



Winter Squash

Harvest of the Season

Eat More Arizona Grown Winter Squash

Vegetables are nature's power food! Eating a variety of vegetables gives you different vitamins and minerals to help keep your heart, teeth, gums, eyes and skin healthy. Eat them every day at meals and snacks.

Buy fresh vegetables, like winter squash, in season when flavor and price are the best!

Most recently, winter squash was harvested on 1,278 acres in Arizona, which includes five acres of organic winter squash. That is 9,100 pounds of organic winter squash!

Why Eat More Winter Squash?

Winter squash is full of nutrients. Here's how the nutrients in winter squash keep you and your family healthy:

Nutrients Found in Winter Squash

Vitamin A

Helps your eyes and skin stay healthy

Vitamin C

Helps your teeth and gums stay healthy

Fiber

Helps keep your heart healthy and improves digestion

Potassium

Helps you maintain a healthy blood pressure

Magnesium

Helps bones stay strong

What are the Different Types of Winter Squash?

Try different types of winter squash to find your family's favorite. These are a few types of winter squash grown in Arizona:

- Acorn squash
- Butternut squash
- Hubbard squash
- Kabocha squash
- Pumpkin
- Spaghetti squash

How Much Do We Need?

In general, your family should eat:

Age	Vegetables	Fruits
Children 2 - 3	1 cup	1 cup
Children 4 - 8	1 1/2 cups	1 to 1 ½ cups
Older children and teens	2 to 3 cups	1 ½ to 2 cups
Adults	2 1/2 to 3 cups	2 cups

Sometimes new foods take time. Kids don't always take to new foods right away. Offer vegetables like winter squash many times. Give them a taste at first and be patient with them.

Make half your plate vegetables and fruits. Visit choosemyplate.gov for more information.

How to Choose, Store and Prepare Winter Squash

Choose

- Choose winter squash heavy for its size and very hard. Press firmly to test the firmness of the rind.
- Look for squash with a small part of the stem remaining. A missing stem may be a sign of mold or bacterial growth inside.

Store

- Most types of winter squash can be stored in a cool, dry place for two to three months.
- The best temperature to store winter squash is between 50-60° F.
- Once winter squash is cut, cover each piece with plastic wrap. Store them in the refrigerator for up to five days.
- Freeze cooked squash for up to one year.

Prepare

Baking winter squash brings out its natural sweetness.

- Wash the shell of the winter squash under cool running water and scrub with a vegetable brush.
- Cut the squash in half and scoop out the seeds and strings.
- Place the squash, cut side down, on a foil-lined baking sheet.
- Pour ¼ inch of water into the pan, cover with foil and bake in oven for 400 °F for 40 minutes or until tender.

TIP: Scoop the flesh from the rind to use in different types of squash recipes.

Visit fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org for more information.

Plant and Grow Winter Squash

- Plant winter squash seeds with your kids. Plant your seeds in an area or garden with full sun exposure.
- Winter squash grows well in Arizona because of its warm dry climate.
 - In the central region of Arizona, plant between July and early August.
 - In the northern and southern regions of Arizona, plant between May and early July.
- Winter squash needs about three to four months to grow. They are mature when rind is hard and solid in color.

Visit extension.arizona.edu for harvest and planting information.

Choose Locally Grown Vegetables and Fruits

- Arizona Grown vegetables and fruits taste best and cost less when purchased in season.
- Vegetables and fruits that are grown in Arizona spend less time in the back of a truck. This causes less damage to the vegetables and fruits.
- When farmers sell directly to consumers, they cut out the middleman and receive full value for their produce. This allows farmers to continue to farm and provide service to the community.
- Let your kids be produce pickers. Help them pick vegetables at a grocery store, your local farmers' markets, or at a u-pick farm near you! Go to arizonagrown.org for more information.

Visit the School Food Programs section of the Arizona Department of Education Health and Nutrition Services website at www.azed.gov for more information.

Butternut Squash with Black Beans

Ingredients:

3 cups butternut squash	¼ cup red wine vinegar
1 teaspoon vegetable oil	¼ cup water
½ cup onion (small, chopped)	2 cans black beans (16 ounces each, rinsed and drained)
½ teaspoon garlic powder	½ teaspoon oregano

Makes 6 servings

Nutrition Facts

per serving	
calories.....	138
carbohydrates.....	31 gm
protein	7 gm
total fat	1 gm
saturated fat.....	0 gm
trans fat.....	0 gm
cholesterol.....	0 mg
fiber.....	9 gm
total sugars.....	4 gm
sodium.....	11 mg
calcium.....	74mcg
folate.....	3 mcg
iron	3 mg
calories from fat.....	5%

Directions:

1. Wash hands with warm water and soap.
2. Wash then heat the squash in the microwave on high heat for 1-2 minutes. This will soften the skin.
3. Carefully peel the squash with a vegetable peeler or small knife.
4. Cut the squash into 1/2 inch cubes.
5. Peel and chop the onion.
6. In a large pan, heat the oil. Add the onion, garlic powder and squash.
7. Cook for 5 minutes on medium heat.
8. Add vinegar and water. Cook on low heat until the squash is tender, about 10 minutes.
9. Add the beans and oregano. Cook until the beans are heated through.

Recipe adapted from the Pennsylvania Nutrition Education Program, Nutrition Education Network Website Recipe.

For more free recipes, visit EatWellBeWell.org.

