

# Potatoes and the Afterschool Snack Program

In addition to being a delicious, cost-effective and kid-friendly solution for breakfast and lunch meals in schools, potatoes are also a **nutritious** option to consider for afterschool snacks. By the time a child arrives at an afterschool program, they are in need of a healthy snack to help fuel their bodies and minds so they can fully participate in program activities. Potatoes are a great option to do just that!

## What is the Afterschool Snack Program?

The National School Lunch Program offers cash reimbursement to help schools serve snacks to children in afterschool activities via the Afterschool Snack Program. To qualify for reimbursement, the program must provide educational or enrichment activities. In addition, the snack must contain at least two different components of the required four food components. For complete guidelines about the Afterschool Snack Program, visit: [www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/afterschool-snacks](http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/afterschool-snacks)

## How Do Potatoes Fit In?

Potatoes are a great fit in schools because:

- They offer a high ROI for school foodservice programs. Offering potatoes helps to meet the vegetable requirement for reimbursement and provides key nutrients at an affordable price.
- Potatoes provide the energy, carbohydrate and potassium that kids need to power their performance throughout the school day.
- In fact, potatoes have the highest score per dollar (along with sweet potatoes and carrots) on eight important nutrients – potassium, fiber, protein, vitamins C and E, calcium, iron and magnesium.<sup>1</sup>
- Kids love potatoes!

<sup>1</sup> J Acad Nutr Diet. 2013 Sep;113(9):1182-7. doi: 10.1016/j.jand.2013.03.015. Epub 2013 May 25. Available at: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23714199>

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## Afterschool Snack Inspiration:

Think beyond the typical raw fruit or vegetable snack and get creative with using potatoes in new ways for a nutritious and delicious afterschool snack. Here are a few simple potato snack ideas to get you started:



### SEASONED FINGERLING POTATOES

**Snack Tip:** Bake fingerlings, cut in half lengthwise or served whole, in advance and chill. Season with any fun flavor seasoning combination such as ranch, nacho cheese, or chipotle. Serve along with a cup of milk.



### RAINBOW POTATO SHAPES

**Snack Tip:** Try using a colorful potato type such as blues, purples or reds and cut into cubes, wedges, or coins. Roast potatoes until they have a crispy outer shell then serve cool. Serve with cubed cheese or a cup of juice.



### TUBER TIP:

Don't have time to cut fresh potatoes or the storage space to house them in your kitchen? Try using dehydrated potato slices or dices. They save space, are quickly prepared, and contain the same nutrients as fresh potatoes. Just add water to hydrate then bake and season for a quick snack option kids will love.

## Enrichment Opportunity:

### Serving potatoes as part of the Afterschool Snack Program?

Pair with the Potatoes Raise the Bar brochure and these fun potato facts for an educational component for your students. Visit [PotatoesRaiseTheBar.com](http://PotatoesRaiseTheBar.com) for additional downloadable enrichment materials.

- Potatoes were the first food grown in space.
- The word potato comes from the Spanish word *patata*.
- Potatoes are grown in all 50 states.
- The potato is about 80% water and 20% solids.
- “French Fries” were introduced to America when Thomas Jefferson served them at a White House dinner.
- Potatoes are America’s favorite vegetable. You are not alone if you love potatoes!