



April 2016

Harvest of the Month Potato

Healthy Serving Ideas

*Boil, bake, roast, or grill potatoes and sprinkle with fresh herbs and spices!

*Top baked potatoes with different toppings instead of butter - try salsa, broccoli, mashed avocado, lowfat cheddar cheese, or lowfat cottage cheese

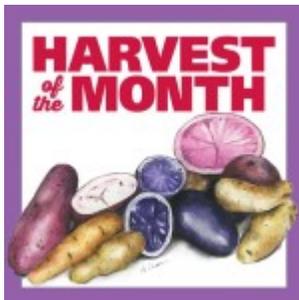
*Make orange mashed potatoes - Boil cubes of potatoes and carrot slices. Mash with a small amount of reduced-sodium chicken broth.

Fun Facts

*Potatoes are the leading vegetable crop in the US with a total production of 41.3 billion pounds.

*The potato chip was invented in 1853 and has been America's number one snack food for more than 50 years

*In 1995, the potato became the first vegetable to be grown in space.



Shopping and Storage

*Look for clean, smooth, firm-textured potatoes with no cuts or bruises

*Don't wash potatoes before storing.

*Store potatoes in a cool, well ventilated place

Happy National Garlic Month!

Garlic is a kitchen staple, found in so many recipes from all different parts of the world! When used fresh, your whole family will be able to smell the garlic before tasting it, since it is so potent. Most of the garlic we eat is grown in California, it needs a bunch of sunshine and is in season during summer months. Each bulb of garlic contains over a dozen cloves, which can either be used fresh or ground and dehydrated to make garlic powder.



Selection: Choose fresh garlic that is plump, dry and firm with skin that is white to off white. Garlic can be purchased year round, but is best in the summer.

Storage: Fresh garlic should be kept in a cool, dark place and can last several weeks. Garlic powder, along with all other spices, should be kept in an airtight container, in a cupboard or drawer away from moisture and heat. Store minced garlic in the refrigerator once opened and read guidelines provided on the package.

Cooking: Raw garlic is great used in salsa or hummus while cooked garlic is great in a variety of dishes, such as stir-fries, soups, stews and side dishes. Garlic powder can be used in pasta sauce, pizza, garlic bread, marinades and so much more!

Health: Garlic not only tastes great but compounds in garlic are thought to be protective against cancer and healthy for the heart, while reducing inflammation.



April's Food Focus is Summer Vegetables

Lightened up Spinach and Artichoke Dip

Ingredients:

6 ounces fresh spinach,
rinsed
8 ounces 1/3-less-fat cream
cheese, softened
1/4 cup fat-free sour cream
1 cup part-skim mozzarella,
shredded
1/2 (14-ounce) can artichoke
hearts, drained and chopped

1/2 (14-ounce) can
artichoke hearts, drained
and chopped
1/8 teaspoon black
pepper, ground
2 garlic cloves, crushed
(not minced)
4 tablespoons parmesan
cheese, shredded
(divided)



Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Tear spinach into bite-size pieces. In a large nonstick skillet, sauté the spinach over medium heat until wilted. Use a colander to remove extra water in spinach.
3. Combine cream cheese and sour cream into a large mixing bowl, mash with a potato masher. Add spinach, mozzarella, artichokes, pepper, garlic, and 2 tablespoons of the parmesan into the bowl. Stir until thoroughly combined.
4. Pour mixture into a 1 quart baking dish. Sprinkle remaining 2 tablespoons of parmesan on top. Bake 30 minutes, or until dip is all bubbly.
5. Once cooled, dunk tortilla chips, pita chips or your favorite whole grain cracker into this delicious warm dip!

Get in the Garden!



Picture taken from High School Garden this past summer

Garden fresh vegetables taste great fresh in salsas, salads or grilled. Toss together your favorite garden greens like spinach, kale or arugula, add in cherry tomatoes, carrots, & cucumbers and top with a home-made vinaigrette.

You'll be amazed at how much you and your family will enjoy food you grew yourselves. The gym or playground isn't the only place we can go to be active! Being a gardener or a farmer provides lots of opportunities to get exercise in a fun, new way. You could even visit a pick-your-own berry farm with your family