

**WILLIAM SHEARER**



Estd.

1857

**SEED POTATOES**

**FOR SEASON  
2023**

71 Victoria Street, Kirkwall  
Orkney KW15 1DQ

Tel. (01856) 873189 Fax. (01856) 870892

E-mail: [info@williamshearer.co.uk](mailto:info@williamshearer.co.uk)

[www.williamshearer.co.uk](http://www.williamshearer.co.uk)

*There can be nothing finer than the taste of  
The new season's tatties, their outer garments retained,  
Boiled in sea water and buttered to taste.....*

*An Orcadian.*

# **Introduction**

Welcome to our Seed Potato selection for 2023.

At the time of writing, most of the County's potato crop is safely gathered in with good crops being reported in gardens and with growers in most areas. The moister summer weather favoured potato crops but caused a few disappointments due to blight.

We have the usual selection of popular favourites as well as a number of new introductions for you to try.

As always, at the festive season, we will have a great selection of eating potatoes from both local and Scottish growers. Try the "Ultimate Roasters" from Farewell Farms, South Ronaldsay. These are available to buy now.

If you are a seasoned gardener or planning to have a first time go at "Growing your Own", we trust you find something to your taste.

*William Shearer*

---

## **First Earlies**

### **Casablanca**

Casablanca has a smooth white skin and shallow eyes, which will be of interest to exhibitors while it's cooking ability to chip, bake or boil will make it a chef's dream. Trials have found a good resistance to splitting, virus leaf roll, blackleg and blight.

### **Colleen - Organic**

A round oval high yielding multi-purpose variety. Flesh is light yellow and of a fairly dry texture. Has good resistance to disease and foliar blight. Popular choice.

### **Duke of York**

A much favoured old variety, especially in Scotland. Dry mealy texture with a firm pale yellow flesh and pronounced flavour. First introduced in 1891, still an Orcadian favourite.

### **Epicure**

First introduced in 1897, Epicure remains a firm favourite despite its deep eyes. Tubers are round with a distinctive flavour. The flesh is white with a slightly mealy texture.

### **Lady Christl**

An extra early variety, Lady Christl produces bumper crops of excellent flavour. Skin is very smooth and bright, making this variety popular for exhibition and salads. Ideal for greenhouse and polycrub forcing.

### **Premiere**

Firm, dry, light yellow fleshed potato with none of the waxiness associated with some first earlies. Good flavour and disease resistance. Popular choice.

### **Red Duke of York**

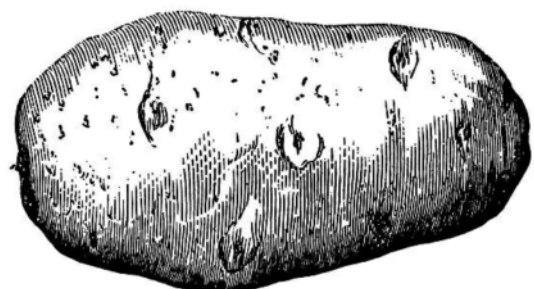
A red skinned variant of Duke of York. First appeared in 1942. Slightly earlier than Duke of York.

### **Rocket**

Produces very early firm waxy tubers. Particularly suited to growing under polythene or in poly tunnels for the earliest crops.

### **Swift**

Extra early Caithness bred variety. Produces good crops in as little as 7 to 8 weeks. Tubers are round oval with a waxy white flesh. Ideal for forcing.



## **Second Earlies**

### **British Queen**

An oval white variety which first appeared in 1894. A dry mealy variety with excellent old fashioned potato taste. Susceptible to blight.

### **Charlotte**

French bred variety and first introduced in 1981 for the early salad potato market. It has a pear shape with a tender creamy yellow flesh which remains firm. Delicious hot or cold.

### **Catriona Limited**

This firm old favourite is making a welcome return to our list. Unavailable for several years, we have secured a small quantity for 2023. Catriona first appeared in 1922. It has a distinctive purple splash around the eyes. The flesh is pale yellow with a good strong flavour.

### **Kestrel**

Smooth skinned oval variety with attractive violet eyes. A creamy, fleshed, fairly dry textured potato with a pleasant flavour.

### **Orla**

This recent introduction is an oval to long oval variety producing medium to large tubers. It has a good skin finish with shallow eyes and a light yellow flesh. Orla has an excellent resistance to tuber and foliar blight.

### **Sagitta**

A round golden skinned variety with shallow eyes, popular with the chip shop trade due to its high dry matter and fluffy texture. Great for roasting and mash and can be boiled well too. Recommended.

### **Sharpes Express**

Another old favourite introduced ten years after the Duke of York. Pear shaped with a white flesh and smooth skin. An excellent variety but susceptible to disease. First introduced in 1901.

### **Vitabella**

A new oval early/second early producing excellent crops. The white skin appears with darker areas at lifting with the skin easily removed with handling. Lightly boil for 20 minutes to retain their firm texture and buttery taste. Excellent for chips. Vitabella are ready, if conditions are right, 14 to 16 weeks after planting. Vitabella's tall foliage may make it less suitable in exposed conditions. Despite this it has very good blight resistance. Recommended.

### **Wilja**

A high yielding Dutch bred variety which first appeared in 1972. It has good culinary qualities including chips and baking. Moderately firm slightly dry texture with a good resistance to blight.

### **Purple Eyed Seedling**

A versatile second early with distinctive purple splashes on a light white skin. Tubers are round oval with pale yellow flesh. Good all round cooking qualities. Great for the show bench.

## **Main Crop**

### **Blue Belle**

This recent introduction is making a return to our list by popular demand. Blue Belle produces heavy crops of smooth, oval tubers with creamy-white skin beautifully marked around the eyes with blue patches. Can be boiled, mashed or baked. Ideal choice for the exhibition grower.

### **Cara**

Smooth skinned variety with pink shallow eyes. Cara has a floury white flesh and recommended for baking. Excellent cropper with a good resistance to blight.

### **Desiree**

A long red skinned variety maturing as an early main crop. Produces a high yield of good sized tubers which are of a waxy texture. An excellent variety for boiling and baking which rarely discolours after cooking. Has a good resistance to drought, gangrene, dry rot, powdery scab and bruising.

### **Java - New for 2023**

Java is an ideal variety for gardens and allotments due to its consistently high-yields and excellent fungal, bacterial, virus and pest resistance. The tubers are round oval with a red skin and waxy flesh which doesn't fall apart when boiled.

### **Kerrs Pink**

A floury potato with soft creamy white flesh and excellent flavour. Very popular in Ireland and with Shetlanders, despite its deep eyes.

### **King Edward**

This well known variety first appeared in 1902. It has an oval to kidney shape and is partly red, mostly at the crown end. The cream white floury flesh rarely discolours on cooking.

### **Maris Piper**

A good all round table potato with a dry floury creamy flesh. Good flavour and rarely discolours after cooking. Much favoured by chippers.

### **Mayan Scapa**

Mayan varieties (phureja varieties) are direct ancestors of the first potatoes ever discovered in South America. These varieties may not produce massive crops, but they have a flavour all of their own. They also cook in two thirds of the time of normal varieties. Mayan Scapa is a long oval type yellow skinned variety with a dense yellow flesh, which is described as both sweet and morish. Delicious hot or cold. Recommended.

Scapa, as the name suggests, has strong Orkney links. This Scottish bred variety is a cross of Mayan Gold and Mayan Twilight and is owned by James Thorburn of Farewell Farms, South Ronaldsay where some of the stock is produced. It is now commercially available worldwide with producers as far afield as Australia.

### **Picasso**

An attractive round, oval variety with pink shallow eyes. Tubers are uniform producing a very high yield. Flesh is cream and of a firm texture. Excellent all round variety for boiling, baking and roasting. Ideal for exhibition. Bred from Cara.

### **Record**

Another Dutch bred variety which was first marketed in 1925. Although it has lost some of its popularity, it is still widely grown and retains a good disease resistance. A mealy yellow fleshed variety, ideal for chipping.

### **Sarpo Axona - Organic**

This "sister" to Sarpo Mira was bred in Hungary by Dr Sarvari. The name "Sarpo" is an abbreviation of "Sarvari" and "Potato". The consensus is that both are highly resistant to blight and that Axona has the best flavour of the two. Recommended.

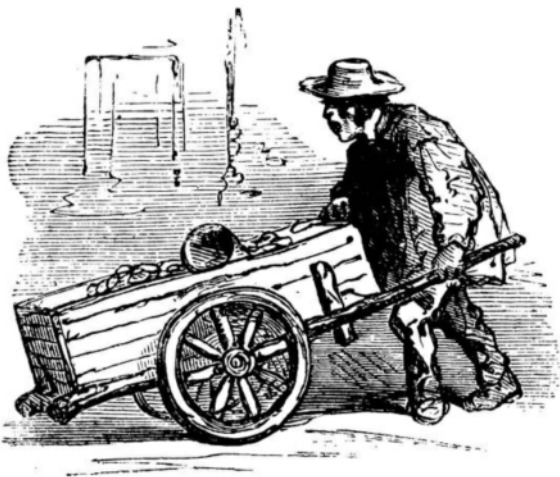
### **Setanta**

First introduced commercially to Orkney by ourselves, this red skinned variant of Rooster has a higher dry matter content. It has an extremely high resistance to foliar blight, gangrene and dry rot. Setanta stores well and its eating quality is excellent. Simply the best all round variety available. Recommended.

## **Late Main Crop**

### **Golden Wonder**

This old favourite from 1906 has a very dry mealy texture with a very pronounced flavour. It requires a long growing season and early boxing is recommended. Careful boiling is necessary to avoid disintegration and best cooked in their skins.



## **Speciality and Heritage Collection**

We are pleased to offer these old favourites from times past. These rare varieties are grown in Scotland under organic conditions and sold as small ware.

## **Second Early**

### **Shetland Black**

This oval variety from our northerly neighbours has a distinctive inky blue/black skin. Flesh is yellow with a ring of purple just under the skin. Exceptionally fine flavour and very nutritious. Best cooked in their skins or steamed to avoid disintegration.

## **Main Crop**

### **Arran Victory**

First appeared in 1918 and named to celebrate the end of the Great War. Oval shape with blue toned skin. A very floury textured variety which is best simmered gently for an exceptionally flavoured fluffy mash.

## **Late Main Crops**

### **Pink Fir Apple**

One of the oldest varieties still in commercial culture (c. 1850). The long pink tubers have a tendency to poke out of the side of the drills and late season hoeing up may be necessary. It retains its new potato taste throughout the season. Best cooked in their skins. Prone to blight.

## **Taster Packs**

We are pleased to introduce these taster packs for you to try alongside your old favourites. Contents vary from 8 to 10 tubers per pack.

### **Alouette**

Sensory taste winning variety. Red skin, oval tubers and good all rounder. High blight resistance. Recommended.

### **Caledonian Rose**

Strong red skin with yellow flesh. Resistant to eel worm. Oval good all rounder.

### **Salad Blue**

Dark blue skinned vigorous main crop with blue floury flesh. Good all round novelty variety.



## Varieties resistant to eelworm

<u>Early</u>	<u>Second Early</u>	<u>Main Crop</u>
Casablanca	Kestrel	Cara
Premiere		Maris Piper
Swift		
Rocket		

## Varieties also known as -

Duke of York	also known as	Midlothian Early
Red Duke of York	also known as	Rode Eersteling
Sharpe's Express	also known as	White Heather
Shetland Black	also known as	Black Kidney
Kepplestone Kidney	also known as	Ramshorn or Cowshorn

## Varieties with medium to high resistance to blight

<u>Early</u>	<u>Second Early</u>	<u>Main Crop</u>
Casablanca	Kestrel	Cara
Colleen	Orla	Picasso
Premiere	Vitabella	Record
Swift	Wilja	Robinta
		Sarpo Axona

## Salad Varieties

Charlotte, Pink Fir Apple, Rocket.

## Recommended for baking

Cara, Blue Belle, Picasso, Golden Wonder.

## Exhibition

Casablanca	Kestrel	Rocket
Picasso	Swift	Robinta
	Blue Belle	

---

## Potatoes from Tubers

On receipt of your tubers, place them with the 'rose end' (shoot buds) uppermost, in trays in a frost-free, light position, to encourage the formation of sturdy shoots, which won't be too spindly, over the next few weeks. An egg tray is ideal.

Planting can be carried out from late March onwards, but earlier plantings are at greatest risk from damage by frost, as the young, tender shoots emerge. Space the tubers around 30cm (a foot) apart, slightly further for the main crop types. Distance between the rows is 60-80cm and planting depth about 10-15cm.

Potatoes will tolerate a wide range of soil types; to reduce the risk of disease build-up, it is best to rotate the crop on at least a three-year cycle. Soil with a good organic content, and a sunny aspect, is best.

If the emerging shoots are threatened by frost, draw soil over them, or protect with straw or fleece. Earth up at around 25cm high, by drawing soil up around the stems. As the crop develops, water generously in dry weather, to ensure a good crop, and to stop tubers going soft during development.

Harvesting times are: July for earlies (as the flowers open)  
August for second earlies  
September for main crops (as the tops die off and wither)

Storage of the main crop varieties, allow the skins to dry for a few hours before sacking them up, otherwise they're more likely to rot during storage.

We always carry a stock of second-hand jute sacks. Ideal for storing your potato crop.

*Information provided for guidance only, as cultural and climatic circumstances vary.*

## **Loose Onion Sets**

Choose a sunny, well drained site. It's possible to grow onions on heavy soil, but drainage should be improved prior to planting or, try raised beds. Onions, garlic and shallots prefer fertile soil, but don't require much nitrogen, so avoid using freshly manured soil. Instead prepare your planting area well in advance of the planting season.

Plant 3" to 4" apart, leaving a hoe width between rows. Cover sets so the necks are just protruding above the soil.

### **Alpha**

Alpha is the earliest ripening brown onion supplied in spring that is ready for harvesting at least 4 weeks before any other variety. Heat treated, Alpha can be planted in late February, if conditions allow, without fear of bolting. Alternatively, sets can be potted up into small pots for transplanting later.

### **Red Baron**

An excellent, very dark red coloured flat-round onion with rings right to the centre, best planted late. Ideal for salads.

### **Sturon**

An RHS Award of Garden Merit variety producing good sized semi-round bulbs, which store well. Our best seller.

### **Turbo**

Compared to Sturon, Turbo has the ability to keep longer and produce high yields.

### **Centurion F1**

An impressive large hybrid variety producing a heavy early crop of uniformly globe-shaped bulbs, with even skin colour. Excellent for eating or the show bench.

---

## **Loose Shallots**

Plant shallots in rows in any firm, well drained soil in full sun. Prepare the planting area several weeks in advance by forking in some well rotted garden compost to improve fertility and drainage. Avoid planting shallots in freshly manured ground. On particularly wet land, try planting in raised beds. Plant the bulbs so that the tip of the bulb is just protruding above the soil surface. Leave a space of 7" between each bulb and 12" between rows.

### **Golden Gourmet**

Golden Gourmet can be planted in very early spring. It has a mild flavour which makes it ideal for salads and pickling. A firm favourite.

### **Red Sun**

An attractive red tinged skin variety, producing good yields of crisp, white fleshed bulbs of excellent flavour for cooking or salads. Bulbs show good storage potential.

## **Potato & General Fertilisers from Bulk and Pre-pack**

### **Main Crop (12-22-22)**

This product is suitable for all potato varieties as well as grass and general garden use. Sold from bulk.

### **Poultry Manure**

Available in 7kg tubs.

### **Rock Dust (Organic)**

Rockdust is 420 million years old, freshly ground, untreated, volcanic rock blended from various Scottish quarries. Whilst chemical fertilisers may produce more immediate results, when you add Rockdust you are adding a huge range of minerals and trace elements for long term soil health. Available in 4kg tubs and 20kg bags.

### **Vitax Organic Potato Fertiliser**

A balanced organic fertiliser for sustained growth of potato tubers. Ideal for potato planters and barrels

---

## **Sundries**

### **Potato / Vegetable Planting Bag**

Ideal for your garden, patio or balcony. Includes carry handles and drainage holes.

### **Hessian Sacks**

Quantity of new and second hand 25kg sacks always in stock

### **Blight Guard**

A brand new produce developed for the prevention of foliar blight in potatoes and tomatoes.

---

## **Clover Compost**

Clover is a consistent high quality nutrient enriched 100% peat compost, with wetting agent to ensure easy watering. Use for all your seed sowing, potting, containers and hanging baskets.

Clover Compost contains no recycled or waste materials and is harvested from carefully managed peat reserves, which are not designated sites of scientific or scenic interest.

**MULTI PURPOSE** - available in 20ltr, 40ltr, 75ltr bags and 100ltr bales.

**MOTHER EARTH** - A budget, multi purpose compost containing all essential nutrients and wetting agents. Suitable for a wide range of plants. Available in 60ltr bags.

Also 4 Plant Growbags and Bark Chips.

# Visit our Garden Store

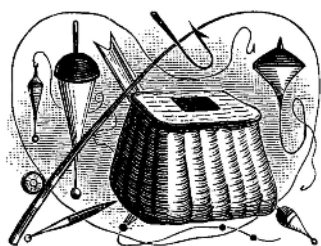


*Large selection of  
Johnson & Country Value Flower & Vegetable Seeds,  
Compost, Seed Trays, Onion Sets etc.*

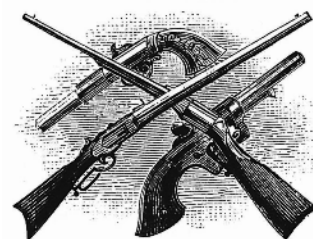
*Fertilisers, Plant Foods, Pesticides, Weedkiller.*

*Grass Seeds for lawn etc.*

*Choose from a wide range of garden tools.  
Forks, Spades, Rakes, Trowels etc.*



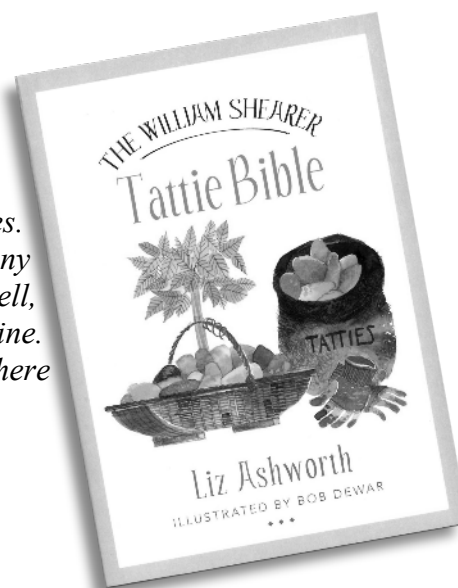
**Have a browse around our  
Fishing  
and  
Shooting Department**



## **The Tattie Bible**

*An imaginative selection of over 50 recipes.  
From Tattie scones, Vichyssoise and Granny  
Mac's fish cakes to Raspberry tattie bakewell,  
Chocolate potato fudge brownies and tattie wine.  
The William Shearer Tattie Bible proves that there  
are many different ways to cook that potato.*

Only £4.99  
or £5.99 including postage.



## **WILLIAM SHEARER**

71 Victoria Street, Kirkwall, Orkney KW15 1DQ  
Tel. (01856) 873189 Fax. (01856) 870892

E-mail: [info@williamshearer.co.uk](mailto:info@williamshearer.co.uk)

[www.williamshearer.co.uk](http://www.williamshearer.co.uk)

*Our third century of trading.  
Still growing strong.*

# WILLIAM SHEARER



71 Victoria Street, Kirkwall  
Orkney KW15 1DQ

Tel. (01856) 873189      Fax. (01856) 870892

E-mail: [info@williamshearer.co.uk](mailto:info@williamshearer.co.uk)

[www.williamshearer.co.uk](http://www.williamshearer.co.uk)

**Opening Hours:**

Monday - Saturday  
9.00a.m. - 5.30p.m.