



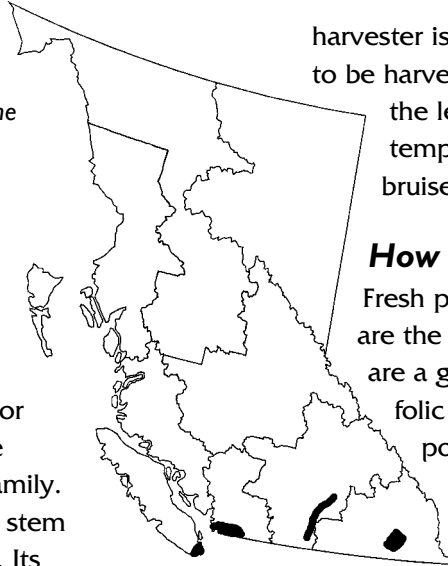
Potatoes

Interesting Facts

Potatoes are grown more than any other vegetable both in BC and in the rest of the world.

What are potatoes?

Potatoes are edible tubers. A tuber is a thick rounded part of an underground stem. Potatoes have white, brown, purple or red skins and white or golden flesh. Potato plants are members of the Nightshade family. Above ground the plant has a stem and coarse, dark green leaves. Its flowers range from white to purple.



harvester is used to dig the potatoes. Potatoes need to be harvested at certain temperatures to maximize the length of time they can be stored. If the temperature is too cool, the potatoes are bruised during harvest.

How are potatoes used?

Fresh potatoes, potato chips and French fries are the most common uses for potatoes. They are a good source of potassium, iron, thiamin, folic acid and vitamin C. The nutritive value of potatoes is reduced the more the potato is processed. Thus, French fries have about one-half as much vitamin C as boiled or mashed potatoes. Potatoes are about 80% water.

Where are potatoes produced in BC?

Potatoes are grown in the Lower Mainland, on Vancouver Island, and in the Okanagan and Kootenay regions.

How many potatoes do we produce?

BC annually produces 78,000 tonnes of potatoes, valued at \$43 million.

How are potatoes produced?

The potato tuber has external buds or “eyes” that can sprout into new plants. These eyes, rather than seeds, are planted to grow a new crop. When the plants are 20 to 30cm high they must be “hilled”. Hilling is done by covering the base of the plant with soil. This prevents the potatoes from being exposed to light, causing them to turn green and produce a poison called solanin. The berries formed on potato plants are poisonous as well as the green tubers. When the tops die back, a mechanical

What happens after the potatoes leave the farm?

Potatoes are harvested from early summer through late fall. Those harvested during the summer and early fall are trucked to on-farm packing operations or processors. At these facilities, the potatoes are washed, graded, packaged and distributed to buyers throughout BC and western Canada.

Potatoes harvested in the fall are put into storage. Loads are removed and distributed to wholesalers and processors as the market demands. Approximately 70% of the crop is sold for consumption as fresh market potatoes and 30% is grown as seed potatoes for local and export markets.

What challenges do potato producers face?

Potato late blight and insect pests are a concern for potato growers. A new program is in place to map the occurrence of plant diseases and insect infestation in a geographic information system. By knowing where disease and insect problems are likely to occur, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) can be utilized more efficiently.

- Field workers
- Seed potato producers
- Employees in processing plants
- Agri-business suppliers
- Financiers

Contacts and other resources:

BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands
 BC Vegetable Marketing Commission
 BC Potato and Vegetable Growers Association
 BC Certified Seed Potato Growers Association

Who’s involved in producing potatoes?

- Potato growers

Nutritional Facts

Serving Size: 1 medium potato (148g)

Calories	100
Total Fat	0g
Saturated Fat	0g
Cholesterol	0mg
Sodium	0mg
Total Carbohydrate	26g
Dietary Fibre	3g
Sugars	3g
Protein	4g
Vitamin A	0%

Vitamin C	45%
Iron	6%
Calcium	2%
Calories from Fat	0
Daily Value*	
Total Fat	0%
Saturated Fat	0%
Cholesterol	0%
Sodium	0%
Total Carbohydrate	9%
Dietary Fibre	2%

*Per cent Daily Values are based on a 2,000-calorie diet.

