

# Potato Days Festival Set For August 24 And 25, 2018

**By: Theresa Olson**  
Potato Days Festival salutes your health! You can enjoy some great potato foods while participating in some potato fun!

Food, family fun and many events make up the Potato Days Festival held annually in Barnesville Friday and Saturday, August 24 and 25.

Well known for its potato production, Barnesville draws on its potato heritage for two days of “spud”rific fun! Each year, an estimated 20,000 tater lovers from across the country descend on Barnesville to enjoy bushels of FREE fun for the entire family.

Wanting to stay healthy while enjoying some of those potato foods? You can sign up for the Mashed Potato Wrestling Competition. This event gathers a bigger crowd every year with its crowd pleasing contestants.

The original 1938 organizers of the Potato Festival might be a little surprised to hear that there are people now wrestling in a ring of mashed potatoes and the spec’tators” are loving every minute of it! This event takes place at 5:30 p.m. in the parking lot of the Assumption Catholic Church. Once the contestant is finished wrestling the local fire department is busy hosing the mashed gook off. That in itself is quite a show. We have contestants come from all over just to participate in this event!

Looking for a bit more exercise than wrestling? On Saturday morning, one can walk off those potato delicacies with a walk or a run with those entering the 5K/10K and Fun Run around the lake. All this fun begins at the Blue Eagle Lake Park around 8:00 a.m.

Saturday afternoon if you are looking for a little Cross-Fit activity the very popular Nick Manston Memorial Strongman Competition at 12:30 to determine who can toss a 100-pound sack of potatoes the highest. This event



One of the more popular items in the food court is the potato dumpling served by Our Savior’s Church from Barnesville. A little melted butter and a tish of salt and the dumpling is ready to go.

draws huge crowds and is fun to watch and participate in!

The mainstay of the festival is the Potato Peeling and Potato Picking Contests but family fun continues with such events as the Strongman Contests, Sculpting Contest, Street Fair, Stage Entertainment and the ever growing Car Show.

In addition, there are the cooking contests consisting of making the best lefse entry or the best potato item, this year we are adding a kids division and category is “Breakfast” made of mostly potato! Get your recipes out and see which one you would like to enter!

Both days of the Potato Days Festival are full of activities. It all begins as the Kiddie Parade kicks off the Festival on Friday at 10:00

a.m. The categories for the Kiddie Parade are doll buggies, wagons, historical, cartoon and character/storybook, hobos/clowns, king/queen, bride/groom, decorated bikes and pets. Immediately following the Kiddie Parade, the Street Fair consisting of arts and crafts, flea market and produce opens. For the rest of the day and night there is something to make the day a s“mashing” good time!

With two days that are packed full of “spud”rifice family fun you can enjoy unique activities and food eating at its best. Bushels of fun await the entire family. Whether one likes to use the potato for eating, sculpting or to play in, there is an activity to do just that. No one will want to be a spec’tator” because they will want to join in and be a partici’tator.”

The younger generation can enjoy games in McGrath Park. Moms, dads, grandmas and grandpas get a real kick out of watching the youngsters in the sack races, or having fun at one of the other activities provided. Later, the Barrel Rides are a favorite as are the Potato Car Races.

Maybe being a spec’tator” is a better idea for some. Down on the main stage, the Miss Tator Tot Contest tugs at the heartstrings of all who attend. The judges really have the hardest job at this event because they are all winners! The Miss Tator Tot Contest is open to young girls ages five and six. Each contestant is interviewed and the day of the contest they model a potato sack outfit of their choice and a party dress. Each contestant is a winner and receives a trophy and is encouraged to ride on the float during the Potato Days Parade on Saturday at 5:30 p.m.

Although that should be a rousing good time for many, there is a Teen Dance for our seventh grade through 12th grade and lots of entertainment downtown where the food court serves up many a“peeling” food items.



One of the more popular attractions of the Potato Days Festival is the annual Car Show. Now in it’s 21st year, car owners from all over bring their most prized possessions to McGrath Park to show off their hard work. Vehicle enthusiasts come to admire the beautiful work on Saturday, August 25. This pink cadillac was here last year but where is Elvis?

Anyone who has attended the festival raves about the good food court that serves up the best of potato pancakes, dumplings, Norwegian lefse, French fries, mashed potatoes and gravy and potato sausage. There are non-potato items such as pork or beef sandwiches, hamburgers, and smoothies served as well.

If one hasn’t gotten enough fun yet they will be up bright and early to get to the KC’s pancake breakfast beginning at 7:00 a.m. Saturday. After eating this hearty breakfast, you will be ready for another fun-filled “spud”tacular day of events.

The Potato Picking Contest is held in a field right next to town and has moved up to 9:30 a.m. The rules of the contest are simple: pick as many potatoes as possible in a given amount of time. A gleaner, person following behind, picks up potatoes left behind and this amount, plus penalty, is subtracted from the total weight.

Following the Potato Picking contest for adults, the Potato Scramble for ages four through 16 is held in the same potato field. They are allowed so much time to pick as many potatoes as they can. They have an added incentive to picking other than being able to take the potatoes home with them. Some potatoes are marked and when turned in, the picker receives a quarter for each one.

The Potato Sack Sewing and Stacking Contest is at 11:30 to pick up the spuds that have been picked and see how fast and how many you can pick!

Also, back again this year will be the Spud Run. Do you have an RC Truck that you like to run in the mud at competitions? If so, then this is the competition for you except instead of mud you will watch or run your truck through, what else? Mashed potatoes! This fun and exciting event is sure to please all ages and provide “spud”tacular fun! Other events include the Horseshoe Tournament, Softball Tournament and the Pinochle Tournament and one is sure to find a game of Bingo somewhere!

Another mainstay of the Festival is the Potato Peeling Contest. This contest is held on the main

stage downtown. Contestants are given three minutes to peel as many spuds as possible. At the end, judges deduct the weight of the peelings and determine a winner. Contestants are asked to bring their own peeling device but a peeler will be provided if necessary. Pre-registration is encouraged but contestants can sign up the day of the contest if there are still openings.

The car show is making this year its 21st anniversary. The show has gone from 45 to over 200 entries! The show is held at McGrath Park, two blocks west of the main street where the Street

Fair and Food Court are held. The show is on Saturday, August 25 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. At 5:00 p.m. a Car Cruise will proceed down the parade route and the Potato Days Parade will follow.

The Potato Days Parade is always a big crowd pleaser. Not only are there many units handing out candy along the parade route, but there is over 170 units of antique potato machinery, tractors, trailers, marching bands, floats, and many horses both pulling carts and with riders.

We encourage anyone interested in having a unit in the parade to call the Potato Days office at 800-525-4901. The parade is on Saturday at 5:30 p.m. and beings at the Clay County Fairgrounds.

Potato Festival souvenirs are available both days. Each year a new logo is designed and used for t-shirts and sweatshirts. There are also aprons and the commemorative button, which is a real collector’s item! We have a cookbook and many other potato kitchen items you won’t want to go home without! There are also many other souvenirs to check out at the Potato Days Souvenir booth!

The festival doesn’t just happen. If it weren’t for the organization of the nine-member Board of Directors and hundreds of hours from volunteers, there wouldn’t be a Potato Days Festival. It is successful because of corporate sponsors, businesses, churches, civic organizations and the volunteers all working together with the common goal being to make sure visitors have a s“mashing” good time during the two day festival.

Whether “spuds” are part of the activity or not, combine all the food and events and you’ve cooked up a “spud”tacular Friday and Saturday while attending the Potato Days Festival in Barnesville on August 24 and 25, 2018.

If you would like more information please visit us at [www.potatodays.com](http://www.potatodays.com) or call us on the “spud” line at 1 800 525-4901! See you at Potato Days!




Tim Gholson welcomed visitors to Potato Days last year and is planning to come back in 2018.



A mainstay of any festival is food and the Potato Days Festival is no exception. From the free French fry feed on Friday evening to the food court open Friday and Saturday. The food court offers everything from kettle corn to cheeseburgers and ice cream to potato sausage. Festival goers should not walk away hungry from the Potato Days Festival on August 24 and 25, 2018.

## Come to the 2018 Barnesville Potato Days!



### Friday, August 24 Highlights

10:00-8:00	Street Fair
10:00	Kiddie Parade
1:00	National Lefse Cookoff
5:30	Mashed Potato Wrestling
6:00	Miss Tator Tot Pageant
7:00	French Fry Feed
7:30	Potato Car Races
7:00	Teen Dance

### Saturday, August 25 Highlights

7:00-11:00	Potato Pancake Feed
8:00	10K/5K/Fun Run
9:00-4:00	Street Fair
10:00	Potato Picking Contest
10:00-4:30	Car Show
12:30	Strong Man Competition
1:00-2:00	Potato Peeling Contest
2:30	Mashed Potato Eating Contest
5:30	Potato Days Parade
9:00	Street Dance - Tripwire

For FREE Color Brochure or More Info  
800 525-4901  
[www.potatodays.com](http://www.potatodays.com)

Food Court Hours:  
Fri. 10:00-10:00 • Sat. 9:00-10:00

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