

Potatoes

Thick-skinned potatoes are generally soft and mash easily, but for added flavor and color, look beyond Russet potatoes.

1 pound = 3 cups sliced = 2 cups mashed

Best potatoes for mashing or frying (dry and fluffy): Russet, Chef

Best potatoes for roasting or chunkier mashed potatoes (moist and flavorful): German Butterball, Red potatoes, Yukon, Nicola, Fingerling

For purple, red, or pink mashed potatoes: Purple potatoes, All Red potatoes, Mountain Rose potatoes

Roots

Local root vegetables add color and flavor to the Thanksgiving table.

To roast: Peel and cut a mixture of root vegetables, such as carrots, rutabagas, parsnips, and beets into 1-inch chunks. Toss with oil and salt at 400 degrees until tender, 30-50 minutes depending on variety. Roast beets separately if you don't want their color to stain everything red.

To mash: Peel and cut root vegetables into chunks and cook in boiling water with potatoes. When tender, drain and mash together with butter, heavy cream, and salt. Turnips, celeriac, and parsnips are great additions to mashed potatoes.

To serve raw: Consider thin slices of raw or lightly pickled radishes on the Thanksgiving table or a grated carrot slaw (with added ginger for kick).

Sweet Potatoes

Sweet potatoes add a bright orange note to any Thanksgiving meal; choose moist, soft-fleshed varieties for mashing and firmer sweet potatoes for baking or roasting.

Jewel – a firm variety that is great for baking and roasting with a slightly nutty taste

Garnet – a soft variety that is great for mashing; a deep orange color; (super sweet locally-grown varieties are seasonally available)

Beauregard – a firmer variety of sweet potato that often has an elongated shape and reddish skin; its lower sugar content and nutty taste make it good for roasting and baking

Covington – a soft-fleshed sweet potato; good all-purpose mashing potato with a sweet taste

Evangeline – another soft-fleshed sweet potato, good for mashing, deep orange color

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Winter Squash & Pumpkins

To prepare any winter squash or pumpkin for cooked puree, simply slice in half, remove seeds, and place cut-side down in a 350° oven for about 45-60 min., or until tender all the way through when pierced with a fork. Mash well with a fork or in the blender.

1 pound pumpkin = 1 cup cooked

**2 cups cooked pumpkin (1 15-oz can) =
standard pumpkin pie recipe**

Best pie varieties: Pie pumpkin (soft and moist), Butternut squash (silky and more delicate flavor)

Best soup varieties (bake round varieties in oven first and make puree for ease of handling; peel and dice long-necked squash): Cinderella pumpkin, Kuri squash, Butternut squash

Best baking varieties (slice in half and bake with a little butter and maple syrup): Sweet dumpling, Acorn, Buttercup, Carnival squash

Best roasting varieties (cube and roast with olive oil and sea salt): Butternut squash (peel removed), Delicata (peel-on)

Thanksgiving Produce Guide



Looking for a particular variety of onion, or the best apples for pie, as you're running down your Thanksgiving shopping list? Look inside this guide for frequently asked questions about varieties of Produce and tips for how to use them in preparing a bountiful Thanksgiving meal.

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Apples

Apples play a starring role in apple pie and can also make appearances in various side dishes on Thanksgiving.

1 pound = 2 large apples = 2 cups cored and sliced

6 cups cored and sliced = standard pie recipe

Best pie apples: Choose a mixture of tart and sweet apples. Choose more tart/tannic apples than sweet apples for the best balance of flavors and texture. Examples:

Tart: Northern Spy, Mutsu (and many heirloom varieties)

Sweet: McIntosh, Macoun

Tart apples are also good added to bread stuffing or wild rice pilaf and to flavor the cavity of a turkey or placed in the bottom of the turkey-roasting pan.

Best apples diced raw in salads and side dishes - firm: (particularly tossed with a squeeze of citrus to keep the apples from discoloring): Mutsu

Best apples for applesauce and cranberry-applesauce - soft: McIntosh

Citrus

Lemons and oranges can brighten the earthy flavors of a Thanksgiving meal. Wash first. When a recipe calls for both zest and juice, be sure to remove zest before juicing!

To season turkey: Rub outside of turkey with lemon or orange zest. Slice lemons or oranges and place on the outside of the turkey for extra moisture and flavor, inside the cavity to brighten the flavors of the juices, or under the turkey for moisture and juiciness. Long, slow roasting caramelizes lemons and brings out their sweetness (just be sure to remove the seeds!).

To flavor roasted roots: Quarter a lemon and toss with chopped root vegetables when roasting to brighten flavors (remove lemon before serving).

To flavor vinaigrette: A basic vinaigrette of 3 parts olive oil to 1 part lemon juice is a great base for a dressing to toss on warm green beans, Brussels sprouts, or finely chopped kale or radicchio/endive salad.

To flavor cranberry sauce: Orange juice and zest can be used in place of water to cook cranberries; zest adds extra flavor.

To flavor sweet potatoes: A combination of orange juice and orange zest combined with butter and maple syrup can be used to glaze sliced sweet potatoes for a delicious side dish.

To add sparkle to vegetables: Grate a little orange zest or lemon zest and add to warm string beans, Brussels sprouts, or a leafy green salad.

Cranberries

Cranberry sauce comes together in a snap and can be made up to 5 days ahead; serve chilled or at room temperature.

1 pound = 4 cups fresh cranberries = serves 6-8

For cooked cranberry sauce: Put a little water, apple cider, or orange juice in the bottom of a pan, add 1 pound cranberries, and cook, partially covered, until cranberries pop and the liquid thickens, about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Sweeten to taste with honey, maple syrup, or sugar (1/2 cup makes a tart cranberry sauce). Add grated ginger, diced apples, or orange zest for added flavor.

For fresh cranberry sauce: Grind 1 pound cranberries with a quartered/seeded orange, quartered/seeded lemon, and fresh apple until coarse consistency is reached; blend 1/4 of the mixture more finely and place in serving bowl with about 1 cup sugar or to taste, plus chopped walnuts, if desired. Serve chilled.

Herbs

Rosemary, sage, and thyme are classic Thanksgiving flavors for turkey, gravy, and stuffing; parsley adds sparkle at the end. Leave stems on to make stock or season a turkey cavity, but be sure to remove stems when mincing.

1 Tbs. fresh minced herbs = about 1 tsp. dried

To season turkey: Place a handful of whole herbs with their stems inside cavity of turkey; look for a pre-made *bouquet garni* of rosemary, sage and thyme.

To make herbed gravy: Add finely minced rosemary, sage, and thyme to gravy while cooking; add minced parsley right before serving.

To season stuffing: Add finely minced herbs to stuffing or wild rice pilaf while cooking.

To add sparkle when serving: Set aside some minced fresh herbs and sprinkle on the dish just before serving: Curly parsley is very pretty minced and goes with just about everything – sprinkle it on mashed potatoes, stuffing, Brussels sprouts, roasted roots, gravy, salads, and more.



Mushrooms

Mushrooms are great stuffed as an appetizer, as an earthy flavor in stuffing, and as the main ingredient in vegetarian gravy.

1 pound fresh mushrooms = 6 cups sliced

1/2 pound fresh mushrooms = 1 ounce dried

Fresh mushrooms: Crimini are a good all-purpose mushroom with a soft texture and mild flavor that is good in creamy sauces; for a mushroom that lends a chewier, meatier texture, try shiitakes, chanterelles, or portabellas.

Dried mushrooms: A handful of dried mushrooms can be soaked in boiling water or vegetable stock to reconstitute them. This makes a rich, earthy-flavored liquid that can be used as the basis for gravy. They have a nice, chewy texture when reconstituted and rich flavor.

Onions

Onions accentuate the flavors of other dishes and can also be the main attraction in a side dish or vegetarian entrée.

Cipollini onions – small, flattened onions that are high in residual sugars which makes them great for roasting or caramelizing

Leeks – have a milder, sweeter flavor than onions; use just the white and light green part and slice in half lengthwise to wash well; delicious with apples in stuffing, braised as a side dish, or cooked in a tart or potato-leek gratin for a vegetarian entrée

Pearl onions – small and sweet, they are often served as a side dish with a sweet glaze. To prepare them for glazing, bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Add onions, and cook 3 minutes to loosen skins. Drain, and cool slightly. Slice top off root end, squeeze, and skins will slide off.

Red onions – both sharp and sweet tasting, their pretty purple color fades somewhat when cooked; mince and use raw in salad and side dishes for added color; also complements roasted roots and winter squashes

Shallots – sweeter and more pungent flavor than onions; they pair well with apples and thyme to flavor stuffing, and are great caramelized and added to string beans or Brussels sprouts

Sweet onions (Walla Walla, Vidalia) – these have a sweeter flavor without the astringent bite of other onions; mince or slice raw in salads, or anywhere you want a silky and sweet onion flavor

White onions – tend to have a sharper and more pungent flavor; mince raw to flavor vinaigrette for salads and side dishes

Yellow onions – all-purpose onion with a sweet and earthy flavor that becomes sweeter when cooked

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