



Eat a Colorful Variety of Fruits & Vegetables Every Day



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## Fruit & Vegetable of the Month



### Vegetable of the Month: Sweet Potatoes



Sweet potatoes are a Native American plant that was the main source of nourishment for homesteaders and for soldiers during the Revolutionary War. These tuberous roots are a most nutritious foods in the vegetable kingdom. They are excellent sources of vitamins A. This is why one colonial physician called them the "vegetable indispensable." Sweet potatoes are often confused with yams, but yams are large, starchy roots grown in Africa and Asia. Yams grow up to 100 pounds and are rarely available in American supermarkets. Nutritionally, sweet potatoes greatly outweigh yams. Because of the common use of the term "yam," it is acceptable to use this term when referring to sweet potatoes. 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.

#### Selection

Choose firm, dark, smooth sweet potatoes without wrinkles, bruises, sprouts, or decay. Even if cut away, a decayed spot may have already caused the whole potato to take on an unpleasant flavor.

#### Storage

Sweet potatoes spoil rapidly. To keep them fresh, store them in a dry, cool (55-60°) place such as a cellar, pantry, or garage. Do not store them in the refrigerator, where they will develop a hard core and an "off" taste. If stored properly, sweet potatoes will keep for a month or longer. At normal room temperature, they should be used within a week of purchase. You may brush off any excess dirt before storing, but do not wash them until you are ready to cook them. It is the moisture from washing that will increase their spoilage.

#### Preparation

#### Sweet Potatoes

Serving size 1/2 cup, baked

#### Amounts Per Serving

Calories 90  
 Calories from Fat 0  
 Total Fat 0g  
 Saturated Fat 0g  
 Cholesterol 0mg  
 Sodium 35mg  
 Total Carbohydrate 21g  
   Dietary Fiber 3g  
   Sugars 8g  
 Protein 2g  
 Vitamin A  
 Vitamin C  
 Calcium  
 Iron

Wash sweet potatoes well. Cook them whole whenever possible as most of the nutrients are next to the skin, and skins are easier to remove after they have been cooked. Pierce skin with fork. Place potatoes in a pan and cook in an oven heated to 375° F for about 45 minutes or until tender. Cool potatoes before removing skins. Sweet potatoes can be cooked in a microwave oven to save time and pierce potatoes, then place them on a paper towel. The cooking time for 2 medium potatoes on high for 5–9 minutes, and 4 potatoes, 10–13 minutes. Yellow and dark orange sweet potatoes can be used interchangeably in recipes. Try not to mix the two types in a single dish, because different textures and cooking times may affect the outcome of the recipe. The yellow variety takes longer to cook than the orange and will be done at the upper range of cooking times.

\* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

### Varieties

Although sweet potatoes are harvested in August through October, they are available in supermarkets all year. Many stores feature them at Thanksgiving and Christmas. There are two main varieties of sweet potatoes; the pale yellow with a dry flesh and the dark orange with a moist flesh. The dark orange variety is plumper in shape and somewhat sweeter than the yellow variety.



Yellow, dry-fleshed

Orange, moist-fleshed

### Make Sweet Potatoes Part of Your Fruit and Vegetable Plan

It is easy to include sweet potatoes in your daily Fruit and Vegetable Plan. Use them in soups, casseroles, puddings, baked goods, or as a substitute for white potatoes in your favorite recipes. They make a nice addition to stir-fries; cut them into thin sticks so that they will cook quickly.



### Recipes

#### Sweet Potatoes & Carrot a L'orange

Makes 4 servings.

This is an official 5 a Day recipe.

#### Ingredients

- 2 cups thinly sliced sweet potatoes (1 large)
- 1 cup sliced carrots
- ½ cup orange juice
- 1 tsp grated orange peel
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp cornstarch
- 1 Tbsp water
- 2 Tbsp slivered almonds



Boil or steam sweet potatoes and carrots until tender. When they are almost done, heat orange juice to boiling in saucepan. Add the orange peel and lemon juice. Dissolve the cornstarch in 1 Tbsp water and add to orange mixture. Continue to heat, stirring until thickened. Remove vegetables from pot and place in serving dish. Drizzle orange sauce over them and sprinkle almonds on top.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 160, Protein 3g, Fat 3g, Calories From Fat 13%, Cholesterol 0mg, Carbohydrates 33g, Fiber 4g, Sodium 25mg.

### Glazed Sweet Potatoes

Makes 4 servings.

This is an official 5 a Day recipe.

#### Ingredients

1 lb sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into ½ inch-thick slices  
vegetable cooking spray  
1 Tbsp cornstarch  
1 Tbsp brown sugar  
¾ cup unsweetened orange juice  
2 Tbsp lemon juice

Spray 1 quart casserole dish with cooking spray and place potato slices in the bottom. Combine cornstarch and brown sugar in a small bowl and add orange and lemon juices, stirring well. Pour over potatoes and cover and bake at 425°F for 40 minutes or until potatoes are tender and sauce is thickened.

Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 161, Protein 2g, Fat 0g, Calories From Fat 3%, Cholesterol 0, Carbohydrates 38g, Fiber 4g, Sodium 17mg.

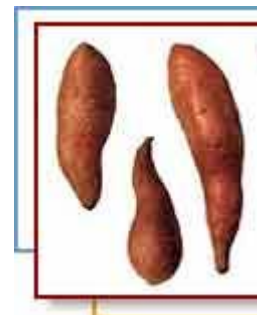
### Sweet Potato Pancakes

Makes 8 servings.

This is an official 5 a Day recipe.

#### Ingredients

6 cups peeled and finely shredded sweet potatoes  
1 cup finely shredded onions  
1 tsp salt-free herb seasoning  
1 2/3 cup unbleached flour  
1/3 cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley  
2 cups finely shredded zucchini  
¼ cup lemon juice  
1½ cups egg substitute  
6 tsp canola oil, divided



In a large bowl, mix the sweet potatoes, zucchini, onions, lemon juice, herb blend, egg, and parsley. In a large non-stick frying pan or griddle over medium-high heat, warm 2 tsp of the oil. Spoon a large Tbsp of the batter into the pan and spread it with a spatula to form a thin pancake. Add more batter to fill the pan without crowding the pancakes.

Cook for about 2 minutes per side, or until golden and crispy. Remove from the pan and drain on a paper towel. Repeat, adding the remaining 4 tsp oil as needed, until all the batter has been used.

Nutrition information per serving: Calories 267, Protein 11g, Fat 6g, Calories From Fat 2%, Cholesterol 0mg, Carbohydrates 44g, Fiber 3g, Sodium 94mg.

### Sweet Potato Praline Pie

Makes 10 servings.



Recipe by: MSCS Winger, US Navy

#### *Ingredients*

1 cup All-Bran<sup>3/4</sup> Cereal, finely crushed  
 1/4 cup pecans, finely chopped  
 1 egg white, slightly beaten  
 2 cups sweet potatoes, mashed  
 1/4 cup brown sugar  
 1/4 cup granulated sugar  
 1 tsp. cinnamon  
 1/2 tsp. nutmeg  
 1/2 tsp. ginger  
 pinch cloves  
 1 egg, plus 1 egg yolk, slightly beaten  
 1 scant cup milk, 2% lowfat

Combine first three ingredients, press into bottom and sides of 9-inch pie tin lightly spray non-stick spray (easiest to do with dampened hands). Bake in 400-degree oven for 10 m

Mix sweet potatoes in electric mixer for 5 minutes until smooth. Add sugars, spices and e to blend. At low speed add milk until well blended. Pour into prepared shell and bake at 4 45 to 55 minutes or until knife inserted into filling comes out clean (center may be soft bu when cool).

Refrigerate until ready to serve. Cut into 10 wedges per pie. Serve with Praline sauce, be


#### **Praline Sauce**

#### *Ingredients*

1/2 cup brown sugar  
 1 Tbsp. cornstarch  
 3/4 cup coffee  
 1 tsp. butter  
 1/4 cup pecans, finely chopped

In saucepan combine brown sugar and cornstarch. Stir in coffee. Cook and stir 4–5 minu bubbly. Cook and stir for 2 minutes more. Stir in 1 teaspoon butter until melted. Stir in pe Serve warm with Sweet Potato Praline Pie, approximately 5 teaspoons per serving.

Nutrition information per serving: Calories 198, Fat 6g, Protein 3g, Carbohydrates 35g, C 47mg, Sodium 43mg.

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