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**PRECAUTIONS IN CULTIVATING
 POTATOES.**

It is well known that this important tuber has very much deteriorated of late years; the yield being less and the quality inferior to what was formerly obtained. Several causes have probably combined to produce this result; such as insufficient attention to the storing and selecting of seed, unseasonably late planting, injudicious manuring, wetness of the land and its inadequate preparation. The character of the seasons has no doubt much to do with the result. It was confidently expected during the late favourable summer in the British Islands that the potato crop would prove unusually sound and abundant, as the plant had seldom a healthier appearance; but it would appear from recent accounts that the heavy rains of September seriously affected the ripening process, and that large areas, particularly in late and damp situations, have been visited by disease, and the crop as a consequence has been very much deteriorated. To some extent this has also been the case in Canada, as well as in certain localities of the neighbouring States. We condense the following precautions for the consideration of our readers from a recent number of the "*Journal de la Société Centrale d'Agriculture Belge*."

1st: The late planting, which prevents the tuber from undergoing at the proper period the different phases of vegetation, and weakens the vitality of the potatoes, which an earlier planting would have strengthened.

2nd. The division of the tuber into quarters, which deprives the plant of the nourishment nature has placed at its disposal.

3rd. The principal cause of the diminution in the crops of potatoes is the use of the lower part of the tuber instead of the upper part or crown. The latter produces sprouts not only stronger, but quicker and more productive, whilst the lower part of the tuber produces sprouts later and less vigorous. The sprouts are often very slender, and produce weak stalks without strength, and which fall to the ground, and often at the raising of the potato an abundant quantity of hair like roots is found instead of potatoes; if they are found, it is in small numbers and of every little size. These facts are said to be but little known, and deserve particular attention by cultivators of this useful esculent. Let them choose for planting tubers with large germs or eyes, and if they do not wish to plant them whole, cut them in twos and across; plant only the upper half or crown, and keep the lower part for consuming.

4th. It is advisable, after raising the crop, to wash the seed potatoes in diluted urine with lime and salt, and those intended for consuming, in water with lime and salt, and dry them well before pitting. The seed potatoes should not be taken cut till the time for planting, in order that the germs and little roots may not be destroyed, as this would weaken and retard the growth of the plant. When potatoes are kept in outhouses, it is best to pick them over and cut them long before planting, in order to dry the wound: A hard crust is formed