



Potatoes Have Hearty Appeal

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EDITOR'S NOTE: This release kicks off the media campaign for National Potato Lover's Month. To schedule interviews with 65th Alice in Dairyland Rochelle Ripp, please use the information above.

MADISON - We know that February is celebrated with valentines, chocolates and flowers but don't forget potatoes! Rochelle Ripp, the 65th Alice in Dairyland of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP), is joining the Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers Association (WPVGA) in celebrating National Potato Lover's Month during February.

The average American eats about 126 pounds of potatoes each year. Last year, Wisconsin grew more than 2.9 billion pounds of potatoes, ranking third in the nation for potato production.

"Not only are potatoes healthy for us to eat, but they are also healthy for Wisconsin's economy," said Rochelle Ripp, 65th Alice in Dairyland. "Buying Wisconsin potatoes helps support Wisconsin farmers and food processors while keeping money in our local communities and economies."

One medium sized potato only has 110 calories and is free of fat, cholesterol, sodium and gluten. It also provides you with 45 percent of your recommended daily Vitamin C and has more potassium than a banana. Wisconsin potatoes are not only nutritious and delicious but come in several varieties and colors such as red, white, yellow and even purple!

Warm up with your sweetheart on a cold February night with a potato soup. When dining at your favorite restaurant for Valentine's Day, choose a side of Wisconsin potatoes. Treat your co-workers to some heart-shaped potato cookies. Spread your love of potatoes by enjoying Wisconsin spuds this season.

"The nutrient delivery provided by potatoes is one of the best food values available to consumers," stated Duane Maatz, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers Association. "You can even eat the tasty wrapper which is full of essential nutrients and fiber."

According to the University of Wisconsin Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, potatoes in Wisconsin contribute about \$260 million to the Wisconsin economy.

Treat the potato lovers you know to some tasty new ways of enjoying America's favorite vegetable. Learn more about Wisconsin potatoes from Alice in Dairyland throughout the month of February by friending her on Facebook ([Alice Dairyland](https://www.facebook.com/AliceDairyland)), following on Twitter ([Alice Dairyland](https://twitter.com/AliceDairyland)), or visiting her travel blog at wisconsinagconnection.com/alice. You can also find tasty recipes at eatwisconsinpotatoes.com year-round.

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