The Benefits of Common Root Vegetables

Root vegetables are exactly what the name implies – they are the root of the plant. The most common root vegetables have become family staples: potatoes, sweet potatoes, carrots, onions, garlic, and beets. High in vitamins and minerals that they absorb from the ground, root vegetables are full of nutrients and are an excellent source of fiber. Many are high in vitamin C, B vitamins, and vitamin A. Many are high in antioxidants. Several have remarkable healing properties.

In choosing the best root vegetables, all should be firm, never soft, and blemish free. If the tops are still attached, you want to choose fresh leaves, not only as a means to choose the freshest vegetables, but due to the fact that the tops of many root vegetables are eaten as well as the root.

In the past, we stored root vegetables in the root cellar, a dark, cool, humid space. If you choose to store any root vegetables in the refrigerator, cover and seal them in plastic or paper and place them in a drawer or they will soon become soft. (Do not refrigerate regular onions or potatoes.)

Many root vegetables can be eaten raw, steamed, sautéed, baked, roasted, stir fried, or fried.

Potatoes

The number one food crop in the world, potatoes are a nutritious vegetable unless they are fried or loaded down with butter and sour cream. They are a good source of antioxidants, vitamin B6, vitamin C, potassium, manganese, phosphorus, niacin, copper, and pantothenic acid.

Potatoes are one of the “dirty dozen” with the highest

pesticide residues. Choose organic potatoes to avoid these toxins.

Carrots

Most of the time, the carrots we see in the grocery store or farmers market are a bright orange color, but carrots come in a variety of colors: white, yellow, red, purple in addition to orange.

Carrots are a well-known and proven aid to eye health, including glaucoma and cataract prevention. Newer studies show prevention of colon cancer and cardiovascular disease. They are an excellent source of vitamin A, with one cup of carrots providing more than the daily requirement. They are also a good source of vitamin C, B vitamins, vitamin K, vitamin E, manganese, potassium, and more.

Sweet Potatoes

There are about 400 varieties of sweet potatoes. Their flesh may be nearly white, cream, yellow, orange, pink or purple. They are anti-inflammatory, have antioxidant properties, and they help maintain blood sugar levels.

The leaves of the sweet potato plant have antioxidant properties and are often added to soups. Purple sweet potatoes contain antioxidant ability more than three times that of blueberries. They are also a very good source of vitamin C, B vitamins, manganese, phosphorus, copper, potassium, pantothenic acid, and vitamin B6.

Onions

Onions support the cardiovascular system, benefitting both the heart and the blood vessels. They help increase bone density, support ligaments, and are an anti-inflammatory. Onions have

also been shown to help prevent cancer and are antibacterial. Rat studies are showing onions help to balance blood sugar. They are a very good source of biotin and a good source of vitamin C, copper, B6 and B1, phosphorous, potassium, and folate.

Beets

Beets provide antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and detoxification support. They are especially good for the nervous system and eye health. They help prevent heart disease and cancer and their fiber is especially healthy for the digestive tract. Beets contain folate, manganese, potassium, copper, magnesium, phosphorus, vitamin C, B6, and iron.

Garlic

Garlic is antiviral, anti-bacterial, antifungal, and anti-inflammatory. Regularly used in alternative treatments, garlic has a long history of medicinal excellence, among them cancer prevention and cardiovascular benefits. It is an excellent source of manganese and vitamin B6. It is a very good source of vitamin C and copper, and a good source of selenium, phosphorus, vitamin B1, and calcium.

The all star of the group is garlic, check out, *Garlic, the Most Amazing Herb On the Planet*. And speaking of beetroot, if you're looking to boost your health by giving your body a lot more nutrition, see *Total Nutrition – Make your own Homemade Multivitamin and Mineral Formula.*

Recommended Supplements:

- Shillington's Total Nutrition Formula
- Shillington's Total Tonic

Further Reading:

- *Garlic – The Most Amazing Herb On The Planet*
- *Total Nutrition – Make your own Homemade Multivitamin and Mineral Formula*

Sources:

- *A Guide To Root Vegetables* – Oh My Veggies
- The World’s Healthiest Foods