

Nutritious Friend



Nutritious Friends Program

The Nutritious Friends program promotes a different healthy food each month through educational materials, activity & coloring sheets, student interaction and incorporation in the monthly menu. Nutritious Friends proves healthy eating can be delicious as students take part in promotional games, learn interesting nutrition facts and sample new recipes.

Sweet Potatoes

DID YOU KNOW....

The sweet potato is not a potato or even a distant cousin. Potatoes are tubers (the underground part of the stem of the plant); sweet potatoes are the actual roots. The root is the part of the plant that absorbs water and nutrients.

Sweet potatoes with orange flesh are often called yams but they are not the same! Sweet potatoes are roots (like carrots) that are native to Central America and Peru, while true yams are tubers (like potatoes) that are native to Africa and can grow to be over 50 pounds.

Sweet potatoes were grown in Peru as early as 750 BC. Native Americans were already growing sweet potatoes in North America when Columbus arrived on American shores in 1492. Columbus and his men loved the tasty sweet potatoes so much, that they brought them back to Europe to grow their own.

Sweet potatoes contain an enzyme that converts most of its starches into sugars as the potato matures. This sweetness continues to increase during storage and when they are cooked.

There are hundreds of types of sweet potatoes ranging from white and mild to deep red and super sweet.

Why are sweet potatoes good for you?

Sweet potatoes are one of the most nutritious vegetables and are packed with essential nutrients needed for healthy bodies.

Some of those key nutrients are vitamin A and beta carotene, which promotes eye and skin health. Beta Carotene is what gives sweet potatoes their orange color,. Sweet potatoes contain other important nutrients, such as vitamin C, potassium, and fiber.

What is a sweet potato?

A sweet potato is actually a root.

How much vitamin A is in a sweet potato?

A serving of sweet potatoes contains 327% of your daily need for vitamin A? (More than any other vegetable!).

How can I prepare sweet potatoes to eat?

Sweet potatoes can be prepared with sweet or savory flavors.

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Top Ten Ways to Enjoy Sweet Potatoes

1. Try munching on sweet potato chips. Thinly slice a large sweet potato and brush lightly with olive oil. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes or until lightly browned and crisp.
2. Dice cooked, peeled sweet potatoes and drizzle with maple syrup for a side dish that's delicious.
3. Cut thin slices of cooked sweet potatoes and add to your favorite sandwich or wrap instead of tomatoes.
4. Breakfast is sure to be a hit when you make sweet potato pancakes.
5. Substitute sweet potatoes for regular spuds in your favorite potato salad recipe.
6. Slice sweet potatoes into thick 1/2 inch rounds and grill until lightly browned.
7. Sweet potato fries make a delicious treat. Quarter sweet potatoes and drizzle with olive oil. Bake at 400 degrees for 40-60 minutes. For a spicy twist, add a dash of cayenne pepper.
8. Sweet potatoes make sweet salad toppings. Combine diced sweet potatoes, pineapple tidbits, apples, celery and cashews. Serve over salad greens.
9. Steam peeled sweet potato chunks for about 10 minutes until tender, and mash with a dash of orange juice.
10. Replace pumpkin with sweet potato purée in your Thanksgiving pie for a major flavor boost.

For Parents: Apple Sweet Potato Casserole

Ingredients

2 sweet potatoes
2 apples, cored and sliced into circles
1/2 Cup orange juice
1/4 Cup brown sugar

1 teaspoon cornstarch
sprinkle of cloves
2 Tablespoons pecans, chopped

Directions

Bake sweet potatoes until tender. Cool and cut into chunks. Spray a baking dish with cooking spray. Place sweet potato pieces in bottom of baking dish. Layer apple rings over top of potatoes. Keep layering apples and potatoes.

In a pan, add orange juice, brown sugar, cornstarch and cloves. Heat until mixture thickens. Pour over sweet potatoes and apples. Top with pecan pieces. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes or until apples are tender.

Sweet Potatoes
November



ACTIVITIES

November



True or False?

1. The vitamin that helps with your eyesight is Vitamin A.
2. Sweet potatoes grow on big bushes.
3. There are many ways to prepare sweet potatoes.
4. Sweet potatoes were discovered in the 1970s.

SWEET POTATO

How many words can you make from the word "Sweet Potato"

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

SWEET POTATO COLORING PAGE

