



POTATOES

Cafeteria Connection

Tell Me about Potatoes

Per year, Washington potato growers provide an average of nearly 29 billion servings of potatoes to people around the world. Potatoes come in a variety of sizes and colors, including red, pink, yellow, and purple. Potatoes can be starchy or waxy, which impacts how they should be cooked.

Crediting Information

- Potatoes credit toward the Vegetable meal pattern component by volume served. For example, 1/2 cup mashed potatoes credit as 1/2 cup vegetable.
- In School Meals, potatoes contribute to the "Starchy" vegetable sub-group.
- A whole, average size white or russet potato (approximately 8 oz), when baked, credits as 3/4 cup vegetable.
- Vegetables must be fresh, frozen, canned, or full-strength vegetable juice, referred to as 100% juice, to credit as a vegetable component. Dried vegetables, including beans, peas, and lentils, must be reconstituted to credit toward reimbursable meals. Please confirm crediting requirements for dried vegetables with your specialist.



Potatoes in a field. Credit: AVSDAA

Nutrition Facts

Potatoes are starchy vegetables. Starch is a carbohydrate that our bodies break down into glucose to give us energy. They are rich in several other important nutrients as well, including B vitamins which help our cells grow and stay healthy, and fiber which is important for maintaining a healthy heart and digestive system. Potatoes contain vitamin C, which helps with healing and supports immune function, but new potatoes (those picked early in the growing season when they are still small) have higher vitamin C content than fully mature potatoes.

Potatoes also provide essential minerals, like potassium, a type of electrolyte that supports heart health, and iron, which is essential for making red blood cells and building muscles.

Selection and Storage

Choose smooth, firm potatoes with no mold, soft spots, sprouting, or green color.

Potatoes store best in cool, dark, dry environments. Store in a well-ventilated place away from onions. New potatoes keep for one week; other potatoes keep for several weeks.

Culinary Tips

- Leave the skin on when possible; remove deep eyes, sprouts, or green spots. Scrub under cold water before cooking.
- Boil chopped potatoes for 15 minutes; mash after draining.
- Bake whole potatoes at 400 degrees F for 45 minutes or until they reach an internal temperature of 205–210 degrees F.



Filling a potato storage shed, credit: WSDA

Recipes

- [Parm Potatoes – Minnesota Recipe for Schools](#)
- [Southwest Seasoned Potatoes Wisconsin Recipe for Schools](#)
- [Breakfast Bowl USDA Recipe for Family Child Care Homes](#)
- [Baby Potatoes Persillade USDA Recipe for Child Care Centers – Child Nutrition Recipe Box](#)

Sourcing

- [Find Potatoes](#)



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