

# DISHING IT UP WITH DANA



## Game Day Kicks Off with Cheesy Potato Skins

Pecan Toffee Bars are the perfect sweet treat to bring home a Green Bay Packers victory

Column and photos by Dana Rady, Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers Association

Football is a big deal in our house. I'm sure that's the case for a lot of you, especially if you reside in the state that bleeds green and gold.

By the way, I send my deepest sympathies to those of you who feel the need to wear purple and gold, blue and orange, or even blue and silver. It's a bit unfortunate that such colors even exist in the NFL.

More often than not, if the Packers are scheduled to play at noon on a

Sunday, my family records the game and watches it later at night after we've had the chance to get some work done. Thank goodness for digital video recorders, right?

While that provides more flexibility, it can also be a problem.

My husband, Eric, truly detests hearing about any aspect of the game before watching it. He becomes a hot mess if he gets a call or text from family or friends about a certain

play or score if he hasn't already seen it himself. It's like the world is coming to an end. It is a bit dramatic, and so I insert my eyeroll here.

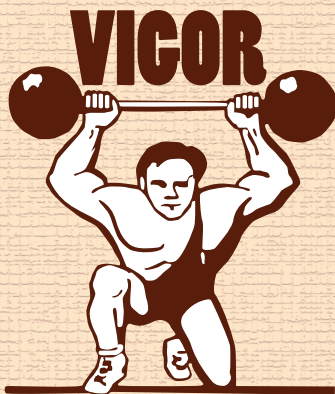
While not hearing about the game before we watch it isn't always a guarantee, one aspect that's guaranteed is game day food. And I'm pleased to say that our game day menu isn't complete without something that involves Wisconsin potatoes.

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#### INGREDIENTS: Cheesy Potato Skins with Sun-Dried Tomatoes

- 4 medium russet potatoes, about 1.5 lbs.
- 1/4 cup fat-free sour cream
- 2 oz. shredded Parmesan cheese
- 2 oz. shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1/3 cup sun-dried tomatoes, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup sliced green onion tops
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley
- Pepper to taste

## Dishing It Up with Dana...

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The two recipes herein are each super easy to make. So, if you don't like to spend a lot of time in the kitchen, these are for you. One is savory and the other sweet. Both use Wisconsin potatoes, but one may have you raising your eyebrows. I promise, though, that making it will be well worth your time.

Whether you're watching the next game with friends or just your immediate family (and regardless of which team you are cheering for), each recipe is sure to win over any guest. In fact, they both easily have the potential to distract your guests from the game. So, make sure no one misses the replays!

### DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit and bake potatoes for 50 minutes or until tender. Let cool.

Cut each potato in half lengthwise, and with a spoon, scoop out the pulp, leaving 1/4-inch of potato in each half.

Cut each half in half lengthwise again to form quarters. Season with salt and pepper and bake potato quarters for 15 minutes. This will crisp them up so that they can be picked up easily.

Mash 1 cup of potato pulp with a potato masher (save remaining pulp for later use). Stir in sour cream, cheeses, tomatoes, green onions and parsley. Mixture should be sticky and hold together.

With your hands, divide the mixture evenly between the potato skins, pressing the mixture into the skins.

Sprinkle with fresh ground black

pepper and bake for 15 minutes.

Serve warm.

### INGREDIENTS: Pecan Toffee Bars

- 1 cup mashed Wisconsin russet potatoes (nothing added)
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 tsp. baking soda
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 1/2 cup chopped toasted pecans
- 3/4 cup milk chocolate or semi-sweet chocolate chips

### DIRECTIONS

Combine potatoes, butter, and brown sugar in a heavy medium saucepan. Place over medium heat and bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Continue to cook and stir for 5 minutes.

Remove 2/3 cup of mixture and place in a small bowl. Cool slightly.

While cooling, preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Stir together flour, soda, and salt, and add to the mixture in the bowl. Mix well.

Pat the mixture into the bottom of an 8- or 9-inch square baking pan. Bake for about 15 minutes or until the crust is golden brown.

Add toasted pecans to the remaining potato mixture. Spoon over crust and spread evenly.

Bake 10 minutes longer or until mixture begins to bubble. Remove from oven.

Sprinkle with chocolate chips, and when melted, spread to cover.

Cool, and then cut into bars. **BCT**

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