Introduction to Potatoes
Types of Potatoes

Potato varieties differ in starch and moisture content, shape, and skin color.

- **High-starch, low-moisture potatoes** are dense because they have a high amount of dry starch. They are best when baked, puréed, or fried. They include Idaho and russet potatoes.

- Sweet potatoes, yams, and russet potatoes are suited to baking, puréeing, and frying. They are high in starch and low in moisture.
Types of Potatoes

- **Medium-starch, medium-moisture potatoes** are versatile.
  - Chef’s all-purpose, Yukon gold, and yellow-fleshed potatoes.

- Best for:
  - boiling
  - steaming
  - sautéing
  - oven roasting
  - stewing
  - mashing
  - braising
Types of Potatoes

- **Low-starch, high-moisture potatoes** are new potatoes.

- Best for
  - boiling
  - Steaming
  - oven roasting
Types of Potatoes

- Sweet potatoes, yams, and russet potatoes
  - Suited to baking, puréeing, and frying.
  - High in starch and low in moisture.

Yams:
- Not related to s.p.
- More natural sugar/higher moisture content
- Used interchangeably with s.p.
Selecting Potatoes

- A wide variety of market options exists when purchasing potatoes. These forms include fresh, frozen, refrigerated, canned, and dried.

- When selecting potatoes, choose potatoes that are firm and smooth.

- Do not accept potatoes with dark spots, green areas, mold, or large cuts.
Storing Potatoes

- Store potatoes in a cool, dry place at temperatures ranging from 45°F to 55°F.

- All potatoes are best stored in ventilated containers in indirect light.
Cooking Potatoes

- The potato is one of the most popular vegetables because it is inexpensive, adaptable, versatile, and tasty.

- Always discard potatoes if you have any doubts about their freshness or safety.

- Potatoes exposed to light may develop a greenish color
  - Although color is harmless, potato contains **solanine** (harmful, bitter-tasting substance)
  - Cut away and discard sprouts and green portions before using potatoes.
Cooking Potatoes

- In the **single-stage** cooking technique, take potatoes directly from the raw state to the finished state by using one cooking method.
  - Examples: Baked or boiled

- In a **multiple-stage** technique, prepare potatoes using more than one cooking method before they are a finished dish.
  - Example:
    - **Lyonnaise**: Potatoes are precooked, sliced, and fried with onions.
Cooking Potatoes

- **Boiling** is one of the easiest methods of cooking potatoes. It is often the first step for other preparations, such as puréed potatoes.

- **Steaming** is an especially good cooking method for new potatoes because of their high moisture content.

- **Baked** potatoes are always served in their skins. The best baking potatoes are Idahos or russets.
Cooking Potatoes

- Scrub all potatoes clean and pierce with a fork before placing in the oven, no matter the technique.

- For *en casserole* potato dishes, combine peeled and sliced raw potatoes with heavy cream, sauce, or uncooked custard.

- Chef’s potatoes are the best for sautéing.

- Deep-fry potatoes to make French fries, cottage fries, steak fries, and many other fried potato dishes.
Cooking Potatoes

- Make potato pancakes with grated potatoes and other ingredients. Pan-fry them to a crispy brown.

- Puréed potatoes are the basis of many popular dishes, including mashed or whipped potatoes, duchesse potatoes, and potato croquettes.

- Whenever possible, cook potatoes in their skins to retain their nutrients.