

The Montana Harvest of the Month Program showcases Montana grown foods in Montana communities. This program is a collaboration between Montana Farm to School, Montana Office of Public Instruction, Montana Department of Agriculture, and Abundant Montana. More information and resources are available at [mtharvestofthemoth.org](http://mtharvestofthemoth.org). This project is possible with funding from the Montana Department of Agriculture's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program.



have to offer

Potatoes can be baked, boiled, microwaved, frozen, or dried. Different varieties are better suited to certain preparation methods. Russets are excellent for baking or mashing but tend to fall apart in soups and stews. In contrast, fingerlings hold their shape well when boiled. Be sure to leave the skin on to get all the nutrients potatoes

## Cooking

Select potatoes that are firm and fairly clean; a little dirt is okay! Avoid potatoes with a lot of sprouted eyes, wrinkled or wilted skin, discoloration, dark spots, soft areas, cut or bruised surfaces or areas that are greening. Store potatoes in a cool area, 42-48°F, with good ventilation, away from direct sunlight. Refrigeration is not recommended as cold temperatures change the sugar and starch content which changes the texture and flavor. Scrub off dirt and trim any rotted areas when ready to use.

## Buying Tips

Potatoes are starchy vegetables. Starch is a carbohydrate that our bodies break down into glucose to give us energy. Potatoes also contain fiber, vitamins, and minerals. They are rich in potassium which is an important electrolyte that helps our hearts, muscles, and nervous systems function. Potatoes contain Vitamin C, which is required for healthy skin, teeth, gums, muscle, and bones. It also helps us absorb iron from other food sources! New potatoes have higher vitamin C content than fully matured potatoes.

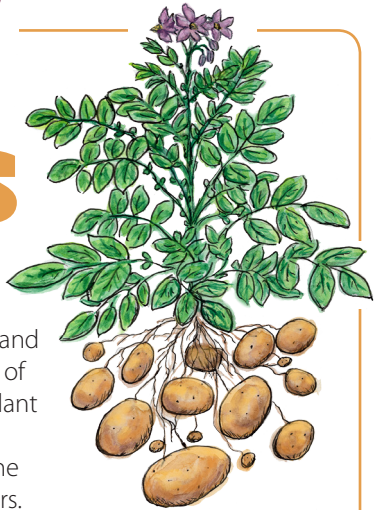
## Nutrition Information



# Potatoes



# Potatoes



## Did You Know

- The edible part of the potato grows underground and is called a tuber. Tubers are not roots; they are part of the plant's stem that stores nutrients to help the plant regrow in the spring. Potato stems and leaves are toxic and are not safe to eat. Potatoes are part of the nightshade family, alongside tomatoes and peppers.
- Potatoes represent the fourth largest crop grown worldwide, just behind corn, rice, and wheat crops. There are over 4,000 varieties of potatoes, making them the most abundant non-grain food product on earth.
- Montana is a leading state in seed potato production. Seed potatoes are sent to other states, such as Idaho and Washington to be planted and grown into full crops. The U.S. is the 5th largest producer of potatoes globally, following China, India, Russia, and Ukraine.
- What we call 'new' potatoes are young potatoes that are harvested before they fully mature.
- Researchers are growing potatoes on the International Space Station due to their high nutritional content and ease of growing.



## Dig Deeper

For sources and photo credits along with more recipes, lessons, quick activities, resources, and guides, visit:

[www.mtharvestofthemoth.org](http://www.mtharvestofthemoth.org)