**What is in it for you?**
- A good source of Vitamin C
- A source of carbohydrates for energy
- Contains vitamins and other chemicals that help:
  - Regulate blood pressure
  - Lower cholesterol

**How Do Potatoes Grow?**
The potato is a cool-weather, perennial plant. The plant’s leaves create excess starch, which gets sent down through the roots and deposited at the stolen (underground stem) ends forming tubers. The part of the potato plant we eat is called the tuber (pronounced: toober). Potato tubers come in a variety of colors. The most common are red and white. Tuber shapes can be round, oblong or flattened.

**How Do Sweet Potatoes Grow?**
Sweet potatoes are tropical plants, grown mostly in California and the southern states. Sweet potatoes are formed in the true roots of the plant. The root is the part of the plant that absorbs water and nutrients from the soil and anchors the plant in the ground. A variety of sweet potatoes grown in Louisiana have been nicknamed “yam.” However, true yams are only grown in the tropics and can weigh over 100 pounds. For additional information about sweet potatoes, visit: [www.harvestofmonth.org](http://www.harvestofmonth.org).

**Just the Facts**
- Wild potatoes originated in the Andes Mountains and were first cultivated about 7,000 years ago.
- Sweet potato plants were believed to have been domesticated in Central and South America 5000 years ago.
- In 1995, NASA grew the first vegetable – the potato – in outer space.
- Pennsylvania is the #1 source of chipping potatoes, supplying the US with ¼ of the US chipping potatoes.
- The Center for Science in the Public Interest ranks the sweet potato as one of the best foods to eat, primarily due to its high level of vitamin A and vitamin C.

**Trivia Questions:**
Q: Which former U.S. president was a sweet potato farmer before taking office?  
A: George Washington

Q: Which U.S. president was the first to serve french fries at a presidential dinner?  
A: Thomas Jefferson

**Note:** The *Market Basket of the Month* Promotions Kit contains additional information, including the full Educator’s Guide with botanical and historical facts, mini-posters of different types of potatoes, an enlarged botanical diagram, and trivia questions. Ask your school principal or school district food service director for the location of your school’s kit.

*Market Basket of the Month* is a Growing Healthy Kids initiative, coordinated by the Community Health Improvement department of WellSpan Health. To view the monthly family newsletters, go to: [www.wellspan.org/marketbasket](http://www.wellspan.org/marketbasket)