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FACT SHEET ON SWEETPOTATOES

The Problem:

Heavy supplies of sweetpotatoes are anticipated during the principal harvesting season beginning about September 15 and ending November 1. The heaviest supplies are expected from the producing areas along the eastern seaboard during this period. A large part of the marketing is normally done at harvest time in these areas, and the crop on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia is practically all marketed before December 1. Storage and curing facilities in those sections are limited, so that the crop must be moved promptly into consumption channels or spoilage will occur. Properly cured, sweetpotatoes will keep for months, retaining their natural flavor, goodness, and nutritive values. Unless properly cured and stored, however, they soon perish.

The Solution:

Consumers should be encouraged to eat sweetpotatoes. This can be done by stressing their great nutritive value, their high vitamin content, their flavor, and the variety of delicious ways in which they may be used in cooking.

Regional Promotion:

Intensive promotional efforts through the month of October will be needed especially in the Northeast Region, where shipments will be made from the areas of heaviest supply, particularly from the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia. Consumer demand should be created to help in disposing of these supplies. Some shipments may be made to the Midwest Region from the eastern seaboard, and in case these supplies are large, and are in addition to normal shipments from Louisiana, Tennessee, and other Southern States, an intensive promotional effort may also be needed in the Midwest Region.

Nutritional Importance:

Sweetpotatoes are high in vitamin A. Among other benefits, vitamin A aids in the prevention of night blindness which is particularly important to avoid now when so many workers are on night shifts. Sweetpotatoes are also high in vitamin C, and, if eaten in large enough quantities, they are also valuable for their content of thiamine, niacin, riboflavin, and iron. Because of a large content of sugar and starch, this vegetable also has high calorie value.

Temporary Abundance:

The period of abundance for sweetpotatoes is at harvest and that time is short. It is probable that sweetpotatoes may even be relatively scarce sometime after the first of the year. It is not recommended that householders attempt to store uncured sweetpotatoes in large quantities in the home, since curing and storing of this crop is a problem which can be handled successfully only on a larger scale. However, homemakers should have no difficulty in keeping sweetpotatoes for 2 or 3 weeks.

Historical Background:

According to some accounts, sweetpotatoes were grown in ancient China, long before the discovery of America. Other records point out that they are native to South America. In any event, they claim a truly romantic history.

A member of the morning-glory family, sweetpotatoes are known to have been among the riches from the New World presented by Columbus to Queen Isabella of Spain. An early writer of the period describes the gorgeous colors of the roots later grown in southwestern Spain, where red, purple, and white sweetpotatoes spread gray-green vines along the ground.

It is believed by some historians that sweetpotatoes, now the most widely used vegetable in tropical and subtropical countries, not only were introduced into Spain and Western Europe from America, but that Polynesians in their long boats carried them 1,500 miles across the Pacific, to flourish in the islands of the South Seas.

RECIPES

The following are sweetpotato recipes tested in the laboratories of the Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics. They are for six servings.

BAKED SWEETPOTATOES

Wash and dry sweetpotatoes of uniform size. Bake in a hot oven (425° F.) 40 to 60 minutes or until tender. If you want the skin to be soft, rub a little fat on the before baking. Cut crisscross gashes in the skin of the sweetpotatoes on one side, then pinch the sweetpotatoes so that some of the soft inside pops through the opening. Drop in meat drippings, bits of crisp cooked salt pork, or table fat. Save fuel by baking sweetpotatoes when you ovencook other food. If a moderate oven is called for, allow a little extra time for the sweetpotatoes to bake.

HASH BROWNED SWEETPOTATOES

Add chopped cooked sweetpotatoes to a little fat in a frying pan. Season with salt and pepper. Moisten with about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water for 4 cups sweetpotatoes. Cook over low heat until brown on the bottom -- don't stir. Serve folded in half.

Sweetpotato hash -- add chopped cooked meat and enough gravy or hot water to moisten. Brown on both sides.

SWEETPOTATO CAKES

Shape cold mashed sweetpotatoes into small cakes; roll in bread crumbs or crushed cornflakes. Fry golden brown in a little fat. For variety, add to the mashed sweetpotatoes chopped, cooked bacon and other leftover meat, or finely chopped apple.

SWEETPOTATO AND APPLE SCALLOP

3 medium-sized sweetpotatoes	1 or 2 tablespoons sugar
3 medium-sized apples	2 tablespoons fat
$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup water

Boil the sweetpotatoes until they are partly tender. Take off the skins. Slice the sweetpotatoes and the raw apples in layers in a greased baking pan. Sprinkle with a bit of salt and a bit of sugar and add a dot or two of fat to each layer. Pour in the water. Bake covered in a moderately hot oven (375° F.) for 30 to 40

minutes, or until the apples are tender. If desired, uncover the dish the last 15 minutes of cooking and top with cornflakes or bread crumbs combined with a little fat. For variety, in place of apples use layers of chopped ham. Bake about 20 to 30 minutes. Omit sugar if desired. Or, omit the apples and sprinkle each layer of sweetpotatoes with chopped toasted peanuts, a little sugar and salt, and dot with table fat. Bake 20 to 30 minutes.

SWEETPOTATO PUFF

5 or 6 medium-sized sweetpotatoes	2 tablespoons melted fat
2 eggs	2 tablespoons hot milk
1 teaspoon salt	

Boil the sweetpotatoes. When tender remove the skins and any discolored portions, and press the sweetpotatoes through a ricer. There should be about 1 quart of pulp. Beat the yolks and whites of the eggs separately. To the sweetpotato add the yolks, fat, milk, and salt, beat well, and fold in the well-beaten whites. Pile the mixture lightly into a greased baking dish and bake in a moderate oven (350° F.) for 45 minutes, or until light and fluffy and brown on the top.

SWEETPOTATO PUDDING

2 tablespoons fat, melted	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup orange juice
$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt	1 teaspoon grated orange rind
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup corn sirup or cane sugar sirup	2 cups mashed sweetpotatoes
	1 or 2 eggs, separated
	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk

Add fat, salt, sirup, orange juice, and grated rind to the hot mashed sweetpotatoes. Add the beaten egg yolks and the milk. Beat well. Fold in stiffly beaten egg whites. Pour into a greased baking dish and bake in a moderate oven (350° F.) 50 to 60 minutes, or until the pudding sets.

SWEETPOTATO PIE

Use the recipe for pudding given above. Pour the filling into a 10-inch baked pie shell and bake in a moderate oven 30 to 40 minutes.

CANDIED SWEETPOTATOES

Boil 6 medium-sized sweetpotatoes in their skins. When they are tender, drain, peel, and cut them in halves or slices. Make a layer of the sweetpotatoes over the bottom of a greased baking pan. Dot with fat, sprinkle with salt. Pour over them a cup of corn sirup, or honey. Bake in a moderate oven (350° F.) 15 to 20 minutes, basting frequently. Or...to save heating up the oven especially for the sweetpotatoes...cook them on top of the stove. Be sure to keep the heat low and watch to see that the sirup does not scorch.

