

# Cooking Corner

## Sweet Potatoes Update A Comfy Classic

(NAPSA)—For 200 years and more, a one-dish meal of seasoned beef and mashed potatoes has been known as cottage pie. Like any classic, it's ready for an update—and a sweet-potato topper does the job.

Think about breaking through a golden crust into sweet-potato creaminess, and then into a succulent layer of seasoned beef. Comfort foods with such qualities are often problematical on the nutrition front. But this clever twist on a popular pie is not just hearty and delicious, it's downright wholesome.

Sweet potatoes provide many nutrients, including fiber, beta-carotene, vitamin C, potassium and magnesium. And for those on diabetic diets, there's good news: Preliminary research suggests that sweet potatoes help stabilize blood sugar and lower insulin resistance. Visit [www.ncsweetpotatoes.com](http://www.ncsweetpotatoes.com) for more information.

Most of the nation's sweet potatoes are cultivated in North Carolina's fertile fields and are available year-round. Given this fact, it's appropriate that our prize-winning cottage pie recipe comes from Ashley Bonnema, whose Ashley's Kitchen blog is described as "Southern tradition meets genuine Midwestern values."

### SWEET POTATO COTTAGE PIE

- 1½ pounds North Carolina sweet potatoes (about 2 large)**
- 1 tablespoon olive oil**
- 1 cup chopped onion**
- ¼ cup chopped celery**
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped garlic (1 large clove)**
- 1 pound ground beef, 90% lean**
- 1 can (15 ounces) tomato sauce**
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce**



Cottage Pie with a "Sweet" Twist.

- 1½ teaspoons fresh thyme or teaspoon dried thyme or *herbes de Provence*, divided**
- ½ teaspoon salt, divided**
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper, divided**
- 2 tablespoons butter**
- 1 tablespoon milk**

**Preheat oven to 350°F. Oil a 6- to 8-cup shallow baking dish. Pierce sweet potato skins; microwave until tender, about 4 to 6 minutes; cool. In large skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Add onion and celery; cook and stir until tender, about 5 minutes. Add garlic; cook and stir 1 minute. Add beef; cook and stir until it just begins to brown. Stir in tomato sauce, Worcestershire, 1 teaspoon of the thyme and ¼ teaspoon of the salt and pepper; bring to a boil. Transfer to baking dish; spread evenly. Scoop sweet potato from skins into medium bowl; add butter, milk, remaining ½ teaspoon thyme and ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper. With electric beater, beat until smooth; spread over meat in baking dish. Bake until bubbly, about 20 to 25 minutes.**

**YIELD: 4 to 6 portions**

Per serving: 386 calories, 34 g carbs, 6 g fiber, 14 g sugar, 15 g fat. Diabetic exchanges: 1.26 starch, 1.75 vegetable, 3.45 lean meat, 1.79 fat.