be specifically answering the question; where does potato come from?

To begin, we'll once again be putting on our wellies and heading on a journey to a local allotment. At this site, we'll be shown around by a local gardener who is keen to answer our questions and help us explore as we discover what and how vegetables are grown in the ground. We'll observe the plants and crops growing as well as pull and pick some of the fruit and vegetables that have already grown. It is here that we will first consider how potatoes might grow and will have the opportunity to plant our own to take back to school.



In the classroom, we'll learn how to care for our potato crop to help it grow. We'll practise gardening skills such as raking, digging, planting and watering and will discover the important processes that occur when plants grow. We'll

learn that plants have roots and that the tiny green plant to initially sprout above the ground is called a shoot. We'll learn that plants and crops need sunlight, water and soil to grow, and will learn that after a long time has passed, we can often eat a part of it. I wonder what fruit and vegetables the children might recognise from their own packed lunches?



Once we know all about crops and plants and feel secure in knowing where and how potatoes are grown, we'll journey to the shops once again. This time we'll be buying the ingredients for a mini cooking project -the children will be working together to make mashed potato! In small groups we'll practise taking turns, sharing equipment and working together to follow a recipe. After lots of peeling, mashing, pouring and mixing, the children can take pride in tasting their delicious potato-based creation.



The project will have the children observing, noticing, predicting exploring and sequencing as scientists again, but this time we'll also be placing an emphasis on following instructions, turn-taking, working collaboratively to meet a shared goal, and engaging with resources and shared experiences together. It's a very 'hands-on' project with lots of opportunity

to strengthen and develop our fine and gross motor skills too.

To facilitate this, a gardener's haven has been created in the classroom, fully stocked with seeds, equipped with gardening tools and, of course, potatoes. The provocation will have us rolling our sleeves up, tying up our gardening

aprons and getting muddy in the soil! In the book corner there will be a range of fiction and non-fiction books as well as our project stories;



Through the stories, environment, experiences and project sessions, the children will be exposed to the following vocabulary;

Nouns; crop, plant, seed, shoot, water, leaves, root, sunlight, soil, potato, allotment, trowel

Verbs; To grow, to dig, to water, to care for, to plant, to harvest, to mash, to peel

Adjectives; muddy, big, small, round

Prepositions; in, on, under

Supporting your child at home. At home you could support your child with this project by:

- Making a trip to a local allotment or going for a walk past fields with animals crops them. Make comments about what the fields and gardens are being used for and open up a discussion.
- Explore potatoes at home -what do they look and feel like when they're taken straight from the bag? Are they all exactly the same or do they look slightly different from each other? How would you describe them? How does this change when they are cooked?
- Have a look in your cupboard at home, what other foods contain potatoes? Are there any foods that have an image or picture of a potato on the packet? What do you think this might mean? Can the children spot if and where *potato* is written in the ingredients?
- Get peeling, mashing and cooking potatoes together –what potato based foods can you create together? Practise turn-taking, sharing and following instructions or a recipe with your child when you do this together.

- Go shopping with your child and ask your child to find the potatoes. Can they spot them?
- Plant and grow your own crops and plants together. Can your child make a choice about what they'd like to grow? Can they recall how to plant it themselves? Do they know where to keep it or what it needs to grow? Remember to look after it!!
- Share the photos uploaded onto Dojo with your child if they feature in them. Comment and ask 'who', 'what' and 'where' questions about them and encourage them to share project-related experiences with you.
- Read and share our project stories at home (listed above). If you are not a confident reader yourself, sharing the story together will still be a valuable activity. Look at the pictures together and talk about what is happening on each page, encourage your child to hold the book and turn the pages themselves, and see if your child can label any of the project-related vocabulary in the illustrations. Some of our project stories can also be found as 'read-aloud' versions on the internet.