COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
University of Alaska Fairbanks
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SUMMER SQUASH

Nutrition and Health

Summer squash contains a good supply of vitamins A and C. A ½-cup serving of diced squash provides 15 calories.

Selection

Select the smallest, firmest, glossiest squash of your preferred yellow or green variety. Select squash that is heavy for its size. There should not be soft spots or blemishes. Varieties include zucchini, pattypan, round and crookneck, among others.

Storage

Store in plastic bags in the refrigerator crisper. Cut small slits in bags for ventilation or use breathable, reusable produce bags.

Preparation

Summer squash is frequently cooked in simple ways, such as frying in a small amount of oil, roasting, steaming or simmering in its own juices in a covered pan.

Squash can be frozen, but there are no longer canning recommendations for summer squash due to inconsistent food safety results.

To freeze, choose young squash with tender skin. Wash, slice and scald in boiling water 3 minutes. Chill in cold water to stop cooking action, drain well and package in labeled, air-tight freezer packaging.

Before cooking fresh squash, wash and scrub well with a brush; cut off stem and blossom ends, but do not peel. Slice or dice as preferred or called for in a recipe. An easy method is to steam in a rack over 1 inch of water until tender, but not mushy, 5 to 10 minutes. Drain, season with salt, pepper, butter, butter substitute, and/or brown sugar or maple syrup, if desired.

Recipes

Skillet Vegetable Medley

2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 tablespoon cider vinegar
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1½ teaspoons sugar
1½ teaspoons salt
1½ teaspoons oregano
½ teaspoon dry mustard
½ pound green beans
½ pound mushrooms, sliced
2 medium squash, sliced
2 medium tomatoes, cut in wedges

In a large skillet, combine vegetable oil, vinegar, Worcestershire sauce, sugar, salt, oregano and mustard. Bring to a boil and add beans. Return to boiling point; reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 5 minutes. Add mushrooms and squash. Cover and simmer for 3 minutes. Add tomatoes. Cover and simmer for 1 minute. Serve hot.

Zucchini Salad

1 pound zucchini
salt
1 cup plain yogurt
Juice of one lemon
⅛ teaspoon of finely chopped dill
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
⅛ teaspoon of oregano
1 garlic clove, crushed
½ teaspoon sugar
dash of pepper

Peel squash, slice thinly and place in a bowl. Toss with enough salt to coat all pieces. Let stand 15 minutes. Drain liquid drawn out by salt. Add remaining ingredients to bowl and marinate in the refrigerator at least one hour.

Squash and Hamburger Casserole

2 pounds squash, diced
1 pound lean hamburger
1 onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, smashed
¼–½ pound shredded cheese
1 can cream of mushroom soup

Cook squash until crisp-tender using preferred method. Brown hamburger, onion and garlic. Add cheese, soup and squash. Mix well. Put in a medium-size casserole dish and cover with cracker crumbs. Bake at 325°F for one hour.

Sausage Stuffed Summer Squash

1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil, plus dish
2 pounds summer squash, halved lengthwise
1 pound Italian sausagee
1 small onion, coarsely chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced (about 2 tablespoons)
1 cup coarse bread crumbs
1 tablespoon lemon juice
¾ cup grated Parmesan
1 teaspoon salt
1 large egg, lightly beaten

Preheat oven to 350°F. Drizzle a large baking dish with oil. Scrape seeds and soft flesh from squash and reserve ½ cup. Place squash, cut sides up, in baking dish.

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat; add sausage and onion. Cook, breaking up sausage, until sausage is browned and onion is softened, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and reserved squash; cook until garlic is fragrant, about 1 minute. Remove from heat; stir in remaining ingredients.

Divide mixture among squash halves. Bake until filling is firm and each squash is tender and wrinkled around edges, 35 to 40 minutes.

Breakfast Muffins

Liquid ingredients
¼ cup melted butter or oil
1⅓ cups shredded summer squash
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
⅓ cup orange juice
2 eggs

Dry ingredients
1 cup rolled oats
⅓ cup all-purpose flour
¼ cup whole wheat flour
¼ cup barley flour
½ cup lightly packed brown sugar
½ teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon baking powder
¼ teaspoon cinnamon
pinch salt

Add-in ingredients (optional)
1 cup dried fruit (any combination)
1⅔ cups shredded Cheddar cheese

Grease muffin tins or line with cups and preheat oven to 350°F. Combine liquid, dry and add-in ingredients separately, placing the liquids and add-ins in small bowls and dry in a medium bowl.

Stir dry ingredients to combine. Pour liquid ingredients into dry ingredients and mix until just combined. Add in fruit and/or cheese, taking care not to overmix.

Using a level ⅓-cup scoop, fill greased or paper-lined muffin tin. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.

Remove from oven and allow to cool on rack for 5 to 10 minutes before removing from tin.

More research-based information can be found at:
www.uaf.edu/ces or 1-877-520-5211/907-474-5211

Sarah R.-P. Lewis, Extension Faculty, Health, Home and Family Development. Originally prepared by Roxie Rodgers Dinstel.

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