

FRESH FOOD

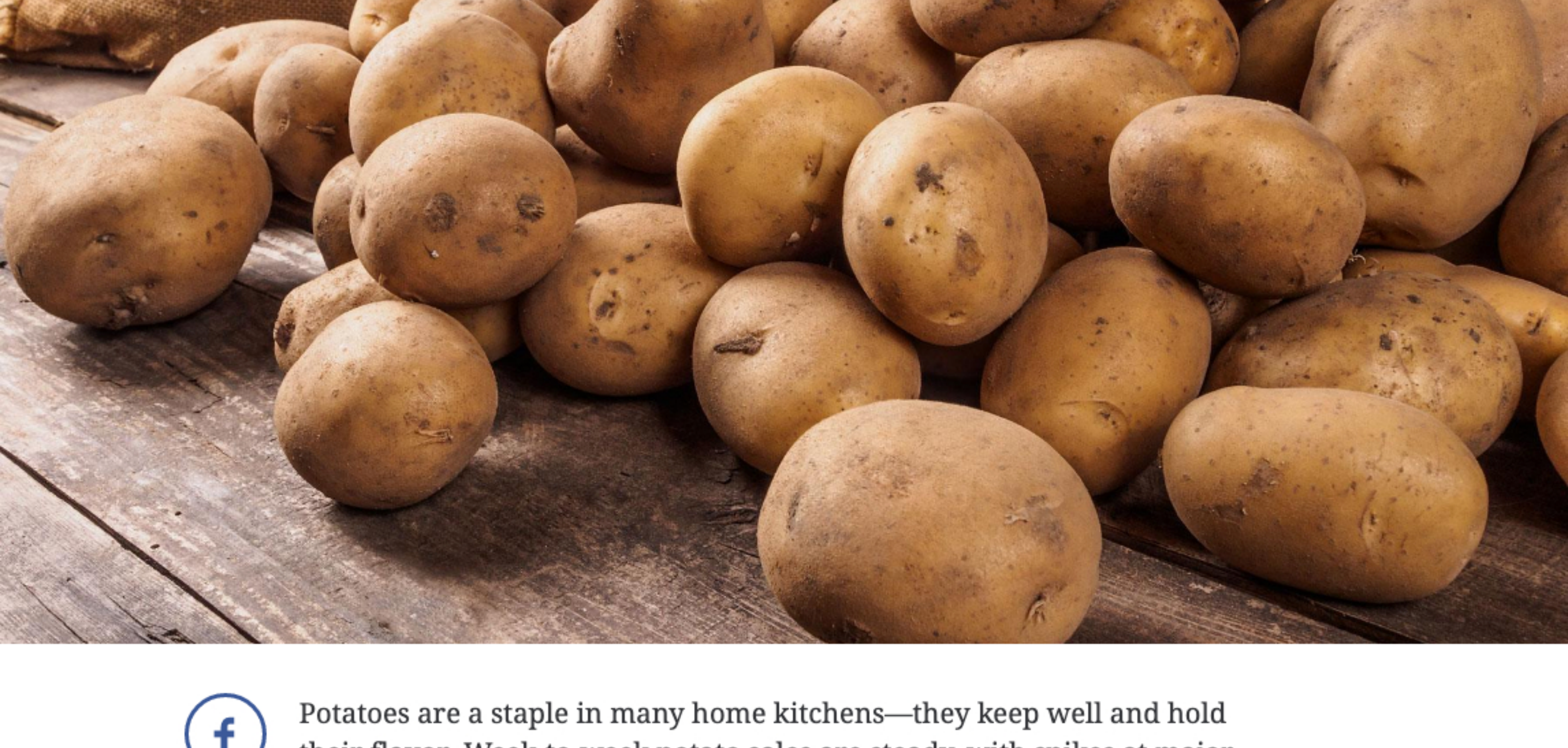
3 Innovative ways grocers can increase potato sales

Potatoes are a staple in many home kitchens—they keep well and hold their flavor.

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Potatoes are a staple in many home kitchens—they keep well and hold their flavor. Week-to-week potato sales are steady, with spikes at major holidays such as Thanksgiving and Christmas. It comes as no surprise, then, that potatoes are a grocery-store top seller. In fact, IRIdata\* notes that potatoes are one of the most popular vegetables sold, bested only by lettuce.

According to IRI research, 87% of consumers say they keep potatoes at home, followed by onions (86%), tomatoes (83%), carrots (82%) and peppers (72%). And when shoppers are buying potatoes, they're buying a lot more, too—in fact, data from IRI's 2018 Product Affinity Basket Study finds that cart size averages about \$77 for potato buyers, compared to a cart size of \$42 for shoppers who aren't buying potatoes.

With numbers like that, grocers should focus on promoting this versatile food. But how can this be done in meaningful ways?

Strategic potato displays

Grocers can give potatoes a sales edge by using these principles of merchandising optimization. Data from Kantar Consulting's Shelving Study says that potato sales can increase 5.2% overall with strategic placement, including placing potatoes at the front, right side of the store—which can lead to an 8.7% lift in sales. Other tactics, such as using raised bins for potato shelving, can lead to a 4.1% increase, while making potato signage visible from the store entrance can increase sales by up to 2.9%.

Evaluating how potatoes are displayed in the store can help retailers see opportunities for small, impactful changes to optimize sales.

Make potatoes the starring players

In addition to careful attention to merchandising techniques for potatoes, it pays to inspire shoppers' imaginations with possibilities for preparing potatoes. Options to include on signage can include dishes like roasted potatoes—cut into quarters and tossed with olive oil and seasoning before roasting—or mashed potatoes with garlic, chives and additional mix-ins.

A display with recipe cards for dishes such as a creamy potato salad or homemade potato chips might prompt some shoppers to prepare the dishes at home for their families, or to serve at a springtime celebration, graduation party, or summer picnic. The traditional baked potato bar with toppings such as cheese, broccoli, bacon, butter, sour cream and more can also be pictured to spark a shopper's interest.

What's new with potatoes

Shoppers may be interested in exploring all the different types of potatoes. There are seven types of potatoes: russet, red, white, yellow, purple, fingerling and petite. Each potato type has distinct characteristics and can vary in color, texture, flavor, cook time, moisture and preparation techniques.

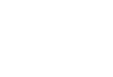
Because potatoes are a grocery-store staple, grocers may be stumped on how to generate additional customer interest. But strategic store displays of the popular potato, along with recipe inspiration and promotions for new types, can affect shoppers' buying habits and may spark new ways to cook the beloved potato.

Sourcing:

IRI Freshlook WE 12/31/17.

IRI's 2018 Product Affinity Basket Study

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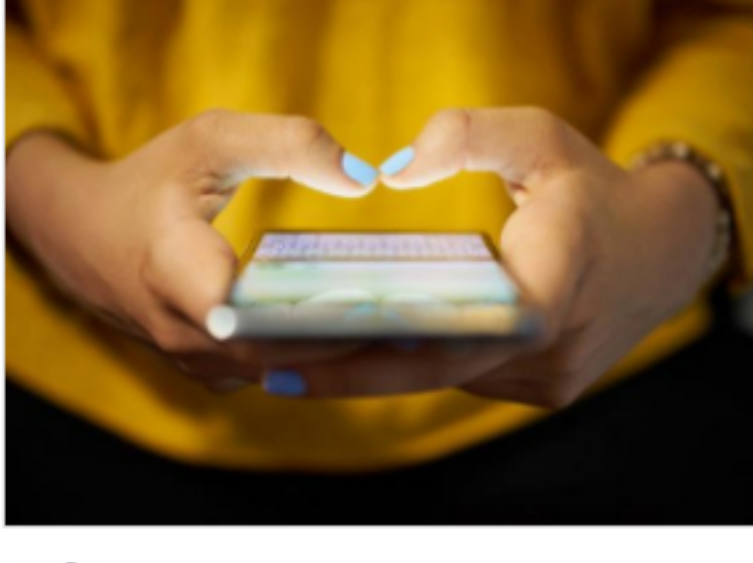
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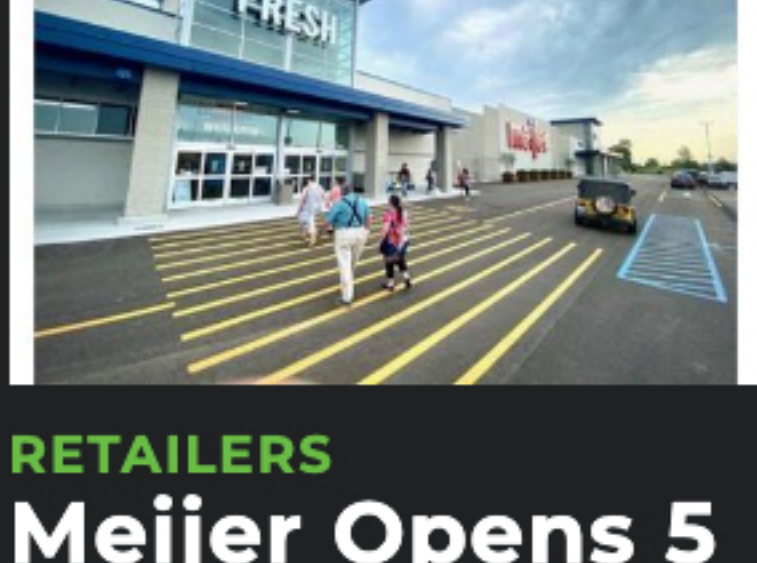
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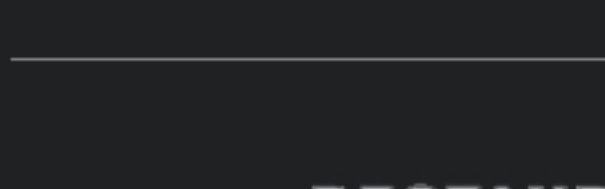
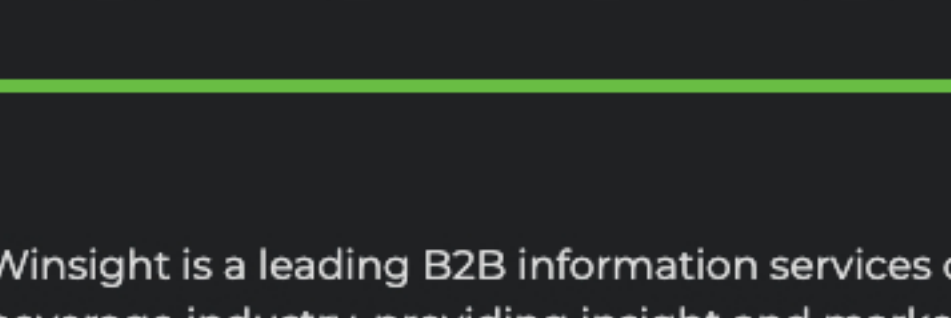
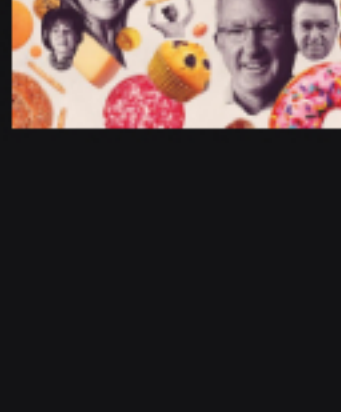
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