



March is Sweet Potatoes

Nutrition & Health Benefits

- **Vitamin A** - Keeps skin and bones healthy, resists and fights infection, and maintains good eyesight.
- **Vitamin C** - Helps wounds heal, is important for the immune system, and is an antioxidant, which protects cells from damage.
- **Vitamin B6** - Important for immune system and brain function. Helps you get energy from food.

Preparation & Cooking Tips

- Select** - Choose sweet potatoes that are firm and smooth.
- Store** - Store in a cool, dark place for 3-5 weeks.
- Prepare** - Rinse under cool, running water and scrub to remove dirt.

Did you know?

- Fresh sweet potatoes grown in Wisconsin are available from July through October.
- Sweet potatoes can be white, yellow, red, purple or orange.
- Sweet potatoes originated in the tropical regions of Central and South America.

Fun Facts

- Sometimes people call sweet potatoes yams, but yams and sweet potatoes are different vegetables! Yams are large, starchy roots native to Africa and Asia.
- Sweet potatoes are considered root vegetables because they are the part of the plant that grows into the ground and anchors the plant.

TASTE

taste testing



Nutritious,
Delicious,
Wisconsin!

The simpler the better! You can serve a sweet potato raw, cut into thin strips. You could also pair one slice of raw sweet potato and one slice of roasted sweet potato. Explain that the flavor changes depending on how you prepare the sweet potato. Tell kids not to give up if they try a vegetable and they do not like it. Instead, try it prepared another way because it may taste different and they might like it!

Credit: Liliana D Ramirez, FoodWise Nutrition Educator and Sheena Cook-Fuglsang, FoodWise Coordinator

With **POWER UP SWEET POTATO**



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FUN

activity: Grow Your Own Sweet Potato Vine



Objective: Kids will see how sweet potatoes grow.

Supplies: Sweet potato (unwashed with eyes), toothpicks, wooden skewers, or wooden craft sticks, clear quart-size jar or glass container with wide mouth, water (non-chlorinated), and sunlight.

Procedure: Stick 3-4 toothpicks around the middle of the potato and support them on the rim of a clear glass cup or jar with the plumper or rounded side facing up. Fill the glass jar with water so that the bottom of the potato is in water. Place the jar in moderate to full sunlight at room temperature. Change the water weekly and replenish what evaporates. The roots will develop on the tapered bottom end of the potato while the stem and leaf buds develop at the top. For the next three to six months, vines will grow from the sweet potato. Encourage kids to record their observations about the changes taking place. Ask them to identify the roots, stems, and leaves.

— Adapted from: *Got Veggies? A Youth Garden-Based Nutrition Education Curriculum*

This activity can be done in multiple settings: classroom, outdoors, garden, or virtual.

Tips for adapting to virtual learning: This activity is simple to do in a home environment if kids have access to a sweet potato. If this is not feasible, share a link to a video: <https://youtu.be/hXSSXP2Pt0>.

Share pictures and engage with the Wisconsin Harvest of the Month community by using #WIHarvestoftheMonth on social media.

READ



books

- *Little Sweet Potato* by Amy Beth Bloom
- *Sweet Potato Pie* by Kathleen Lindsey
- *Tops and Bottoms* by Janet Stevens
- *Gigantic Sweet Potato* by Dianne De Las Casas



Sweet Potatoes: Quick & Easy

- Rinse sweet potatoes under cool, running water and scrub to remove dirt. Pat dry.
- Rub skin with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper.
- Bake at 375F for 50-60 minutes or until tender when pierced with a fork.
- Cool 5 minutes before cutting open.
- Add your favorite toppings! For a sweet treat add cinnamon and brown sugar. For a savory dish, add corn, cheese, and shredded chicken.



Information adapted from Wisconsin Harvest of the Month.