The Yuma area was once home of significant potato production, primarily for the potato chip market. Now, there’s specific interest in bringing that crop back to the desert.

The potato is a relative of tobacco and the tomato. Up until the late 18th century, the French believed that potatoes caused leprosy.

The annual diet of an average person includes about 125 pounds of potatoes.

The potato is the fourth most important crop in the world after wheat, rice and corn.

Marie Antoinette wife of Louis XV was known to wear potato blossoms as a hair decoration.

The potato, which originated in Peru, took a long journey to reach North America. The Spaniards took it back to Spain in the 16th century; from there it made its way to Italy and northern Europe, then to Bermuda and the Virginia colonies of North America.

Potatoes are environmentally friendly. They’re cheap and ridiculously easy to grow, and don’t require massive amounts of fertilizer and chemical additives to thrive (although some growers still use them anyway). They’re also super cheap and good for you, providing you’re not eating them in fried form all the time. This makes them a perfect crop for farmers in the developing world, who can easily grow a nutritious food in adverse conditions.

In 1995, potato plants were taken into space with the space shuttle Columbia. This marked the first time any food was ever grown in space.

The world’s largest potato weighed in at 18 pounds, 4 ounces according to the Guinness Book of World Records. That’s enough for 73 portions of medium fries at McDonalds.

While potatoes may be synonymous with the Irish these days, they were grown in the Andes Mountains, centuries before Europeans ever set foot in the new world. The Inca people of Peru were growing them as far back as 200 BC. They were first introduced to Britain and Ireland in the late 1500s. They weren’t an immediate hit, many people blamed them for diseases and railed against them because they weren’t mentioned in the Bible.

The “French fry” was allegedly served in the U.S. for the first time by Thomas Jefferson at a presidential dinner.

In the summer of 1853, Native American George Crum was employed as a chef at an elegant resort in Saratoga Springs, New York. One dinner guest found Crum’s French fries too thick for his liking and rejected the order. Crum decided to rile the guest by producing fries too thin and crisp to skewer with a fork. The plan backfired. The guest was ecstatic over the browned, paper-thin potatoes, and other diners began requesting Crum’s potato chips
Potato blossoms used to be the hottest royal fashion accessory. Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette were both known to wear potato blossoms to spiff up their outfits.

The potato is the most important non-cereal crop food crop in the world, and fourth most important crop overall. Only corn, wheat, and rice are more important. In the US, potato products are the second most consumed food overall, trailing only dairy products.

Approximately 1/3 of all potatoes grown in the US are grown in the state of Idaho

Frozen Potatoes, including French Fries, are the number one prepared style of Potatoes in the US. Americans eat more than 16 pounds of French Fries every year. That's over 2 million tons!

62% of all Idaho potatoes that are harvested are used to make frozen or instant potatoes.

New York consumes more potatoes than any other state, followed by Ohio, Florida, Pennsylvania, and Texas

The story of this versatile tuber begins almost four thousand years ago, when in its present form, it was cultivated by the then inhabitants of the land we now know as Peru. In the mountainous regions of this land, it must have been too cold to grow wheat or corn, so tubers were the next best thing to cultivate. The hardy tubers could be a Godsend in the cold climate; they were frost resistant, kept for long months and provide all the nourishment one needed.

Nutritionally, potatoes are best known for their carbohydrate content (approximately 26 grams in a medium potato). The predominant form of this carbohydrate is starch. A small but significant portion of this starch is resistant to digestion by enzymes in the stomach and small intestine, and so reaches the large intestine essentially intact. This resistant starch is considered to have similar physiological effects and health benefits as fiber: it provides bulk, offers protection against colon cancer, improves glucose tolerance and insulin sensitivity, lowers plasma cholesterol and triglyceride concentrations, increases satiety, and possibly even reduces fat storage.

In 1770 a crop failure gave a war its name - "The Potato War" when a war between Frederick the Great and Maria Theresa forced soldiers to steal the enemy's potatoes as there was not much more food to eat. When the potatoes were finished, so did the war.

Potatoes are generally grown from the eyes of another potato and not from seed. Home gardeners often plant a piece of potato with two or three eyes in a hill of mounded soil. Commercial growers plant potatoes as a row crop using seed tubers.

Potatoes are usually cured after harvest to thicken their skin. Prior to curing, the skin is very thin and delicate. These potatoes are sometimes sold as "New Potatoes" and are particularly flavorful.

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