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Ornamental Sweet Potatoes - Fact Sheet



The ornamental sweet potato (*Ipomoea batatas*) are grown for their highly attractive heart shaped leaves.

To grow them well you need to follow these basic ideas

- Full sun or at least half a day of sun
- Good quality good soil with added compost and fertiliser
- Premium potting mix for pots with controlled release fertiliser added
- Protection from severe frosts (they will die right down in winter in frosty areas)
- Regular tip pruning



Do they produce edible tubers like normal sweet potatoes?

The ornamental sweet potato will grow an edible tuber that is somewhat drier than the commercially grown edible cultivars but quite tasty. Perhaps best suited to baking and addition to cakes or patties.

How do you propagate?

They are easily grown from tip cuttings in summer. Place in potting mix in a shady position in the garden or simply strike in water.

How many cultivars are available?

Overseas there are quite a number of different cultivars but in Australia there seems to be 4 main cultivars – a gold form, a dark purple (often sold as Blackie), a soft purple form and a cut leaf purple form.



The sweet potato looks great when combined with Dragon Wing Begonia or Impatiens such as these specimens seen growing in Niagara Village on a recent Wattle Tree Garden tour to Canada – for more details see www.wattletreehorticulture.com.au