Using & Storing Potatoes

South Carolina-grown potatoes are available in the spring and fall.

Potatoes are Good for You

Potatoes are:
- a vegetable.
- a good source of vitamins B and C.
- a source of minerals.
- high in complex carbohydrates.
- high in fiber, if the skins are eaten.
- fat-free.
- about 3 medium potatoes.

How to Buy Potatoes

Choose clean, firm, smooth potatoes with no sprouts or greenish color.

One pound of fresh potatoes equals:
- about 3 medium potatoes.
- 3 cups peeled and sliced potatoes.
- 2 cups mashed potatoes.
- 2 cups French-fries.

Potato Types

Round red or white potatoes have a thin outer skin. They are good for boiling and stewing.

New potatoes are freshly harvested. They are sweet and moist and good for boiling and stewing.

Russets are oblong with thick outer skins. They are good for baking and make excellent mashed potatoes.

In addition, red- and yellow-fleshed potatoes (such as Yukon Gold) are sometimes available.

How to Store Potatoes

- Handle potatoes gently. Bruised potatoes turn dark and begin to rot.
- Store potatoes in a cool (45-50 °F.), humid (not wet), dark place with good ventilation. When potatoes are correctly stored, they will remain fresh for up to a month.
- If potatoes are stored in a warm place, such as under the sink, they may attract bugs and rodents. They will sprout and shrivel. Throw away potatoes that are shriveled or have many sprouts.
- If potatoes are stored where they are exposed to light, they turn green, produce a toxic substance, and develop a bitter flavor. Peel off green areas before using. Throw away potatoes that are mostly green.
- If potatoes are stored at temperatures below 40 °F. or in the refrigerator, they develop a sweet taste and turn brown when cooked. If potatoes get cold, warm them to room temperature before cooking.

Compare the Calories

Take a small (3½ ounce) potato, and look how the calories change depending on how it is prepared.

Comparison of Potato Preparation & Calories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eat Potato as:</th>
<th>Calories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baked or boiled</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add 1 Tbsp. butter</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashed with 1 tsp. butter and ¼ cup 1% milk</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hash browns</td>
<td>229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French-fries</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potato chips</td>
<td>564</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Potato Recipes
Note: The peels can be left on the potatoes in all these recipes.

Potato Soup:
4 to 6 potatoes, cut in chunks
Water (about 4 cups) to cover
2 bouillon cubes or 2 teaspoons bouillon granules
1 Tbsp. chopped onion
⅛ tsp. pepper (to taste)
¼ tsp. parsley flakes, optional
1½ cups nonfat dry milk powder
3 Tbsps. cornstarch
3 Tbsps. Margarine

Directions: Place potatoes, water, bouillon, onion, pepper and parsley in a pan. Cook over medium-low heat until potatoes are tender (about 10 to 15 minutes). Do not drain. In a bowl mix together dry milk powder and corn starch. Cut in margarine until it looks like crumbs or cornmeal. Sprinkle over potatoes. Stir until thickened. Serves 5.

Calories: 330 per serving
Fat: 5 grams per serving
Optional: You may add shredded cheese, ½ cup cooked chicken or fish, or ½ cup cooked vegetables, such as broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, corn, peas, mushrooms, or spinach.

Oven Fries:
4 medium potatoes
1 Tbsp. vegetable oil (or use vegetable spray)

Directions: Scrub potatoes. Cut into long strips about ½ inch thick. Dry strips with paper towel. Mix potato strips and oil (or spray) in a bowl. Place oil coated potatoes in a single layer on a cookie sheet. Bake at 475 °F. for about 35 minutes. Turn strips once to brown on both sides. Serves 6.

Calories: 93 per serving
Fat: 2 grams per serving

Scalloped Potatoes:
Vegetable oil or nonstick cooking spray
5 cups (about 2 pounds) raw potatoes, washed and sliced
½ cup onion, peeled and sliced thin
¼ cup flour
¼ cup margarine
1½ cups low-fat 1% milk

Directions: Oil or spray the bottom and sides of a 2-quart baking dish. Place about ⅓ of the potatoes in the baking dish. Add ⅓ of the flour, margarine and onion. Continue to layer the ingredients two more times. Heat the milk to a simmer. Pour evenly over the potatoes. Bake at 400 °F. uncovered for 1½ hours or until potatoes are tender. Serves 6.
Calories: 243 per serving
Fat: 9 grams per serving

Microwave Baked Potato:
Scrub a medium Russet potato (6 to 8 ounces). Pierce with a fork. Place on paper towel. Microwave on high power 4 to 6 minutes, turning once. Let stand 2 minutes. Baking time can vary, depending on size, shape, temperature and variety of potato. Serves 1.

Serving suggestions: Top with salsa, vegetables, chili, yogurt and chives, stroganoff, cheese or cottage cheese.

Calories: 220 per serving without topping
Fat: 0 grams per serving without topping

Source:
University of Illinois Extension fact sheet; originally developed by Michigan State University Extension

This information has been reviewed and adapted for use in South Carolina by J. G. Hunter, HGIC Nutrition Specialist, and K. L. Cason, Professor, State EFNEP Coordinator, Clemson University. (New 09/05.)

This information is supplied with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by the Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service is implied. All recommendations are for South Carolina conditions and may not apply to other areas. Use pesticides only according to the directions on the label. All recommendations for pesticide use are for South Carolina only and were legal at the time of publication, but the status of registration and use patterns are subject to change by action of state and federal regulatory agencies. Follow all directions, precautions and restrictions that are listed.