

FROZEN

U.S. POTATO REFERENCE GUIDE





INTRODUCTION

U.S. FROZEN POTATOES: WORKING HARD ON THE WORLD'S MENUS

If there's one question atop every foodservice operator's mind, it's "How do I make my menu work harder?" And if there's one solution making menus work harder the world over, it's U.S. frozen potatoes. They're the best tool for pleasing patrons, easing operations and driving profits.

U.S. frozen potatoes have the same high quality and performance you expect from all U.S. potato products. When paired with the marketing and culinary support of Potatoes USA, they help your operation stand out from the competition. Here's how:

A PREMIUM POTATO

All frozen potatoes are not created equal. The rich soil, ideal temperatures and generations of grower experience that produce premium U.S. potatoes also produce a premium frozen product. Potatoes used in U.S. processing meet rigorous standards for high solids and low sugars that ensure an appealing appearance, taste and texture. And with plentiful harvests year-round, U.S. frozen potatoes promise supply-chain consistency.

QUALITY FROM THE GROUND UP

The high quality of U.S. frozen potatoes starts in the fields, where generations of experience combine with the long days, cool nights, rich soils and varied microclimates of potato-growing regions to produce consistent—and consistently flavorful—potatoes. The results: real potatoes = real quality.

U.S. POTATOES PAY DIVIDENDS

Simply put, U.S. frozen potatoes boost bottom lines. Their convenient format reduces prep time and trims labor costs; their high solids and low moisture content conserve costly fryer oil; and the same growing conditions that make U.S. frozen potatoes so fluffy and delicious produce potatoes perfectly shaped to yield a high percentage of longer fries. A study from Oregon State University comparing U.S. Extra Long Fancy fries to other exporters' highest-grade fries found that the superior length of U.S. fries translated into more servings per case. More servings per case equals more servings sold, and more servings sold means more money in the cash register.

TRUSTED AND VERIFIED

Did you know that the United States is the only country with mandatory grading standards for frozen potatoes? That's just one sign that U.S. frozen potatoes are a cut above; others include the fact that every U.S. potato processor meets the stringent safety requirements of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and maintains thorough Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) plans to further guarantee safety.

THE FUTURE OF FROZEN

The U.S. potato industry has long pioneered state-of-the-art technologies—like the process that instantly quick-freezes potatoes to lock in fresh flavor and nutrition, and the automatic defect removal system that keeps most spotted and discolored fries from making it into the package. And speaking of packages, even the corrugated-fiber boxes and paper/poly bags that your frozen potatoes arrive in are strategically designed to maintain product integrity, keep out moisture and minimize breakage.

MORE PRODUCTS, MORE POSSIBILITIES

U.S. frozen fries are famous, but U.S. potato processors offer so much more. With all the options available, U.S. frozen potatoes help you create menu items that your customers will crave and your back-of-the-house crew will appreciate, too. Consider the possibilities:

- Specialty cuts can inspire entire dishes.
- Batter-coated potatoes maintain their quality over a longer holding time.
- Whole frozen bakers, frozen half shells and individually quick frozen (IQF) pieces save labor.
- U.S. frozen potatoes could be the hardest-working item on your menu. Find out for yourself!



FROM FIELD TO FREEZER: THE LIFE OF U.S. FROZEN POTATOES

U.S. growers know: the more solids in the potato, the more solid the profits. That's why all U.S. frozen potato products get their start as high-quality, high-solids fresh potatoes.

What's their path from there? Potatoes destined for freezing are first graded for size and quality. Then these premium potatoes are peeled, washed, preheated and cut into strips and other shapes. Strips are blanched to give the finished products a more uniform color and better texture, and while still moist from the blancher, they're dried and fried in oil. Following that, they're frozen to -18°C and again graded for size. The result: pristinely frozen, perfectly delicious U.S. fries.

But straight-cut fries are only the start. From curly and basket-weave cuts to hash browns, tater drums and more, there's a shape, size and style of U.S. frozen potato that's just right for your menu.



Unlock U.S. Frozen Potatoes’ Profit Potential

What do you call a menu item that suits any cuisine, fits every daypart and is so popular that almost half of consumers consider it a food “everyone can enjoy”?¹

We call it the potato! And with all the U.S. frozen potato products available, this terrific tuber’s potential to increase sales lies waiting to be tapped. Need proof?

More Products Mean More Possibilities

U.S. PRODUCERS LEAD GLOBAL INNOVATION

The U.S. invented the frozen fry, but potato processors didn’t stop there. Decades of innovation have yielded a wealth of formats that are favorites with consumers—and foodservice operators—worldwide. With these options, it’s no wonder U.S. potatoes are famous:

- Frozen Straight-Cut Fries
- Tater Drums
- Crinkle-Cut Fries
- Loop/Curly Fries
- Frozen Wedges
- Lattice/Basket-Weave Cuts
- Frozen Half Shells
- Whole Frozen Baked Potatoes
- IQF Hash Brown Patties
- Frozen Mashed Potatoes
- Dehydrated Frozen Dices
- IQF Shreds, Slices, Dices

SPECIALTY CUTS INSPIRE CREATIVITY

With so many options, U.S. potatoes are just the spark it takes to create menu items that customers crave. The different shapes, sizes and textures suggest pairing with on-trend sauces and dips, and the clean, appetizing flavor of U.S. potato products adapts to any cuisine, menu category or daypart. Always follow the manufacturer’s instructions for the frozen product being used, as cooking specifications may vary.

Frozen straight-cut fries are available in a variety of coatings and seasonings that enhance flavor and increase holding times. To get maximum servings per case, order only Extra Long or Extra Long Fancy fries.

FROZEN STRAIGHT-CUT FRIES

RECOMMENDED USES

What would a burger be without its fries? In fact, frozen straight-cut fries are used alongside a variety of hot and cold sandwiches in quick-serve and family dining restaurants around the world. They taste best when served hot and lightly salted.



Tater drums—also known as potato tots and potato puffs—are grated potatoes processed into a cylindrical shape, and they offer the perfect mix of nostalgia and fresh culinary inspiration to everyone who tastes them. There’s nothing quite like the contrast of their crispy outside texture with the fluffy potato inside.

TATER DRUMS

RECOMMENDED USES

Children love to eat these crispy potato treats. (So do their parents!) Tater drums go well with hamburgers, and are very popular at chicken restaurants. Serve them with a variety of toppings, dips and sauces to make a fun and unique appetizer or include them in casseroles to add delicious flavor and texture.

Who doesn't love crinkle fries? They let customers enjoy their fry favorites from a whole new angle. And they pack a lot of delicious potato flavor into a ridged, or wavy, cut for a unique texture.

CRINKLE-CUT FRIES

RECOMMENDED USES

The distinctive cut of this fry makes it an excellent choice to pair with creative dipping sauces. It's earned pride of place as the featured fry in some beer pubs, as it makes an excellent appetizer. Even better, the greater surface area of the crinkle cut creates a fry with a crispier texture. Crinkle cuts exceed USDA standards for extra-long fries, giving better plate coverage and increased profits.



Loop or curly fries are frozen fries with a twist—literally. The unique shape is popular among consumers, who've demonstrated a willingness to pay more for a premium product.

LOOP OR CURLY FRIES

RECOMMENDED USES

The unusual shape of these fries makes them a premium promotional item at many restaurants. They're a fun side dish that both children and adults enjoy. Curly fries also give restaurants greater yield thanks to their excellent plate coverage. As an added bonus, they have an extended holding time, making them ideal for home delivery and hotels.

Looking for a heartier alternative to the classic fry? Choose frozen wedges. Their thicker cut offers the customer more potato taste per bite. Tasty sauces love them as much as customers do.

FROZEN WEDGES

RECOMMENDED USES

Ideal for home delivery, room service or drive-thrus, wedges are a popular cut to serve with grilled meat or sandwiches. They work great as a topping for pizzas and other items too.



Whether you call them criss-cut fries, waffle fries, lattice fries or basket-weave fries, these thick slices of potato are cut into a criss-cross pattern that’s impossible not to notice. They can also be ordered with custom seasonings and batters that create a signature product.

LATTICE OR BASKET-WEAVE CUTS

RECOMMENDED USES

Their unique waffle-like shape and thicker cut gives basket-weave fries a longer holding time and outstanding plate coverage, providing greater yield. They’re excellent appetizers and even desserts as their crisp texture is the perfect complement to dipping sauces and stands out as a topping. Their distinctive appearance also has real plate presence in contemporary cuisine.

Frozen potato half shells are prebaked and quick-frozen to provide a fast and wholesome foundation for almost any recipe. Their consistently uniform size is an advantage in portion control.

FROZEN HALF SHELLS

RECOMMENDED USES

Half shells just beg to be topped with something delicious and the possibilities are numerous: cheeses, vegetables, meats, sauces. No matter the flavor profile or meal style, customers crave them. No wonder they’re so popular as appetizers and sides at family dining restaurants. The unique shape of half shells, and their topping potential, is catnip for a culinary director’s creativity.



These bakers have the same great taste as U.S. fresh potatoes—just in handy frozen form. They come in a variety of sizes to fit any appetite or plate presentation.

WHOLE FROZEN BAKED POTATOES

RECOMMENDED USES

Whole frozen bakers are convenient to use as is or prepped further; simply heat in the oven or microwave. Perfect alone, served as a meal or accompanying an entrée, this frozen vegetable can be topped with a wide variety of ingredients to add local flavor to any dish at a restaurant or home.

IQF hash brown patties make traditional hash brown potatoes more convenient. Made from shredded potatoes formed into a patty shape, these products are extremely easy to prepare—no thawing is necessary, as they can be cooked from a frozen state. The patty shape allows for easy portion control when serving and preparing, while smaller hash brown “coins” and “rounds” inspire creative new menu possibilities.

IQF HASH BROWN PATTIES

RECOMMENDED USES

Many restaurants serve hash browns as a side dish for breakfast, but more and more, this popular product is served as a great potato option any time of the day. Try adding a little crispy potato goodness to a sandwich by topping your burger with a hash brown patty.



Imagine mashed potatoes minus the hassle of washing, peeling, cutting, cooking and mashing. That’s frozen mashed potatoes for you. Packed full of nutrition, they make a great side to most entrées and are quick and easy to prepare in small or large quantities.

FROZEN MASHED POTATOES

RECOMMENDED USES

Handy in cafeteria or healthcare settings, frozen mashed potatoes are easy to enhance with a variety of toppings or spices to create a custom flavor. They’re also highly versatile ingredients in any kitchen, and a convenient choice for creating salads, soups, mains and even baked goods full of flavor and creativity.

Partially drying before instant quick-freezing concentrates dehydrated frozen dices for more efficient shipping and storage.

DEHYDRATED FROZEN DICES

RECOMMENDED USES

Dehydrated frozen dices taste just like fresh potatoes and are excellent in any dish requiring diced potato—think soups, chowders, stews, casseroles, vegetable mixes and salads. There are minimal labor costs involved in prep—no peeling, slicing or washing—and their consistency makes them a great choice for canning and retort packages.



Whether shredded, sliced or diced, IQF potato products save labor, money and kitchen waste. No storage, washing, peeling or cutting of fresh potatoes is necessary, and they go conveniently from the pack to the prep counter without defrosting. The individual quick-freezing process preserves potato nutrition and flavor, and IQF products provide uniform consistency and performance year-round.

IQF SHREDS, SLICES, DICES

RECOMMENDED USES

Toss shreds on the griddle and cook as hash browns, or use in stir-fries or atop a nouveau potato pizza. IQF slices also look impressive on pizzas and taste great in gratins and salads, classic or contemporary. They even add texture to instant mashed potatoes. IQF dices were tailor-made for stews, soups and other potato dishes, where they make prep a snap.





Who Uses U.S. Frozen Potatoes?

Savvy operators know that few products help increase sales and are as versatile and convenient as hardworking U.S. frozen potatoes. This is why you’ll find them on menus, in cafeterias, on consumers’ plates and in retail stores all over the world. But U.S. frozen potatoes play important roles elsewhere. You might be surprised to learn where they can work for you.

GENERAL FOOD MANUFACTURERS

In their many forms, U.S. frozen potatoes are indispensable in frozen meals and sides, canned soups and stews and the growing category of fresh-made ready meals at retail.

COMMERCIAL AND NON-COMMERCIAL FOODSERVICE OPERATIONS

U.S. frozen potatoes are at home on every menu. They make the preparation of large amounts of nutritious food quicker and more affordable. Consumers love them, and the product options available keep fans coming back for more.

RETAIL CONSUMERS

Between easy preparation and a wealth of product options, frozen potatoes are a consumer favorite.

U.S. Grade Standards for Frozen French Fried Potatoes

Businesses can promote the quality of potatoes processed in the U.S. with the USDA’s U.S. Grade Standards for Frozen French Fried Potatoes. The standards take into account criteria such as color, texture, uniformity in size and symmetry and the presence or absence of defects. Using a score sheet like the one below, evaluators quantitatively score U.S. fries on how well they meet these qualitative criteria and then, based on the total scores, assign the fries one of three grades: Grade A, Grade B and substandard grade.

SO TO QUALIFY AS GRADE A, FOR EXAMPLE, A STRAIGHT-CUT FRY MUST:

- 1. Have good flavor.
- 2. Have good color.
- 3. Be practically uniform in size and symmetry.
- 4. Be practically free from defects.
- 5. Possess good texture.
- 6. Score not less than 90 points when scored in accordance with the scoring system.

SCORE SHEET FOR FROZEN FRENCH FRIED POTATOES

Size and kind of container			
Container mark of identification			
Label			
Net weight (ounces)			
Style and cross-sectional dimension			
Type			
Length			
Factors		Score points	
Color	30	"A"	27-30
		"A" short	27-30
		"B"	24-26 1/
		"SStd"	0-23 1/
Uniformity of size and symmetry	20	"A"	18-20
		"A" short	18-20
		"B"	16-17 1/
		"SStd"	0-15 1/
Defects	20	"A"	18-20
		"A" short	18-20
		"B"	16-17 1/
		"SStd"	0-15 1/
Texture	30	"A"	27-30
		"A" short	27-30
		"B"	24-26 1/
		"SStd"	0-23 1/
Total Score	100		
Flavor			
Grade			

1/ Indicates limiting rule.

Potatoes USA: Your Resource for U.S. Potatoes

Potatoes USA is the marketing organization representing the 2,500 commercial potato growers operating in the United States.

In addition to frozen potato products, we promote four other categories of potatoes and potato products: fresh table-stock potatoes, fresh chipping potatoes, seed potatoes and dehydrated potato products.

Whether you're seeking ideas, information, tools or inspiration, Potatoes USA can provide support to enhance your sales:

- Educational and training materials
- On-site and technical training
- Point-of-sale materials
- Individualized seminars
- Promotional support
- Recipe and formula development assistance
- Product samples

Contact your local Potatoes USA representative office to find out about services available in your market. We're also happy to put you in touch with exporters of U.S. potatoes and potato products. And to answer your potato questions and fuel your imagination, visit PotatoesUSA.com.



For more information about frozen exporters and suppliers, visit:

<http://potatoesusa.com/contact/us-potato-exporters-suppliers/frozen-exporters-and-suppliers>



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