The Russet Burbank Potato

Potatoes are one of the most commonly eaten foods with the average American eating 117 pounds of potatoes each year, and yet, a large amount of people do not think about what type of potatoes they are eating, they just grab a potato. There are an immense amount of different potatoes from the classic Russet Burbank Potato to the smaller less versatile King Edward potato. The supermarket always stocks an overwhelming number of potatoes to choose from with little information about the potatoes being readily available which leads to a random choosing. However, the Russet Burbank Potato, is the potato that should be chosen. The Russet Burbank Potato, also known as the Idaho Potato, accounted for four percent of potatoes in 1930 but now accounts for over seventy percent of potatoes used. This rapid growth in the popularity of the Russet Burbank Potato really shows how everyone from the farmers, to the stores, to the consumers much prefer the Russet Burbank Potato for a multitude of reasons.

The Idaho potato is much more versatile than many other types of potatoes. It is starchy, has a neutral flavor, and a creamy texture. The starchiness of this potato makes it a great candidate for dishes like potato noodles or potato bread because it is easy to make it stay together in a solid object but is not too hard when eating. This feature of the potato also helps with their biggest use, french fries, a classic American dish that has largely contributed to the success of this wonderful potato. Not only does the starch make fries easy to form together, the neutral flavor makes it easy to tailor to your needs and preferences, whether it's with a sauce like ketchup or ranch or a

seasoning like salt, the Idaho Potato will be able to handle it without a problem. French fries and other potato recipes can be customized easily because their flavor is so easy to work with. Not only can these potatoes be turned into fries because of their neutral taste but they can also be turned into many other things like mashed potatoes and baked potatoes. In addition to their flavor being conducive to potato dishes, they have a very creamy texture that makes them easily mashed or turned into a delicious baked potato. Just like French Fries this opens the potato up for so many different recipes. Whether it is french onion or cheesy chive and bacon, mashed potatoes can be flavored with almost anything your heart desires. The same goes for a baked potato, it is your personal potato, that you get to build. It is no one's potato but your own. And when you buy an Idaho Potato, you choose the flavor, it doesn't. Now that the great features of the Russet Potato we can explore the sub-par qualities of some other potatoes. The Red Bliss Potato, as an example, is bitter and firm making it bad for mashed potatoes and french fries because of both the taste and texture because it is hard to form and must be used in a certain way with certain flavorings. While it can be used for something like a soup because of its rigidness, it is significantly less versatile than the Idaho Potato and therefore should not be used nearly as widely. Because of the taste and texture of the Idaho potato is is much more versatile and widely used making it the superior potato.

Something else to think about when picking out a picking out a potato, whether you are a store or your average consumer, is the shelf life of the potato. The Russet Burbank Potato it can be stored up to five months in the right conditions because of the thick skin and enzyme composition whereas a Yukon Gold Potato, another popular

potato, only have a shelf life of three months. This makes it that much easier for everyone involved in the potato process. The farmer and the store do not have to worry as much about immediately selling the potatoes immediately. This longer time allotment takes a lot of pressure off of them and contributes to less wasted potatoes which is always a positive. No one wants to waste a potato. The same thing applies to the consumer of these potatoes. Both your everyday consumer and restaurants can buy potatoes in bulk not worrying about them getting rotten before they have the opportunity to eat them. They can use the potatoes as they are needed without wasting any potatoes making the potatoes that much more useful.

Something that a lot of consumers think about when purchasing most food products, but not necessarily potatoes, is nutritional content. In terms of macronutrients an Idaho Potato and a King Edward Potato are very similar. Both within one gram of fat, carbohydrates and protein of each other when you compare 100 grams of each potato but when micronutrients are taken into account there are significant differences. This makes an especially big difference when taking into account the massive amount of potatoes people eat each year. A King Edward Potato has has almost no micronutrients with zero percent of your daily Vitamin A, Vitamin C, Calcium, Potassium and Iron. These potatoes are very nutrient low and not very good in those high amounts but Idaho Potatoes are an entirely different ordeal. While it does not have any Vitamin A and slightly more sodium than the King Edward Potato, it has thirty percent of your daily Vitamin C, two percent of your daily Calcium, four percent of your daily Iron, and 420 milligrams of Potassium. This combined with the fact that most Americans eat almost

twice this amount of potatoes each day can greatly change the effects potatoes on their diet bringing them from a carb source to a healthy micronutrient rich side.

A lot of the aforementioned rationale of why the Russet Burbank Potato was aimed towards the consumer but it also is very beneficial on the farming side of potatoes because of their high crop yield and uniform size. The Idaho Potato has a crop yield of about four and a half hundredweight per acre, which is quite high compared to other types of potatoes. This is because they have high disease resistance, are very adaptive, and have thick stems there is a small loss of potatoes while farming. The size of the Russet Burbank Potato also leads to better economic effects. Because the potatoes are larger than average the manual labor per hundredweight is significantly lower than it would be with any other type of potato leading to cheaper labor costs and eventually a cheaper potato. Along with their larger size, they have a much more uniform size than most other potatoes so it is much easier to collect and package potatoes because you do not need to account for a large variety in the size of the potato.

From the farmer, to the store, to the consumer, the Russet Burbank Potato offers great benefits to each. These potatoes are easy to farm, can be stored for long periods of time, are easy to prepare, and offer great health benefits making them the easy choice for anyone buying potatoes. Even though many people do not think about the effect that different potatoes have, they can have a significant effect on your life and the lives of others. That effect can be made positive if you go with the Idaho Potato. This is a simple potato and a simple choice.

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