

## Squash Facts!

### Winter Squash... Especially Butternut!

Winter squash are varieties of squash marketed only when fully mature. Some of the most important varieties are the Acorn, Butternut, Buttercup, Hubbard, Delicious and Banana.

Winter squash, is harvested in a mature stage, when flavor is rich and full and the skin has hardened into a tough rind, which makes it suitable for winter storage. Summer squash is harvested in the immature stage, when the rind is tender and seeds have not yet developed.

Usually, winter squash starts maturing in September or late August.

Winter squash can be stored from several weeks to six months if kept in a cool, dark place (about 55 F).



#### Nutrition Facts

One cup of mashed squash contains: 80 calories, 2 grams protein, 1 gram fat, 18 grams carbohydrates, with riboflavin, iron, plus Vitamins A and C.

#### Equivalencies for 1# fresh squash:

1# = 3 medium fruits = 3 c. sliced = 1 c. cooked / mashed

Winter squash is a delicious source of complex carbohydrate and fiber. Fiber, once called roughage, absorbs water and becomes bulky in the stomach. It works throughout the intestinal track, cleaning & moving waste quickly out of the body. Research indicates that this soluble fiber plays an important role in reducing the incidence of colon cancer.

Winter squash is also a source of potassium, niacin, iron and beta carotene. The orange-fleshed squash is also an excellent source of beta carotene. As a general rule, the deeper the orange color, the higher the beta carotene content. Beta carotene is converted to Vitamin A in the body. Vitamin A being essential for healthy skin, vision, bone development and maintenance as well as many other functions.

### The Feed The Hungry Program

A program that includes planting, growing, harvesting, giving to your community, preparing, tasting and lots of learning! Lesson plans are available on our website ([www.nyfbfoundation.org](http://www.nyfbfoundation.org)).

This program expands students' knowledge of the food and fiber system and enhances understanding of good nutrition, growing healthy food, and provides a connection between agriculture, community and social service.

**The Foundation has developed tools and resources to "sow the seeds of understanding". Our programs are available throughout New York State. We invite all who utilize agriculture in the form of food, shelter and clothing to invest in our programs and help us as we work to accomplish our mission.**

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Sowing the Seeds of Understanding

The Foundation

New York Farm Bureau  
Foundation for Agricultural Education, Inc.

# Winter Squash!



Created for use with...

## FEED THE HUNGRY PROGRAM



Our Mission : to inform and educate all New Yorkers regarding agriculture and to increase understanding between the farm and non-farm public.

[www.nyfbfoundation.org](http://www.nyfbfoundation.org)

# Squash...easy to prepare & delicious!

## Peeling and Cutting!



Peeling winter squash can be challenging. The thin-skinned varieties (acorn &, butternut) can be peeled with a paring knife or vegetable peeler.

Most recipes using these varieties instruct cutting the squash in half. Place the squash on a cutting board, stem end facing you and put the blade of a heavy chef's knife horizontally along the length of the squash. With a hammer or mallet, continue to hit the back of the blade near the handle to drive it into the squash until the squash breaks in half.

Once you have a slit cut, bang on a hard surface and pull apart. Pieces are easier to peel. With a spoon, scoop out the seeds and strings and discard, or set aside if you plan to roast the seeds.



## Preparation Alternatives

Rinse and cut the squash lengthwise. Remove and discard the seeds and excess fiber. Peel the skin if desired.

- Stir-Fry: until tender when pierced.
- Bake: 400 degrees for 30 - 40 minutes, uncovered.
- Microwave: 1/2 squash - microwave for 10 -15 minutes.
- Boil: Cut into chunks and boil for 7 - 9 minutes.
- Steam: Cube and steam for 6 - 8 minutes.
- Roast: 400 degrees for 30 - 45 minutes in pieces.

**Baking:** Place unpeeled pieces cut sides down on a shallow baking dish and bake in a 350°F oven for 30 minutes or longer. One-half squash, place the squash on a baking dish and bake for 1 1/2 to 2 hours at 325° F. Test for doneness by squeezing the shell. When it feels a bit soft, it is done. Also check for doneness by piercing with a fork or skewer. When tender, remove from the oven and allow to cool. Spoon out the soft flesh and mash or process in a blender or food processor.

**Microwave:** Microwave the squash pieces on high for 15 minutes or more. Small acorn squash and spaghetti squash



can be pierced in several places with a fork or metal skewer and baked whole. Piercing prevents the shell from bursting during cooking.

**Boil:** Peel pieces cut into cubes and boiled until tender. Use with any recipe using cooked, mashed or pureed squash.

## Snack on the Seeds!

You can eat the Winter Squash seeds. Remove the seeds from the squash. Rinse to remove strings. Place on an oiled baking sheet. Sprinkle the seeds with garlic powder, a pinch of salt and any other seasonings you desire. Roast in a hot oven (about 400°F) until seeds are toasted but not burned.

## A Microwave Suggestion!

Microwave winter squash for a quick and delicious side dish. Cut a butternut or other winter squash in half. Scoop out the seeds and strings. Place the halves face down in a microwave-safe baking dish. Cook on high for 3 minutes. Remove, turn face up and season with cinnamon, sugar and butter. Return to microwave and cook on high until tender, about 7 to 10 minutes.

## Butternut Squash Soup

5-6 Servings

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup chopped onions
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 1 pound butternut squash, pared, seeded and cut into 1-inch cubes
- Optional: 2 Pears - Sliced/pared – one for garnish/one cooked with soup
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 cup heavy cream

Directions

Cook and stir onion and margarine in 4-quart saucepan until tender. Stir in broth, squash, 1 sliced pear, salt, and pepper. Heat to boiling; reduce heat. Cover and simmer until squash is tender, 10 to 15 minutes. Pour about half of the soup into food processor or into blender container; cover and process until smooth. Repeat with remaining soup. Return to pot; stir in heavy/whipping cream. Heat, stirring frequently, until hot. Serve with sliced pear garnish.

