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ROOT VEGETABLES







Pictured on front: Parsnips & Carrots

Roots are the hidden structures that anchor plants in the soil. They absorb, store, and transport water and nutrients which allow leaves, flowers, and fruits to grow above ground. But for root vegetables, the roots are also the parts we eat, providing a rich source of nutrients and a tasty, healthy diet! Most root veggies are cool season vegetables that like full sun and grow best in early spring and fall. They are often enjoyed in warm and filling meals throughout the colder months.

Health Benefits of Root Vegetables:

Packed with fiber and antioxidants, root vegetables are well known for their distinct vitamin and nutrient content. As starches, they also provide a good source of carbohydrates for energy. Brightly colored root veggies (carrots, beets, and sweet potatoes) contain high amounts of carotenoids, Vitamin A, and Vitamin C which support vision and immune health. Root vegetables have varying amounts of Vitamin B, Potassium, Iron, Folate, and Manganese which help to reduce inflammation and support a strong and healthy body.[1]

Growing Local Root Vegetables:

Root vegetables are buried treasures, ready to be harvested from the ground during colder months, before the ground freezes. They like well-drained and loose soil to grow and expand their roots. Growing root crops requires lots of weeding and sometimes patience for certain types to germinate and grow to maturity. Hot weather can stress the plants causing them to 'bolt' and turn bitter. Farmers grow root crops because they take up less space and are frosthardy, leading to less crop loss and waste, while offering versatility for their harvest and use. Also, they require less water and resources than many other types of produce and tend to be hearty enough that less packaging is needed for transport, making buying root vegetables from small, local farms even more important.[2]





- I. Carrots
- 2. Beetroot
- 3. Turnips
- 4. Onions
- 5. Garlic
- 6. Parsnips
- 7. Radish
- 8. Potatoes
- 9. Sweet Potatoes
- 10. Ginger
- 11. Cassava Root
- 12. Rutabaga



Pictured Above: Rutabagas, & Right: Cassava Roots

- Many root vegetables like radishes and carrots have large leafy green tops that are edible and full of nutrients but are often discarded. These greens can be sauteed just like kale or spinach, and make a great nutritious addition to meals on top of reducing food waste!

Carrots were not originally orange. Wild carrots ranged from white to purple. It wasn't until the 1600s that horticulturists began breeding orange carrots.[3]

- Red and yellow onions are richer in antioxidants than other types.
- Rutabagas are considered a cabbage-turnip hybrid. They're easy to grow and, once you pull them from the ground, they can keep in your cupboard for up to three whole months.
- Sweet potatoes are not potatoes and are different than yams! Sweet potatoes have smooth reddish skin and a sweet flavor while yams have rough, dark brown skin with dry, starchy flesh.

NOVIMIENSON

In general, the harder

the root, the longer it

will keep!

[1] Brennan, D. (Ed.). (2021, November 9). Root vegetables: What are the health benefits? WebMD. Retrieved February 7, 2023, from webmd.com/diet/what-are-root-vegetables [2] Voyle, G. (2021, March 9). Root for your root vegetables. MSU Extension. Retrieved February 7, 2023, from https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/root_for_your_root_vegetables [3] Carrot - Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. (n.d.). Retrieved February 7, 2023, from https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/school-nutrition/pdf/fact-sheet-carrot.pdf

SWEET POTATO FRIES Recipe

Serving Size: 6 / TotalTime: 35 mins

Root veggies can provide an added nutritional boost to almost any meal. They can be enjoyed grilled, roasted, baked, as a base for stir fry or salads, on pizzas, in soups, and so much more! For a super simple and easy recipe, try this family-favorite Sweet Potato Fry recipe.

Ingredients:

- 2 Medium-Large Sweet Potatoes
- 3 Tbsp Coconut Oil, or vegetable oil

Salt. to taste



Root Vegetable Storage & Preservation: Root vegetables are best stored at cool temperatures in dark areas with relatively high humidity. Storing them in the refrigerator in a container covered by a damp cloth works well, but storage in a cool basement or produce cellar works better for large quantities. The greens on root vegetables will not stay fresh for as long, so it is best to remove and eat them promptly, even though the root vegetables themselves will stay fresh in cold storage for up to a few months. They can also be preserved by freezing.

Directions:

- I. Preheat the oven to 425 °F.
- 2. Line a large-rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper
- 3. Place the coconut oil in a large bowl and microwave for about 20 seconds to melt.
- 4. Peel the sweet potatoes and slice into equal-width sticks.
- 5. Dump all the sticks in the bowl with the melted coconut oil. Mix and make sure all the sweet potato slices are evenly coated with the oil. Mix in some salt to taste.
- 6. Spread out the sweet potato slices onto the prepared baking pan. Avoid overcrowding the pan.

Place the baking pan in the middle rack of your oven. Bake for 20-25 minutes, flipping once if desired. After 20 minutes, check on them and cook until desired crispiness.

Remove from the oven, serve, and enjoy!

Store in fridge.





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