

Sweet Potatoes

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What's So Great about Sweet Potatoes?

- ▶ Sweet potatoes are excellent sources of vitamin A, potassium, vitamin C and fiber.
- ▶ Sweet potatoes also contain niacin, folate, and iron.
- ▶ Like most vegetables, sweet potatoes are low in fat and are cholesterol free.
- ▶ Sweet potatoes can be prepared with sweet or savory flavors.
- ▶ Sweet potatoes go well with meats, fruits, and other vegetables.
- ▶ Canned, frozen, or fresh, sweet potatoes are available all year.



Selecting and Storing Sweet Potatoes

Sweet Potatoes are more fragile than white potatoes. Use extra care when selecting sweet potatoes.

Look for

Firm sweet potatoes with smooth, bright, uniformly colored skins.

Avoid

Sweet potatoes with worm holes, cuts, or any other problems with the skin. Skin problems cause waste and can lead to decay. Cutting away decay will not help because the rest of the potato flesh may have a bad taste. Decay is the worst problem with sweet potatoes. There are three types of decay.

▷ Wet, soft decay.

▷ Dry, firm decay. This begins at the end of the potato, making it discolored and shriveled.

▷ Dry rot in the form of sunken discolored areas on the sides of the potato.

Storage

Sweet potatoes have a thin skin that is easily damaged. Sweet potatoes should not be stored in the refrigerator. Keep in a cool (55°F to 60°F), dry place, such as a cellar, pantry, or garage. Sweet potatoes will keep for a month or longer if stored at 55°F. If kept at room temperature, sweet potatoes should be used within a week.



Varieties of Sweet Potatoes



There are two basic types of sweet potato. Each variety is described and pictured below.

<< **Moist (orange-fleshed)**

Moist sweet potatoes are the most common type. They have orange-colored flesh and are very sweet.

Dry (yellow-fleshed) >>

Dry sweet potatoes have pale-colored flesh and are low in moisture.



▶ **Did you know?**

About Canned Sweet Potatoes?

Sweet potatoes are also sold canned or frozen. The canned potatoes are usually packed in heavy syrup or “candied.” Candied sweet potatoes are high in sugar and fats. Canned sweet potatoes are much lower in beta-carotene, vitamin C, and B vitamins than fresh ones.

What is beta-carotene?

Beta-carotene is an antioxidant and a part of the carotenoid vitamin family. Carotenoids are found in brightly colored fruits and vegetables. The brighter the color of a fruit or vegetable, the higher the beta-carotene content. Beta-carotene is changed in the body to make vitamin A. This is a nutrient important for vision, immune function, and skin and bone health. Sweet potatoes are a good source of betacarotene



Preparation Tips

Scrub the potatoes under cold running water before cooking.

Baking

Pierce the potatoes with a fork before baking. Piercing lets steam escape. Bake until a fork is inserted easily. This is about 30 minutes for small potatoes. Larger potatoes take about 60 minutes.

Boiling

Wash potatoes. Potatoes can be boiled without peeling. The skins will slip off easily when the potatoes are done. This allows more of the nutrients to stay in the potato. Sweet potato skins can be eaten. Skins supply dietary fiber. Cooking time for whole potatoes varies from 15 to 35 minutes. Cooking time for chunks is 10 to 15 minutes.

Microwaving

Wash the potatoes. Pierce them several times with a fork. Place on a paper towel. Let the potatoes stand for five to 10 minutes when done. Cooking time for two medium potatoes is 5 to 9 minutes. For four potatoes cooking time is 10 to 13 minutes.



Fitting Sweet Potatoes into MyPyramid



The **GREEN** triangle of MyPyramid is the vegetable section. Vegetables may be raw or cooked, fresh, frozen, or canned. Age, gender, and level of physical activity determine the daily vegetable need. About 2 ½ cups of vegetables are recommended for a 2000 calorie per day diet. On MyPyramid, sweet potatoes are an orange vegetable. For a 2000 calorie diet, it is recommended having about 2 cups of orange vegetables per week. For more information on vegetable serving sizes visit www.mypyramid.gov.

Nutrition Facts

1 cup cooked Sweet Potatoes

Serving Size 1 cup 200g (200 g)	
Servings per container 1	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 180	Calories from Fat 3
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 72mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 41g	14%
Dietary Fiber 7g	26%
Sugars 13g	
Protein 4g	
Vitamin A 769%	Vitamin C 65%
Calcium 8%	Iron 8%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.	
©www.NutritionData.com	

Recipe Collection

Mashed Sweet Potatoes

Makes 6 servings

INGREDIENTS

4 small to medium sweet potatoes
3/4 teaspoon dried thyme
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper

Estimated Cost: Per Recipe: \$1.21

Per Serving: \$0.30

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Wash and pierce sweet potatoes .Wrap in paper towels.
2. Microwave for 10 minutes (with the skins). Allow to rest for 5 minutes. If you don't have a microwave, boil for 15-20 minutes or until tender.
3. Scoop out the warm potatoes
4. Put the potatoes in a medium bowl.
5. Use a fork or potato masher to mash the potatoes.
6. Mix in the thyme, salt, and pepper.

Nutrition Facts

2 cups Squash Soup

Serving Size (131g)	
Servings Per Container	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 100	Calories from Fat 0
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 23g	8%
Dietary Fiber 4g	16%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 2g	
Vitamin A 380%	Vitamin C 50%
Calcium 4%	Iron 6%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.	
	Calories 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less Than: 65g 80g
Saturated Fat	Less Than: 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less Than: 300mg 300 mg
Sodium	Less Than: 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4	



Grow Your Own Sweet Potatoes


Sweet potatoes are started from plants called "slips." Set the plants 12 to 18 inches apart. Place on a raised ridge about 8 inches high. Allow at least 3 to 4 feet between rows. Sweet potatoes need minimal care to keep down weeds. Do not water during the last 3 to 4 weeks before harvest. Dig around the time of the first frost in the fall. Use a spading fork or stout shovel. Be careful not to bruise, cut or damage the roots. Dig below the level of the ridge. Move closer toward the plants, removing soil until the fat roots are exposed. Carefully dig under these roots. Remove from the soil. The roots should be allowed to dry on the ground for 2 to 3 hours. Sweet potatoes should be handled as little as possible For more information, contact your local Cooperative Extension Services at 202-274-7125



ACTIVITY ALLEY

Sweet Potato Scramble



Directions: Unscramble each of the clue words about sweet potatoes. Take the letters  that appear in boxes and unscramble them for the final message.

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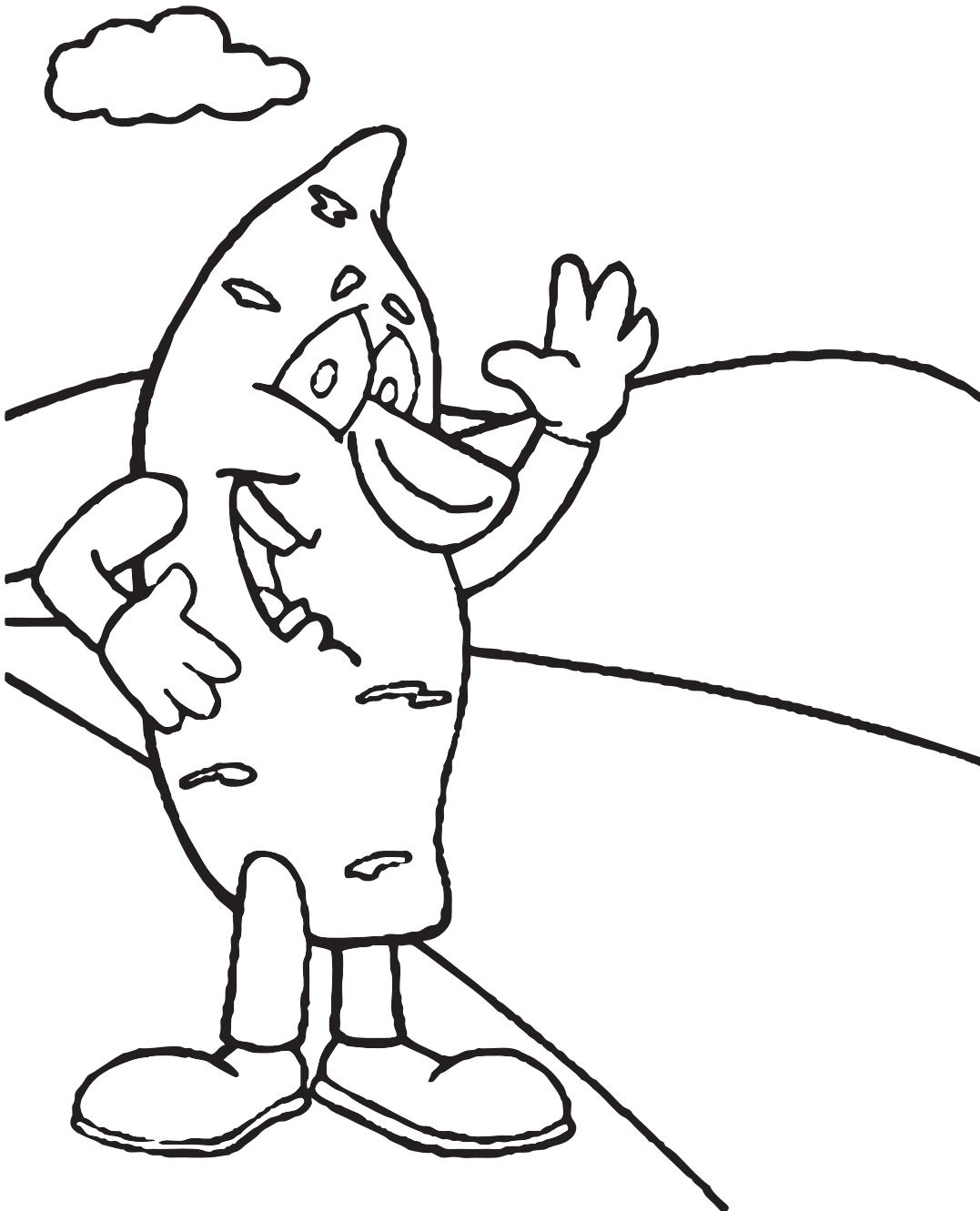
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ACTIVITY ALLEY

Sweet Potatoes Coloring Activity



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