

WINTER SQUASH



Many varieties of squash, another member of the “Three Sisters,” were grown by Native Americans, including acorn, zucchini, pumpkins and gourds. Gourds have been cultivated for about 4,500 years. They were used long before the development of pottery as containers. Native Americans ate squash fresh and dried and stored it. Winter squash is an annual fruit representing several squash species. Late-growing, less symmetrical, odd-shaped, rough or warty varieties, small to medium in size, but with long-keeping qualities and hard rinds, are usually called winter squash.

SELECTION, STORAGE & COOKING

- Look for squash with minimal bruising and no obvious cuts or oozy areas. The squash should feel heavy for its size.
- If you plan on eating the squash soon, you can keep it on your countertop for up to a week.
- For longer storage, keep it in a cool, dark place such as a cold storage room. A properly stored squash can last for weeks or even months.



NUTRITIONAL VALUE

Winter squash will deliver Vitamins A and C, antioxidants, fiber and potassium. When you're prepping winter squash, don't ditch the seeds. They can be roasted and also provide nutrients including more fiber, mono- and poly-unsaturated fats (the types you want to eat more of), vitamin E, and iron.

BUTTERNUT SQUASH & APPLE MUFFINS

Ingredients:

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| • 2 cup raisins | • 2 cups flour | • 1½ cups butternut squash, pureed | • ½ tsp nutmeg |
| • ¾ cup boiling water | • 3 apples (with skin) chopped into 1-2" pieces | • 1 cup butter | • ½ Tbl vanilla extract |
| • 1 cup pecans | • 1 cup applesauce | • 1½ cup maple syrup | |
| • ½ cup oats | | • 1 Tbl cinnamon | |
| • 4 bananas | | | |

Directions:

1. Boil water in your kettle. Measure out the raisins and water. Pour the water over the raisins and let them soak for 10 minutes. Once the 10 minutes is up, transfer the water + raisin mixture to your blender or food processor. Add pecans, oats, and bananas to your blender or food processor and blend until smooth.
2. Transfer the contents of the blender / food processor into a large mixing bowl.
3. Add remaining ingredients to the mixing bowl and stir until well combined.
4. Using cooking spray, lightly grease two jumbo muffin pans (pan for 6 large muffins instead of 12 regular sized muffins). Pour the batter into the muffin cups filling the cups to the top. Garnish generously with chopped pecans.
5. Bake the muffins in a preheated 350°F oven for 30-35 minutes or until golden brown.

WINTER SQUASH SEASONAL AVAILABILITY:

JUL AUG SEPT OCT NOV DEC JAN FEB

DRYING WINTER SQUASH ACTIVITY



1. Wash the squash thoroughly. Get rid of any leaves, stems, or pits.
2. Cut the squash into 1/2-inch slices. Squeeze lemon juice on the slices to keep them from turning brown.
3. Cover a board or tray with cheesecloth. Place the slices or whole squash on it. They should not touch one another.
4. Cover the fruit with a second layer of cheesecloth. Move the board or tray into a sunny spot. Let the fruit dry outside for several days. Turn the fruit three or four times. Take the tray in each night and in the daytime if it rains. Depending on the kind of fruit, it may take from 2 to 6 days to dry.
5. Store the fruit in a covered jar or in the refrigerator.

IMPORTANCE OF SAFE STORAGE

The high sugar and acid content of fruits make them safe to dry out-of-doors when conditions are favorable for drying. Vegetables (with the exception of vine dried beans) and meats are not recommended for out-of-doors drying. Squash is technically a fruit, because it contains seeds and comes from the flowering part of plants.

Moisture is the number one enemy of dehydrated vegetables. Damp basements, under-sink cabinets, or any other place where your stored vegetables will come in contact with moisture will shorten their shelf life. If dried foods pick up moisture from the storage area, molds and bacteria can grow. This can lead to spoilage and illness. For additional food safety information regarding dehydrating fruits and vegetables, please refer to your local extension educator.

For more information about drying fruits and vegetables, visit: extension.colostate.edu/topic-areas/nutrition-food-safety-health/drying-vegetables-9-308

Source: National Center for Home Food Preservation, www.nchfp.uga.edu

LEARN TO SAY "SQUASH" IN DIFFERENT TRIBAL LANGUAGES

DAKOTA

Wamnu waniyetu

UMONHOⁿ

Watoⁿ

PONCA

Watoⁿ

HOCHUNK

Wicąwą cozu

LAKOTA

Wamnu waniyetu



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