



Reflections From The Past



Huge crowds at the Food Court downtown are a given at every Potato Days festival, this year Friday and Saturday, August 25-26. Potato dumplings, potato sausage wrapped in lefse, mashed potatoes and gravy, deep fried potatoes. They're all calorie free soul food when Potato Days rolls into town. This photo from the 2007 festival shows the Food Court crowd reflected in the sunglasses of radio personality Shelly Knight from "The Eagle" station 106.9. She was on the main stage downtown providing commentary and interviews during the Mashed Potato Eating Contest. She also tried her hand in the Potato Peeling Contest.

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The Best Ways to Store And Keep Potatoes Fresh

Compared to other vegetables, raw potatoes last relatively longer when left out of the refrigerator. It's best to store your potatoes in an open bowl, paper bag or a cool dry place.

You'll know how to store your potatoes best by watching how long it takes for them to go bad. Try storing your potatoes in different environments and containers to see what works best in your house. Eventually, potatoes will start to lose their freshness and may develop sprouts or get moldy. So, in order to keep potatoes fresh for 4 to 6 months you'll need a proper food storage container or plastic zip bag that seals in air to properly store them in.

Got Sweet potatoes you want to keep fresh? Storing and freezing sweet potatoes is similar and you can learn more about the best way to preserve your sweet potatoes.

Storing Potatoes

There are various steps you can take to store your potatoes depending on whether they are cooked or not. If you are storing raw potatoes, here's how to preserve them so they stay fresher for longer:

Step 1. Inspect:

Make sure you examine your potatoes for sprouts, mold or soft spots. Potatoes without imperfections are the most ideal for storing purposes.

Step 2. Place:

Put your potatoes in paper or mesh bags, baskets or even a cardboard box. Whatever you decide to store them in, make sure it has good ventilation.

Step 3. Store:

Put your potatoes in a dark place that is cool and humid. The perfect temperature is from 45–50°F.

Step 4. Check:

Be sure to check on your potatoes and remove any that have sprouts or have become soft during their storage.

Storing cooked potatoes is an even simpler process. To start, make sure you are refrigerating all cooked potatoes within two hours of making them. Cooked potatoes take many forms. Depending on the type you have, you can figure out the right potato storing option for you.



It's best to store your leftover potatoes in a shallow container, or storage or freezer bag. Your potatoes will last for 3 to 5 days if stored properly.

If you are planning to store your cooked potatoes in the freezer, they will maintain their quality 10 to 12 months but remain safe indefinitely. However, it's recommended to never store raw potatoes in your freezer. This same method can work for sweet potatoes and other types of potatoes.

Tips for Storing Potatoes and Keeping Them Fresh

On average, raw potatoes last 3 to 5 weeks in the pantry and around 3 to 4 months in the refrigerator. How long potatoes last really depends on how you choose to store your potatoes and the environment you place them in.

How to Tell If a Potato Is Fresh

The type of potato that you purchase makes a big difference on how long they stay fresh. How you choose to store your potatoes also depends on when you plan to cook and eat them.

Remember to check a potato to see how fresh it is or whether it's been stored properly before you cook or eat it. Fresh potatoes should never contain blemishes and should be thin and smooth. When a potato starts to age, you can tell by the skin. It tends to be mushy and sag on the outside. Also, the starchy scent of fresh potatoes often changes to bitter when they start to turn. Always trust the smell of a potato to determine its freshness.

Potatoes with some sprouts are still safe to eat. However, if the potato developed long sprouts, has shrunk or smells bad, always throw them away in the trash or compost bin. You can use scented trash bags to help keep your kitchen smelling nice and free of potato smells.