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The Sweet Potato: Beautiful and Nutritious

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Add a bit of color and nutrition to your Saladmaster® meals with sweet potatoes. Also known as kumara, this vegetable has long been an important food crop in tropical and subtropical regions of the world and is a terrific choice for fighting diabetes when used in light recipes.

Sweet potatoes are an outstanding source of beta-carotene and provide 35% to 90% of the recommended daily vitamin A. Plus the colorful sweet potato is loaded with vitamin C, potassium, and contains more fiber (when eaten with the skin on) than oatmeal. A good source of antioxidants, this anti-inflammatory vegetable is also a good food for those suffering from arthritis and asthma. And preparing them in Saladmaster® cookware will help you lock in the flavor, color and health benefits of this nutritious vegetable.

Wait for the soil to warm to start planting this heat-loving vegetable. Plant slips, sprouts from the tuberous roots, 4 inches deep and 12 inches apart. Those gardening in cooler regions and areas with shorter growing seasons may want to use raised beds and black mulch to warm the soil and speed growth.

Harvest young leaves to use in soups and stews or steamed and served with fish, okra and chili peppers. The leaves are a good source of nutrients, iron, fiber and more.

The tuberous roots are ready to harvest in 90 to 110 days. Carefully dig the tuberous roots before the first frost or when the tuberous roots are full size.

Once dug, cure the tuberous roots in an 80°F/27°C location with high humidity. Once cured, you can store your sweet potatoes in a cool 65°F/18°C location for up to 5 months.

And don't discard those sweet potatoes that sprout in storage. Make it a fun gardening activity for the family. Plant the sprouting sweet potato in a container of well-drained potting mix. Grow in a sunny window and water as needed. They make a great indoor plant or take cuttings and start new plants for your garden.

Enjoy the harvest and get the greatest flavor and health benefits by preparing light recipes with your sweet potatoes in your Saladmaster® cookware.

For more gardening tips, light recipes, and information, visit www.melindamyers.com

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