

SIMPLY GOOD FOOD

SUMMER SQUASH

Summer Squash comes in a variety of colors and shapes. It is picked at an immature stage. Straight neck squash have the same flavor but look like yellow zucchini. Yellow crookneck are bright yellow with curved necks 4" - 5" long. Because of their sweet flavor, they are good mashed.

Culture: Native Americans called squashes "vegetables of the vines." They belong to the main five New Worlds foods (others are beans, tomatoes, potatoes, and corn). Because squash seeds found in Mexican caves have been carbon-dated at 9000 B.C., some believe squash could have been the first cultivated food in the Americas. European explorers and colonists to the New World always spoke of the squashes they saw growing, often mistaking them for melons or gourds.

Season: Year-round for zucchini and yellow squash. July-August for patty pan squash.

Choose: Select the smallest, firmest, glossiest squash, heaviest for their size without soft spots or blemishes. Avoid if rind is tough or the stem dry or black.

Store: in a perforated plastic bag in the refrigerator. Summer squash are excellent with tomatoes, onions, peppers, garlic, oregano, lemon, cheese and butter.

To Prepare: Rinse well. Never peel summer squash. Squash can be eaten raw, boiled, steamed or microwaved.

Nutritional Information: Squash is a source of Vitamin A, Potassium and Phosphorus. It also contains a fair amount of Vitamin C and 3 grains of Fiber.

Squash Enchiladas

2 pounds yellow squash
1 teaspoon salt
Black pepper to taste
Chopped Jalapeño to taste

8 oz. grated cheddar cheese or Mexican Velveeta (or half of each)
1 can cream of mushroom soup
½ cup milk

Boil squash in small amount of water until tender. Drain and mash. Add salt, black pepper, chopped onion and chopped jalapeño peppers if desired. Soften tortillas in hot oil. Make each tortilla with 3 to 4 tablespoons squash mixture and approximately 2 tablespoons of cheese. Roll up. Place edges underneath. Mix can of soup with milk. Pour over enchiladas. Top with remaining cheese. Bake at 350 degrees F until enchiladas are bubbly and cheese is melted.

Squash Pudding

- 2 cups cooked squash, well drained
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- ½ cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 ½ cup milk
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 tablespoon vanilla flavoring
- ½ teaspoon salt

Beat well all ingredients. Pour into a casserole dish; bake at 350 degrees in a preheated oven for 1 to 1 ½ hours or until set.

Microwave Squash Casserole

- 2 lbs. yellow squash, sliced thin
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 1 egg, beaten
- ½ cup cheddar cheese
- 2 tablespoons butter
- ½ cup diced onion
- Salt and pepper

TOPPING:

- ¼ cup crackers
- 2 tablespoons butter

Microwave squash 8 to 10 minutes until soft. Add mixture of other ingredients and microwave for 5 minutes more. Then sprinkle cracker and butter mixture and microwave 2 more minutes.

Chili Squash

- 2 pounds yellow squash
- Water
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 2 chopped green chilies
- Butter
- 2 cups grated cheddar cheese
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ cup crushed cracker crumbs

Cook squash in water; drain and set aside. Sauté onion and chilies in butter until tender. Butter a quart casserole; alternate layers of onion, squash and cheese. Sprinkle salt over all and top with cracker crumbs. Bake in oven at 350 degrees F. for about 30 minutes until bubbly throughout.

Squash Dressing

- ½ cup chopped onion
- ½ green pepper, chopped
- ½ cup chopped celery
- ½ cup butter or margarine
- 5 cups crumbled corn bread
- 2 cups milk
- 1 can cream of chicken soup, undiluted
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper

Sauté onion, pepper, and celery in butter until tender. Add to corn bread and stir well. Stir in remaining ingredients, mixing well. Pour into a greased 13x9x2 inch baking dish. Bake at 400 degrees for 50 minutes or until lightly browned.

Squash Patties

- 1 cup cooked, mashed squash
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped onion
- Dash of pepper
- 1 egg, beaten
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ cup flour
- Hot salad oil

Combine all ingredients, except salad oil; mix well. Drop mixture by tablespoonfuls into hot oil in large skillet. Flatten patties to ¼ inch thickness. Cook until golden brown; turn and brown on other side.

Source: *The Nutrition Bible: Southwestern Public Service Thirty Years of Festive Foods; The Joy of Cooking*; and McLennan and Potter County BLT flyers.

Supporting State Extension Goal: Health, Safety and Well Being

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