

Confusion aside, yams aren't close to sweet potato

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flesh with moist texture.

More than 133 million tons are produced per year in more than 100 countries. Asia is the world's largest sweet potato-producing region, with 125 million tons of annually Production in North America is about 600,000 tons.

High in carbohydrates and Vitamin A, the sweet potato is most often used as livestock feed, in industrial processes to make alcohol and starch, and products such as noodles, candy, desserts, and flour.

The yam

The true yam is the tuber of a tropical vine (*Dioscorea batatas*) and is not even distantly related to the sweet potato.

The yam has a rough skin which is difficult to peel, that softens after heating. Yam skins vary in color from dark brown to light pink. Yam tubers can grow up to

7 feet in length (imagine Bobcats center Primoz Brezec) and weigh up to 150 pounds. Yams are a primary agricultural commodity in West Africa.

Though not as high in Vitamins A and C as the sweet potato, true yams tend to be higher in protein and potassium. There are more than 150 different varieties of yam, which can be fried, boiled, beaten into a paste, made as desserts, or, as in the Japanese mountain variety, eaten raw.

The confusion

Several decades ago when sweet potatoes were introduced in the South, producers and shippers looked for a way to distinguish them from traditional white-flesh types.

The African word *nyami*, meaning to eat, was adapted in its English form, yam. In southern states, sweet potatoes are often still referred to as yams. To add to the confusion, canned sweet potatoes



PHOTO/YAHOO.COM

Yams originated in Africa, and their tubers grow up to 7 feet in length and weigh up to 150 pounds.

are frequently labeled yams.

Though sweet potatoes can be widely found in U.S. grocery stores, true yams can only be found in specialty

markets, such as those serving Asian and Caribbean communities.

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Like mother, like daughter: Generations borrow

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK — Fashion-conscious families are doing some cross-generational dressing.

Grown women are squeezing into miniature Barbie- or Hello Kitty-themed clothes, while their daughters can graduate to True Religion jeans — which can cost \$120 — about the same time they give up diapers. Even some dads get into the act, buying his-and-his vintage rock concert T-shirts for themselves and their sons.

"For the working mom who is pretty much on top of trends, her kids become a reflection of who they are. You do for the kids what you'd do for your own wardrobe," says Jaye Hersh, owner of the hip Los Angeles boutique Intuition which does indeed sell pricey denim for children and "Sesame Street" shirts to moms.

"When you're walking down the street holding your daughter's hand, it makes you feel good when she looks good. It's like having the right car or the right handbag," she says. And for a cool matching mother-daughter look, there's no resistance to the high prices, she adds.

With her trendy, upscale customers it doesn't take long for girls to develop their own fashion sense, but they certainly learn from their parents' example.

"All little girls still like pink, but it's an edgy pink

now. They want a princess crown instead of butterflies. The moms who have a sense of style and make that a priority for themselves—the kids pick up on it," Hersh observes.

Mattel has teamed with both Benetton and Anna Sui for further fashion credibility for its Barbie dolls.

The Barbie Loves Benetton collection is for girls and for the current spring collection features four "models." The Ibiza girl has a knit poncho with fringe and butterfly appliques, and camouflage-print capris. St. Tropez girl has denim Bermuda shorts with an empire-waistingham top; the Osaka girl has a denim miniskirt, graphic T-shirt and vest that are decorated with a Japanese-style cartoon Barbie, and the Melbourne girl has a cropped track jacket and sporty skirt.

The flip side of this trend is women — often the same ones as the haute mamas — who crave the comfort and nostalgia that apparel decorated with icons of their youth can bring them.

Barbie Luxe, a line that debuted last fall, is intended for "girls of all ages." It currently features the same babydoll top and skinny jeans by Sui worn by the Anna Sui BoHo Barbie Doll.

"When they're buying Barbie for themselves, they're drawn to a simpler time and vintage Ts remind them of that. What girl didn't

want Barbie? The women probably remember which outfit was their favorite. They also like shirts with Orange Crush, Junior mints, rock bands, Hello Kitty — anything that conjures up a happy memory," says Hersh.

Jewelry designer Tarina Tarantino added Barbie items to her collection, including a cameo, pink pearls, drop earrings and a rhinestone tiara. She was a Barbie fan as a child. "I loved my Barbie and all of her accessories as a little girl. Barbie lives in this pink sparkling world and has been an inspirational icon to many designers including myself," she says.

The jewelry is intended for adults, but Tarantino says her own daughters, ages 4 and 3, are quite excited about the project.

Tarantino also notes that in a fashion world full of sameness, highlighting favorite childhood icons actually allows the wearer to inject a little personality and individuality.

McDonald's, which only recently launched clothing licenses, has proven a best-seller, especially the "all-beef patty" T that comes in a Happy Meal box, reports Intuition's Hersh. "When parents are buying it for their kids, you hear them say, 'I used to eat with your dad there,'" she says.

Celebrities, seemingly always a driving force for

trends, are an even bigger factor here.

"If you see Lindsay (Lohan) or Paris (Hilton) wearing it — if a customer sees one of them in a Rolling Stones' tongue T-shirt, then the customer comes in looking for that exact one," Hersh says.

Not all of the multigenerational looks are so edgy, though.

Oilily, a Dutch brand that has the style of a modern-day Laura Ashley, dresses moms and daughters in vintage-inspired floral and romantic prints.

Sheri Styles, director of merchandising, explains that the husband-wife design team of Willem and Marieke Olsthoorn starts off with children's clothing and then adapts prints and silhouettes for older girls and women.

An infant's garment, for instance, might be in a miniature floral pattern, which will be blown up for a girl; a teen's garment might feature a patchwork that includes that floral print with a complementary stripe, and the woman's garment will have a different shape and use that floral print for its trim.

"Girls and women seem to like the same colors, things that are pretty, feminine — lots of pink and orange. There are those that like blue-green, and that's also a mainstay for us," says Styles. "The collection is very much designed with mothers and daughters in mind."

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