



The Sweet Potato (*Ipomoea batatas*) belongs to the family Convolvulaceae and known for its edible taste, especially the leaves, stems and tubers. Locally known as Kamote, it is considered as one of the important food crops in the rural areas and provinces. It is a staple food or rice substitute particularly in places where there is rice shortage, or rice absence because it is cheaper than rice and easier to cultivate and propagate.

The tubers, when harvested can be boiled or baked in coals, and may be dipped in sugar and syrup or can be matched with any viand like fried fish, fish sinigang or 'paksiw na isda.' The young leaves and shoots or locally known as "talbos ng kamote" or kamote tops can also be eaten as fresh salad, "adobong talbos", and "sinigang na isda".

The lowly kamote crop can be prepared in a variety of delicacies such as suman, am, kamote que, and even chips. It is a good source of raw materials for industrial purposes and can be made into flour, starch, and pectin (thickening agent).



The flour can be used in making soy sauce and can be also utilized in the production of alcohol and wine. The wine derived from sweet potato can be converted into vinegar and nata.

Sweet potato has also shown potential as a feed ingredient for livestock industries and can substitute corn.

The Healthy Kamote



The sweet potato is considered a healthy root crop because of its diverse nutritional benefits.

1. Reduces degenerative diseases and helps prevent heart attack because of its high Vitamin B6 content.
2. Excellent source of Vitamin C for stronger bones and teeth and good skin elasticity. The ascorbic acid found in kamote is also essential in coping up with stress and protecting the body against cancer-causing toxins.
3. Contains Vitamin D which protects our immune system, and Iron which assists in the production of red and white blood cells.
4. Good source of magnesium and potassium for relaxation and regulation of heartbeat and nerve signals.
5. Although naturally sweet, kamote slowly releases sugar in the bloodstream which stabilizes blood sugar levels and lowers resistance to insulin.
6. It is also high in beta-carotene which helps strengthen the eyesight and add extra fiber to our daily diet.



What you need to know

Unknown to many, sweet potatoes are related to the climbing and trailing plants of the Morning Glory Family, and not the Potato family (*Solanaceae*).

Two main varieties of sweet potato are available commercially. The pale sweet potato has a thin, light yellow skin and a pale yellow flesh. Its darker counterpart, has a thick, dark orange skin and a bright orange flesh.

Selection tips: Look for small to medium size sweet potatoes with few bruises and smooth skin.

Storage tips: For optimal storage for up to three or four weeks, keep sweet potatoes in a dark, dry, and cool environment. If you can't manage a naturally low temperature for them, try to use your stash within a week.

How to eat them: This versatile food may be used in a variety of ways and sweet potato recipes abound, including boiling, baking, and sauteing. Some health food stores and restaurants are now making chips out of them as well.

Preparation tips: Sweet potatoes may be substituted for regular potatoes in almost any recipe. To peel a boiled sweet potato, just drain off the hot water and immediately submerge them in cold water.



Kamote Recipes

Kamote Burgers

Ingredients

1 kilo kamote
1/3 cup flour
1 egg (beaten)
¼ cup tofu (mashed)
1/3 cup carrots (grated)
burger buns



Boil the kamote until soft, then mash along with the tofu. Include the egg, flour, and grated carrots. Add salt and pepper to taste. Shape the mixture into patties then fry each side until golden brown. Remove excess oil then serve on buns.

Kamote Kendi

Ingredients

6 medium kamote
¼ cup butter or margarine
2 tbsp water
½ cup syrup
¼ cup brown sugar

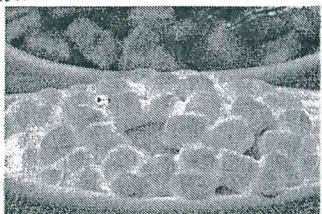


Wash kamote and partially cook in boiling water for 15 minutes. Drain and peel. Slice into ¼ inch thick strips. Set aside. Place all other ingredients in a hot heavy skillet. Put kamote strips in skillet. Cook slowly mixing occasionally until kamote strips are tender and well glazed.

MSP with M (Mashed Sweet Potatoes with Marshmallows)

Ingredients

1/2 kilo kamote (orange variety)
1/4 cup butter
1/2 cup cream
salt and pepper to taste
white marshmallows for topping



Peel and cut potatoes into even-sized chunks. Place in a heavy bottomed pan and cover completely with tap water. Simmer in medium heat until potatoes are fork-tender. Drain and mash well with the butter, cream, and seasoning. Place in an ovenproof dish and top with marshmallows. Bake in 350°F oven until marshmallows are brown and bubbling.

REFERENCES:

DA High Value Crops Development Program
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