POTATO STORAGE FOR SCHOOLS

The following recommendations are basic guidelines that **school** foodservice associates should practice to enhance the shelf life of potatoes and maintain quality at its highest.

1. Dry Potatoes = Happy Potatoes

- Do not mist potatoes

- Misting or spraying of water on the potatoes promotes silver scurf and others diseases

- Wet potatoes will rot quicker

- Keep potatoes off of a wet rack

2. Give Potatoes Their Own Space

- Store potatoes away from other fruit and vegetables to avoid flavor transfer, particularly apples and pears

- Flavor transfer can occur when fruits and vegetables are kept too close to one other

3. Not Too Cold, Not Too Warm

- High temperatures accelerate biological deterioration

- Low temperatures can worsen bruising damage and cause internal discoloration

- Variable temperatures can cause sprouting

- Do not store potatoes in the cooler, on a cold table or in the refrigerator

4. Time Is Precious

- Keep fresh dig or specialty potatoes no more than 10 days

- Maintain good quality potatoes and reasonable inventory levels

- Sprouting and rotting can begin to occur if potatoes are held too long

5. Leave 'Em Alone

- Leave potatoes in shipping boxes until ready to use

- Every time potatoes are handled they can get bruised

- Leave room for air circulation between boxes and walls
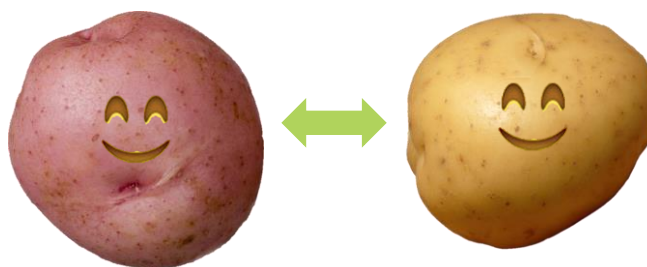
6. Rotation, Rotation, Rotation

- When re-stocking, use a first in - first out system

- Potatoes should not be stacked too high, this reduces air circulation and makes rotation more difficult.

- Rotation limits quality loss, because only one portion of the potato gets exposed to the light
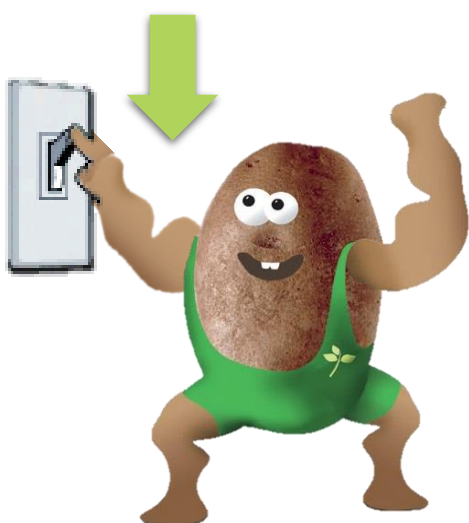
7. Limit The Light

- Potatoes turn green when exposed to light

- Natural or artificial light can cause the development of the green pigment. Solanine, a toxic substance, may also be present in the green tissue

- If there is slight greening, cut away the green portions before cooking and eating

- If the storage room is illuminated, use covers to reduce greening

References: Fresh Potato Handling and Storage Guidelines. Dr. Joe Guenther, University of Idaho.

Potatoes USA