Before the Spanish conquest, the Inca and the pre-Incan peoples of the Andes developed a unique system of agriculture, as rich as that of any other continent. Although they originated in a tropical region, these crops are grown in the cooler high elevations of the Andes, which makes them suitable for cultivation in temperate lowland climates. All of these plants can be grown as annuals or perennials in frost-free climates.

**ULLUCO**

*Ullucus tuberosus*

- Size and shape of new potatoes
- Flavor is similar to beet with a firmer texture
- Dozens of varieties
- Very beautiful tubers in a wide range of colors
- Grows best in maritime climates

**OCA**

*Oxalis tuberosa*

- Size and shape of fingerling potatoes
- Flavors range from lemony potato to winter squash
- Hundreds of varieties
- Colors in vivid combinations of red, orange, yellow, purple, and white
- Easy to grow in mild climates

**POTATO**

*Solanum tuberosum*

The potato is the only one of the Andean root crops to have become popular outside of South America (so far).

**YACON**

*Smallanthus sonchifolius*

- Size and shape of large baking potatoes
- Flavor is like a mix of pear and celery
- Dozens of varieties
- Tall plants look like sunflowers
- Grows well in temperate to sub-tropical climates

**MASHUA**

*Tropaeolum tuberosum*

- Size and shape of parsnips
- Flavor is like turnip or radish with an aniseed or flowery aftertaste
- Dozens of varieties in many colors
- Vines climb up to ten feet
- Easy to grow in mild climates
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>OCA</th>
<th>ULLUCO</th>
<th>POTATO</th>
<th>YACON</th>
<th>MASHUA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CLIMATE</td>
<td>Cool summer</td>
<td>Cool summer</td>
<td>Cool summer</td>
<td>Any not very hot / dry</td>
<td>Cool summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEASON</td>
<td>Mild autumn</td>
<td>Mild autumn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mild autumn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YIELD</td>
<td>6+ months</td>
<td>7+ months</td>
<td>4+ months</td>
<td>6+ months</td>
<td>5+ months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPACING</td>
<td>1-2 LB</td>
<td>1/2-1 LB</td>
<td>1 1/2-8 LB</td>
<td>3-8 LB</td>
<td>1-12 LB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEIGHT</td>
<td>15 inches</td>
<td>15 inches</td>
<td>15 inches</td>
<td>36 inches</td>
<td>30 inches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 1/2 feet</td>
<td>1 1/2 feet</td>
<td>3 feet</td>
<td>6 feet</td>
<td>10+ feet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUGGESTED USES & NUTRITION**

**OCA:**
- Substitute for potatoes in almost any recipe
- Slice thinly and use raw in salads or with dip
- Stems can be used like rhubarb
- Leaves can be used as a tart accent
- Nutrition & calories similar to potato
- Very high in vitamin C and iron

**ULLUCO:**
- Substitute for potatoes in recipes that are not fried
- Boil and cool, add to salads
- Add to stews, soups, roast with meat
- Leaves are also used as a spinach-like green
- Nutrition and calories similar to potato
- High in vitamin C and protein

**YACON:**
- Tubers are generally eaten raw as a fruit
- Very low calories
- Sugars are mostly indigestible
- High in potassium

**MASHUA:**
- Substitute for turnips, radishes, and potatoes in recipes that are not fried
- Makes a tasty dill pickle
- Leaves are also used as a green
- Lower calories & higher protein than potato
- High in vitamin C

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