



Wood County

Eat Healthy

First Week of October Brussels Sprouts and Sweet Potatoes

Did you know?

- Many people call sweet potatoes yams, but yams and sweet potatoes are completely different foods.
- George Washington grew sweet potatoes on his farm in Mount Vernon, Virginia.
- Brussels sprouts are named after the capital of Belgium - Brussels.
- Brussels sprouts were voted the most hated vegetable in 2002, but in 2005 a poll named the sprouts as the 5th favorite vegetable.



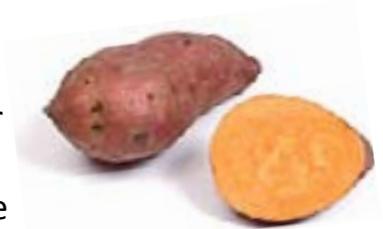
History

Sweet potatoes are native to Central and South America where they served as a staple for the Aztecs in Mexico and the Incas in Peru. Sweet potatoes have been grown in the United States since 1648, when they were first planted in Virginia. Today, the sweet potato is commonly grown and eaten in the American south, but the Irish potato remains more popular in the north.

This week you will learn about the Brussels sprouts and sweet potatoes you grew in your garden, received in your CSA share, or can pick up at your local farmer's market.

Why eat sweet potatoes?

Sweet potatoes are low in calories and packed with disease-fighting antioxidants. They outrank all other vegetables when it comes to the antioxidant known as beta-carotene which helps protect the body against cancer and heart disease. When eaten with the skin on, sweet potatoes are also a good source of vitamin C and fiber.



Preparing your sweet potatoes

When preparing sweet potatoes, be sure to wash them well. Sweet potatoes have a very thin skin, which is edible when cooked. However, if the skin will be removed, it is easier to do so after they have been cooked and cooled slightly. Yellow and dark orange sweet potatoes can be used interchangeably in recipes, but try not to mix the two types in a single dish, because the yellow variety takes longer to cook than the orange. Sweet potatoes can also be eaten raw. They should be washed, peeled, and then cut into sticks. To prevent any discoloring, put the potatoes on ice water for about ten minutes.



In Wisconsin, FoodShare assists low-income families and individuals to buy nutritious food. Visit access.wisconsin.gov or call 1-800-362-3002.

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Selecting sweet potatoes

When selecting sweet potatoes, look for the ones that are firm to the touch, have a dark color, and are heavy for their size. Avoid any that are cracked, bruised or have visible soft spots or decay. Even if cut away, a decayed spot may have already caused the whole sweet potato to take on an unpleasant flavor.



Selecting Brussels sprouts

When selecting Brussels sprouts, look for those that are firm, compact, and have bright green leaves. Old sprouts will tend to have yellow, wilted leaves and have a strong odor that is similar to cabbage. Also be sure to choose sprouts of a comparable size to ensure they will cook evenly.

Feedback

Send your feedback and food stories to getactive@co.wood.wi.us and they may appear in a future newsletter!

Honey Roasted Brussels Sprouts

- 1 lb Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved
- 1 tablespoons olive oil
- salt & ground pepper
- 1 tablespoons honey
- 1 tablespoons lemon juice



Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Toss sprouts and oil on a baking sheet. Season with salt and pepper. Roast, stirring, until golden brown and tender, 35 to 40 minutes. Transfer to serving bowl and dress with honey and lemon juice. Serves 4

Nutrition Information (per serving): 94 calories; 3.5g fat; 14.5g carbohydrates; 4g protein; 4g fiber; 28mg sodium

Source: adapted from Food.com

Why eat Brussels sprouts?

Brussels sprouts are an excellent source of vitamin C, containing almost fifty percent more than an orange. The daily requirement for vitamin C and vitamin K can be reached with only four to six Brussels sprouts. They are also a good source of fiber and contain compounds called indoles which are known for their cancer fighting properties.

Preparing your Brussels sprouts

To prepare Brussels sprouts for cooking, begin by removing any wilted or yellow leaves. Trim the stem and cut a shallow cross in the base of the sprout, to allow heat to enter the core. The secret to good Brussels sprouts is to not overcook them. Regardless of how you cook Brussels sprouts, test for doneness by inserting the tip of a knife into the stem. Brussels sprouts are thoroughly cooked when the stem is barely tender. Properly cooked Brussels sprouts have a crisp, dense texture and a slightly nutty taste.



Learn more at [getactivewoodcounty.org!](http://getactivewoodcounty.org)

