

PRODUCE TALK

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Item of the Week: SWEET POTATOES

Health Benefits

- How sweet it is for your health to eat sweet potatoes! Not only do they taste like dessert, but they provide some surprising health benefits. Many people think about sweet potatoes as being nothing more than plain old potatoes that can tweak our taste buds with some extra flavor. Yet cutting-edge research on sweet potatoes tells us that nothing could be further from the truth as they have so many unique nutritional benefits to offer!
- One difficulty in describing the health benefits of sweet potatoes is knowing where to begin. There are a surprising number of nutrient categories responsible for the health benefits of this underappreciated tuber. Among these categories are antioxidants, anti-inflammatory nutrients, and blood sugar-regulating nutrients. Each category brings with it valuable health benefits.



Antioxidant Nutrients in Sweet Potatoes

- Sweet potatoes contain a wealth of orange-hued carotenoid pigments. In countries throughout Africa, in India and in the Caribbean, sweet potatoes have been shown to be a highly effective way of providing school age children with sizable amounts of their daily vitamin A. In some studies, sweet potatoes have been shown to be a better source of bioavailable beta-carotene than green leafy vegetables. Because sweet potatoes are available in many countries on a virtual year-round basis, their ability to provide us with a key antioxidant like beta-carotene makes them a standout antioxidant food.
- Yet beta-carotene only begins to tell the story of sweet potato antioxidants. Particularly in purple-fleshed sweet potato, antioxidant anthocyanin pigments are abundant. Cyanidins and peonidins are concentrated in the starchy core of part of purple-fleshed sweet potatoes, and these antioxidant nutrients may be even more concentrated in the flesh than in the skin. That's sweet potatoes have genes (*IbMYB1* and *IbMYB2*) that are specialized for the production of anthocyanin pigments in the fleshy part of the tuber. Ordinary, we have to rely on the skins of foods for this same level of anthocyanin antioxidants. But not in the case of sweet potatoes! Extracts from the highly pigmented and colorful purple-fleshed and purple-skinned sweet potatoes have been shown in research studies to increase the activity of two key antioxidant enzymes—copper/zinc superoxide dismutase (Cu/Zn-SOD) and catalase (CAT).
- Recent research has shown that particularly when passing through our digestive tract, sweet potato cyanidins and peonidins and other color-related phytonutrients may be able to lower the potential health risk posed by heavy metals and oxygen radicals. That risk reduction might be important not only for individuals at risk of digestive tract problems but for all persons wanting to reduce the potential risk posed by the presence of heavy metal residues (like small amounts of mercury or cadmium or arsenic) in their diet.
- Storage proteins in sweet potato also have important antioxidant properties. These storage proteins—called sporamins—get produced by sweet potato plants whenever the plants are subjected to physical damage. Their ability to help the plants heal from this damage is significantly related to their role as antioxidants. Especially when sweet potato is being digested inside of our gastrointestinal tract, we may get some of these same antioxidant benefits.

Anti-Inflammatory Nutrients in Sweet Potatoes

- Anthocyanin and other color-related pigments in sweet potato are equally valuable for their anti-inflammatory health benefits. In the case of inflammation, scientists understand even more about the amazing properties of this tuber. In animal studies, activation of nuclear factor-kappa B (NF- κ B); activation of inducible nitric oxide synthase (iNOS), and cyclooxygenase-2 (COX-2); and formation of malondialdehyde (MDA) have all been shown to get reduced following consumption of either sweet potato or its color-containing extracts. Since each of these events can play a key role in the development of unwanted inflammation, their reduction by sweet potato phytonutrients marks a clear role for this food in inflammation-related health problems. In animal studies, reduced inflammation following sweet potato consumption has been shown in brain tissue and nerve tissue throughout the body.
- What's equally fascinating about color-related sweet potato phytonutrients is their impact on fibrinogen. Fibrinogen is one of the key glycoproteins in the body that is required for successful blood clotting. With the help of a coagulation factor called thrombin, fibrinogen gets converted into fibrin during the blood clotting process. Balanced amounts of fibrinogen, thrombin and fibrin are a key part of the body's health and its ability to close off wounds and stop loss of blood. However, excess amounts of these clotting-related molecules may sometimes pose a health risk. For example, excess presence of fibrinogen and fibrin can trigger unwanted secretion of pro-inflammatory molecules (including cytokines and chemokines). In animal studies, too much fibrin in the central nervous system has been associated with breakdown of the myelin sheath that surrounds the nerves and allows them to conduct electrical signals properly. If fibrin excess can trigger unwanted inflammation in nerve tissue and increase breakdown of the myelin wrapping the nerve cells (a process that is usually referred to as demyelination), health problems like multiple sclerosis (in which there is breakdown of the myelin nerve sheath) may be lessened through reduction of excess fibrinogen and/or fibrin. In preliminary animal studies, intake of sweet potato color extracts have been shown to accomplish exactly those results: reduction of inflammation, and simultaneous reduction of fibrinogen levels. We look forward to exciting new research in this area of sweet potato's anti-inflammatory benefits.

Sweet Potatoes' Potential Improvement of Blood Sugar Regulation

- Many people think about starchy root vegetables as a food group that could not possibly be helpful for controlling their blood sugar. That's because many people realize that food starches can be converted by our digestive tract into simple sugars. If foods are especially concentrated in starch, there can often be a risk of too much simple sugar release in our digestive tract and too much pressure upon our bloodstream to uptake more sugar. (The result in this situation would be an overly quick elevation of our blood sugar level.) What's fascinating about sweet potatoes is their ability to potentially improve blood sugar regulation—even in persons with type 2 diabetes—in spite of their glycemic index (GI) rating of medium. (Sweet potatoes are one of four WHFoods vegetables that have a GI ranking of medium. The other three vegetables are beets, corn, and leeks.) The 6.6 grams of dietary fiber in a medium sweet potato are definitely a plus in terms of blood sugar regulation, since they help steady the pace of digestion. But recent research has also shown that extracts from sweet potatoes can significantly increase blood levels of adiponectin in persons with type 2 diabetes. Adiponectin is a protein hormone produced by our fat cells, and it serves as an important modifier of insulin metabolism. Persons with poorly-regulated insulin metabolism and insulin insensitivity tend to have lower levels of adiponectin, and persons with healthier insulin metabolism tend to have higher levels. While more research on much larger groups of individuals to further evaluate and confirm these blood sugar regulating benefits, this area of health research is an especially exciting one for anyone who loves sweet potatoes but is nevertheless concerned about healthy blood sugar regulation.

Other Potential Health Benefits of Sweet Potatoes

- One of the more intriguing nutrient groups provided by sweet potatoes—yet one of the least studied from a health standpoint—are the resin glycosides. These nutrients are sugar-related and starch-related molecules that are unusual in their arrangement of carbohydrate-related components, and also in their inclusion of some non-carbohydrate molecules. In sweet potatoes, researchers have long been aware of one group of resin glycosides called batatins (including batatin I and batatin II). But only recently have researchers discovered a related group of glycosides in sweet potato called batatosides (including batatodide III, batatoside IV, and batatoside V). In lab studies, most of these sweet potato glycosides have been shown to have antibacterial and antifungal properties. To what extent these carbohydrate-related molecules in sweet potatoes can provide us with health benefits in these same antibacterial and antifungal areas is not yet clear. But we expect to see increasing interest in sweet potato's batatins and batatosides and their potential to support our health.

Recipe (Source: Allrecipes.com)

SWEET POTATO FRENCH FRIES

Ingredients:

2 large sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into French fry-size pieces
1 tablespoon olive oil, or as needed
2 tablespoons minced fresh rosemary, or to taste
Coarse sea salt and coarsely ground black pepper to taste

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F (220 degrees C).
2. Toss sweet potatoes, olive oil, rosemary, salt, and pepper together in a large bowl until evenly coated. Arrange sweet potatoes on a baking sheet.
3. Bake in the preheated oven until tender, 20 to 30 minutes.



SWEET POTATO PIE

Ingredients:

1 (1 pound) sweet potato
1/2 cup butter, softened
1 cup white sugar
1/2 cup milk
2 eggs
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 (9 inch) unbaked pie crust

Directions:

1. Boil sweet potato whole in skin for 40 to 50 minutes, or until done. Run cold water over the sweet potato, and remove the skin.
2. Break apart sweet potato in a bowl. Add butter, and mix well with mixer. Stir in sugar, milk, eggs, nutmeg, cinnamon and vanilla. Beat on medium speed until mixture is smooth. Pour filling into an unbaked pie crust.
3. Bake at 350 degrees F (175 degrees C) for 55 to 60 minutes, or until knife inserted in center comes out clean. Pie will puff up like a soufflé, and then will sink down as it cools.



Western Vegetables

ARTICHOKES: Volumes are going to be light for the next few weeks until Mexico begins harvest. The Salinas season is winding down and although Oxnard has begun harvest, we are not going to see significant numbers for a few weeks.

AVOCADOS: Good supply; market continues to drop.

BROCCOLI: The broccoli market remains to have a wide range throughout the industry. Salinas remains steady as the season nears its end. Yuma is slated to start harvest towards the end of next week; we expect a slight overlap in regions.

CAULIFLOWER: Volume has dropped significantly as a direct result of the combination of being in re-cut fields and cold temperatures. Volumes will continue to be extremely light through the end of the week. Yuma starts harvest Friday and will progress into next week; Salinas is slated to end at the end of next week.

CELERY: The celery market has seen a large upswing as we have moved into the Thanksgiving holiday pull. Both the Salinas and Oxnard regions are harvesting, however we are already starting to see shortages approaching as sizes are skewed in the field. Product is expected to get extremely tight as Salinas ends within the next three weeks.

LETTUCE: The mixed leaf market remains steady however availability has tightened up due to early morning ice in the fields. In general, all varieties of lettuce are coming in with great quality.

Value-Added

Raw product supply continues to be limited due to the heat in the western U.S. growing areas and transition to the desert for the fall and winter.

Southern Vegetables

CABBAGE: Still out of Michael's farm until about the middle of November.

CORN: Coming out of the south.

GREENS: All greens are coming out of Michigan.

PEPPERS: Coming out of Georgia and also out of Mexico. Market is on the increase.

POTATOES: Markets are mostly steady; supplies continue to improve. Quality continues to improve on Idaho Russets.

YELLOW & ZUCCHINI SQUASH: Price is down; mostly coming out of Mexico.

Organics

BEETS: Beets still remain a challenge due to curly top virus that impacts the plant leaves and bulb. Supplies will be limited for a few more weeks until growers move to lower elevation new fields that should be clean.

BROCCOLI: Due to weather issues (heat) in growing regions in the west, we are seeing suppliers limit available supply driving market cost up. There will be discoloration to the tops as heat will cause a darker head on the broccoli.

BUNCH CARROTS: Supply has rebounded quite well and we are seeing much better quality.

CABBAGE: Regional supply has really come on from Ohio and other surrounding areas. Great time for promotion!

CAULIFLOWER: Supplies are starting to improve and the quality is good. Market has gradually decreased, high temperatures out west should not affect supply.

CELERY: Supply is getting better as we have moved up in to California regions. Pricing will remain stable for the next 2-3 weeks as we move closer to Thanksgiving.

CUCUMBERS: Supply is looking great right now as Florida product is coming on in the next couple weeks.

GREEN PEPPERS: Steady supplies regionally with good quality.

KALES: Great supplies of kale currently; plenty of regional product from all over the Midwest available. We are sourcing from North Carolina, Ohio and other regions. Product is in great supply and pricing is very promotable.

LETTUCES: Inbound quality on leafs from the west have rebounded in quality and we are seeing much better supply. Canadian and regional supply has finished up.

RADISHES: Supplies are improving with better quality tops. Very little damage now to the tops and they look much cleaner than they have been.

YELLOW SQUASH & ZUCCHINI: Supply has been very good out of Ohio on the zucchini with yellow being much more limited.

Asparagus

Market on the rise as holiday pulls getting started and demand is pushing upward. Supplies overall steady but weather has effected some volume that would have been available out of Peru, coupled with heavier demand for air space on product, shipping from Peru will create strong market. Organic supply back on the rise as volume is dripping.

Fruit

APPLES & PEARS: New Crop Washington apples are almost in full swing. New varieties will be added each week. Looks to be a good crop this year with the volume being in 80 size and smaller. Pink Lady apples will be in a gap for a couple of weeks. Adding new varieties weekly; check your catalog. Michigan Honeycrisp are now available and the fruit is beautiful. New Crop Washington pear crop is looking great; Danjou, Bartlett, Bosc and Starkrimson are now available. Peak volume will be in 80/90ct this year.

BLACKBERRIES: Good volume out of Mexico; quality has improved but earlier issues and November will continue to be good period to promote blackberries. Bigger pack pints will be coming available as the quality fruit will allow packing. Organics blackberries also ramping up for the month.

BLUEBERRIES: The market has taken a dramatic shift last week. The product is shifting to arriving via ship but due to some of the harvest delays that was hit by rain problems, product has been delayed hitting into ports causing temporary product shortages. The markets are very active and very limited supplies are available; it's only temporary but for the next 7-10 days, it'll be a very high market. Once supplies are in, the market will decrease dramatically and will be a great time to promote. Organics are very limited; market remains very high. Switch into the 6oz size for coming week and taking off the 4.4oz size. As we move into later November, big packs will be added to order guides.

CANTALOUPE & HONEYDEWS: Market strong out of Mexico and Arizona with typical green cast to outer netting of cantaloupes but brix levels inside high and good eating quality. Move to off shore cantaloupe season will begin next week. Organic supplies steady but high priced. Honeydews reasonable on both 5 and 6ct sizes.

CHERRIES: A new item coming in from Argentina and Chili next week. Starting out very high priced but that'll decrease as we get further into November.

CITRUS: The California navel orange season has begun; early quality is good. Supplies are starting out light but will continue to improve in the weeks to come. Florida grapefruit and tangerines are available; early quality is good.

CLEMENTINES: New crop Spanish and Moroccan clementines beginning to arrive into eastern ports; quality looks outstanding. California harvest is ramping up and many options will be available to promote great eating clementines for the holiday season.

GRAPES: Latter part of the California domestic grape season but still good solid grapes available. Some of the newer varieties of green and white seedless grapes are great size and eat well. Outstanding varieties on reds; Holidays are still moving along, but market increasing. The markets are starting to move upward and it'll continue throughout November as the crop increases. Organics virtually finished and next week will be final week of availability.

PINEAPPLES: Good supply; good deals on organic pineapple in the coming weeks.

POMEGRANATES: A lot of issues with pomegranates. The heatwave that hit California earlier in the season while they were getting ready for the harvest, has caused some damage to the product. Market will remain strong.

RASPBERRIES: Supply has been affected by delayed inbounds on the east coast leaving us to move out west on orders. Supply should bounce back to loading in the east.

STRAWBERRIES: With the increased temperatures in growing regions, we are starting to see loading and available supply slow down. Inbound quality will be an issue as with higher temperatures will bring increased bruising and sun-scold.

Tropical Fruit

BABY FRENCH BEANS: Market level but could see some increase as holiday demand hits.

KIWI: Steady supplies as we move into the Italian deal.

LIMES: Prices has firmed up and increased on some sizes with better demand this week. Size 200 and large remained limited. Overall quality is very nice.

MANGOES: Product is beginning to tighten as the transition to Ecuador begins; should see relief in the coming weeks.

MARIDOL PAPAYAS/ GOLD PAPAYAS: Stable market; excellent quality on Caribbean Red Maridol papayas and Brazil Gold.

SUGAR SNAP PEAS/SNO PEAS: Supplies improved; markets easing back down.

Merchandising Tips

With Thanksgiving only two weeks away, it's time to do a variety check and see that you have everything you need to carry. How about the four varieties of chopped salads? We offer a three color deli slaw along with angel hair and regular cole slaw. In your lettuce section, you may want to try the Hydro Boston and the Sweet Little Gems next to your Romaine Hearts. Make sure to have a good spread of Brussel sprouts and asparagus. You may want to try asparagus tips or even white asparagus. We even offer riced cauliflower to include in your cut vegetable section alongside your cauliettes and broccoli florettes. A couple other items to carry are French green beans and the bags of microwaveable green beans. Look at your herb section...basil is always a hit, but make sure to have plenty of sage, poultry blend, thyme and rosemary. Be sure to have large displays of Holiday Red seedless grapes and Honeycrisp apples along with Sweet Tango apples. Lastly, don't forget pecan halves and walnut meats. If ever there is a time you can sell extra variety, it's during the holidays, so give it a try!

CROSSET NEW ITEM & DELETION SHEET

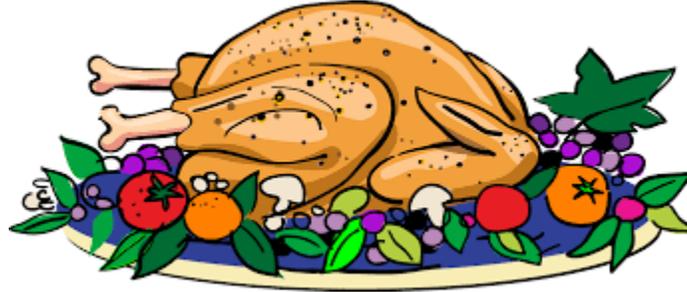
W/B: 11/19/17

ITEM #	<i>NEW ITEMS</i>	SIZE
611718	Choc Pretzel	15#
610415	Frosted Pretzel	15#
94850	Peanut Brittle	20#
61172	Pineapple Wedges	12/4ozx
27890	Walnuts Shelled	24/1#
33760	Autumn Glory	40#
33965	OG Gala Little Snapper	9/3#
33980	OG Pink Little Snapper	9/3#
33990	OG Fuji Little Snapper	9/3#
20808	OG Rainbow Carrots	24/2#
20835	OG Rainbow Carrots	25#
17660	OG Green Beans Packaged	12/12oz
78015	OG Driscoll Strawberries	12/8oz
20828	OG Juice Carrots	15#
79781	OG Nappa Cabbage	30#
97810	OG Celery Root	25#
27890	Walnuts Shelled	24/1#
62020	CV Fuyu Persimmons	18ct
62011	CV Hachiya Persimmons	20ct
78530	OG Blueberries	12/6pz
78545	CV Blueberries 18oz	8/18oz
205	CV Cantaloupes	6ct
79450	Bulk Chestnuts AAAA	25#
25400	OG Bag Kale	8/12oz
68020	Imported Cherries	11#
	<i>DELETIONS</i>	
78004	OG Strawberries	8/1#
78006	OG Driscoll Strawberries	8/1#
75625	OG Tomato Rainbow Mix	12/pints
27812	Walnuts in shell	24/1#
69615	Concord Grapes	12/1#
71165	Prima Peaches	18#
78520	OG Blueberries	12/4.4oz
73050	CV Red Plums	28#
73305	CV Black Plums	28#
73330	CV Black Plums	28#
70010	CV Brown Turkey Figs	12/8oz
70020	CV Black Mission Figs	12/8oz

CROSSET

C O M P A N Y

Thanksgiving Value Added Survey



Item #	Description	Pack	Case Cost	Delivery 11/17 - 11/18	Delivery 11/20 - 11/21
118022	Small 10" Fruit Tray	3/40oz	\$26.00		
118023	Summer Medley Tray	3/33.5oz	\$23.00		
118024	Small Fruit Tray w/Dip	4/26oz	\$27.00		
118025	Apple Tray w/ Caramel Dip	3/24oz	\$21.00		
118027	Fruit Cheese Snack Tray	3/7oz	\$13.00		
118028	Grape Cheese Snack Tray	3/12oz	\$14.00		
118029	Fruit Cheese Bounty Tray	3/28oz	\$25.00		
118032	Large Fruit Tray w/Dip	2/63oz	\$36.00		
770638	Large Veg Tray w/Dip	2/46oz	\$22.00		
770639	Extra Large Veg Tray w/Dip	2/76oz	\$32.00		
770640	Extra Large Fruit Tray w/Dip	2/108oz	\$60.00		
800071	Stuffing Mix	6/18oz	\$21.00		