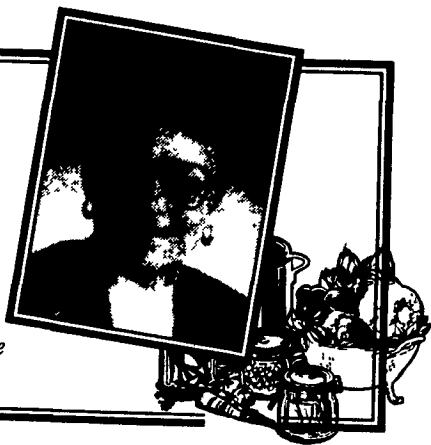


## Consuming Thoughts

by  
**Fay Strickler**

Penn State Extension Home  
Economist For Berks Co.



The latest talk going around the picnic table this summer is potato salad is no longer boring. That's right, that dull concoction of lumpy potatoes, mayonnaise, and celery is a thing of the past.

It's been replaced with super spud salads, that will jazz up any summertime meal. These salads feature a delightfully different approach to the standard salad recipe. For instance, do away with that mayonnaise dressing you've used for years. Substitute a tangy vinegar dressing. Or pour on a topping that includes Dijon mustard and blue cheese.

Instead of adding the usual celery and hard-cooked eggs, experiment with mushrooms or

crisp green or red peppers, bacon, chives or perhaps toss in sliced apples for a sweeter flavor.

Potato salad doesn't have to be fattening. The potatoes aren't the fattening ingredient in the salads—usually it's the dressing that's the calorie-booster. If you're watching your waistline, use a plain yogurt or cottage cheese dressing. (If you just can't give up the mayonnaise taste, use half yogurt and half mayonnaise.) One last salad tip; when preparing salads with mayonnaise, remember to keep them refrigerated whenever possible. It's important to dispose of any mayonnaise salad that sits out at room temperature for two

hours or longer.

Another favor variation that is a nice alternative to the mayonnaise type potato salad is a good German potato salad using vinegar. Here are a few tips for making German potato salad:

When deciding how may potatoes to cook for the salad use these equivalents: Fresh potatoes; 1 pound of potatoes equals about 3 medium potatoes or 3 cups peeled and sliced 2 1/2 cups peeled and diced.

Use firm, red round potatoes whenever possible for German potato salad. Red or white round potatoes (particularly the "new" spuds that haven't been in storage for months) make the best salad because of their firm consistency.

Good cooks know to leave the skin on when boiling potatoes, because many of the nutrients are found just under the surface. In fact, real potato fans never peel potatoes for salads.

Don't overcook the potatoes. Bring them to a boil, then cook them on a low setting until the skin "pops," or pulls away easily. Slice don't cube, the potatoes, for the best consistency.

Put the dressing on the pota-

toes while they are still warm. Then, let the salad sit in the refrigerator for a few hours, so that all the flavors are absorbed. At this point, it may be necessary to add more vinegar, or other seasonings. For extra flavor, add a diced apple or pickle to the salad.

If you have a quantity of fresh unpeeled potatoes left over, be sure to store them properly. Keep potatoes in a cool, dry,

dark and well-ventilated place at 45° to 50°F., for several weeks. Keep only one week at room temperature.

Don't refrigerate potatoes because temperatures below 42° causes potato starch to turn to sugar, producing an uncharacteristic sweet flavor.

Lengthy exposure to sunlight or artificial light causes potatoes to turn green and acquire a bitter flavor.

## Watermelon Promotion's Website Wins Award

ORLANDO, FL — The National Watermelon Promotion Board won a First Place award from the National Agri-Marketing Association for its efforts to promote watermelon on its Internet site, competing against entries from leading agricultural companies and commodity boards.

The NWPB's web site at <http://www.watermelon.org> is an all-purpose educational tool, featuring a variety of watermelon information customized to meet the needs of consumers, retailers, foodservice operators, industry members, teachers and the media.

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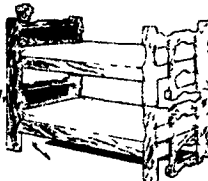
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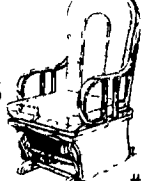
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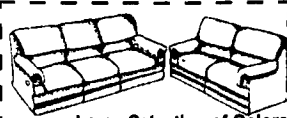
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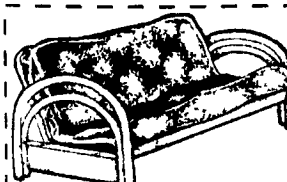
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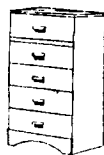
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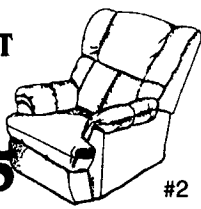
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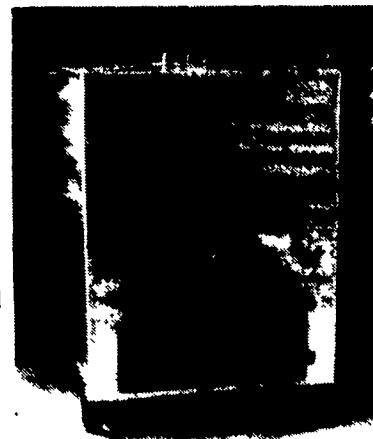
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