



**Fall
2014**

Inside

- ▶ **Kid's Korner**
Roasting Pumpkin
Seeds
- ▶ **Ask Extension**
Gail Cardarelli
Somerset County
- ▶ **Food Safety
Corner**
Knife Safety
- ▶ **Eat Well Recipe**
Pumpkin, Applesauce,
Zucchini Muffins



Eat Well!

A Newsletter for Healthy Eating

Winter Squash and Pumpkin

By Emily Llyod, UMaine Dietetic Intern

Did you know that pumpkins are a type of winter squash? In addition to pumpkin, there are many other tasty varieties of winter squash.

These include:

- acorn,
- butternut,
- buttercup,
- hubbard, and
- spaghetti squash.

All are an excellent source of vitamin A, as indicated by their deep yellow to deep orange color. Vitamin A plays an important role in preventing eye problems, keeping your skin healthy, and promoting a healthy immune system. Winter squash varieties are also a great source of potassium,

which helps maintain a healthy blood pressure.

Winter squash grown in Maine is available from September through February. For pumpkins grown in Maine, the season is shorter, with availability only in September and October.

Selection

Squash: When choosing squash, look for the full sized ones that have a hard, tough rind. If the rind is soft, it means that the squash is not mature and should not be eaten yet. You will want to avoid squash that have cuts or punctures. Also avoid ones that are sunken in or have moldy spots on the rind.

(Continued on page 2)

Looking for ways to save money on food? The *Eat Well!* newsletter has always given you great ideas on how to save money on food. Now these ideas are even easier to spot. Look for this picture in the *Eat Well* newsletter to find great tips to save money on food. **SAVE MONEY.**

Pumpkins: When choosing a pumpkin, look for one that is firm, heavy, brightly colored, and free of blemishes. Avoid pumpkins that have shriveled skin, with soft spots, cuts or breaks.

Storing

Both winter squash and pumpkins must be

stored in a cool, dry place. If you choose to store them outside just make sure there is no danger of frost.

Adapted from Bulletin #4176, Vegetables and Fruits for Health: Winter Squash and Pumpkins, University of Maine Cooperative Extension. 2008.

Preparing

<p>Steaming</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wash, peel and cut the vegetable into two-inch cubes. 2. Bring one inch of water to a boil in the bottom of a pan. Then, place either a colander or a collapsable steaming basket in the pan. 3. Place vegetables in colander or steamer and cover tightly. 4. Reduce heat to medium-low, and steam for 25-40 minutes, or until the vegetable is fork-tender. <p><i>Another option is to steam larger pieces with the rind left on. Once they are cooked, the rind can easily be removed. Once steamed, the squash and pumpkin can be served cubed or mashed.</i></p>
<p>Baking</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wash squash. If the squash is smaller, cut it in half. If it is large, cut it into individual portions to shorten the baking time. 2. Once cut, scoop out all of the seeds and fibers. 3. Bake at 400° F for 1 to 1½ hours. <p><i>The best types of squash to bake are acorn or butternut squash.</i></p>
<p>Microwaving</p>	<p>Microwaving is the fastest way to cook winter squash.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wash squash and cut it lengthwise. Scoop out the seeds and fibers. 2. Cover each of the halves with plastic wrap and place them on a microwavable-safe dish, leaving space between them, in the microwave oven. Microwave on high power for 5 to 8 minutes per half. Let the squash stand, covered, for about 5 minutes before serving. <p><i>If you are working with a larger variety of winter squash, cut it into individual portions. Arrange the pieces in a microwave-safe dish and cover with plastic wrap. Cook for 3 to 4 ½ minutes per piece.</i></p>



Acorn Squash



Pumpkin



Butternut Squash



Buttercup Squash



Kid's Korner

Roasting Pumpkin Seeds

Pumpkin seeds have a wonderful nutty flavor!



Roasting Pumpkin Seeds

When you are carving your pumpkin, don't throw away the seeds! Roasted pumpkin seeds have a wonderful nutty flavor.



How to Roast Pumpkin Seeds:

1. Rinse pumpkin seeds under cold water and pick out the pulp and strings. (This is easier after you have just removed the seeds from the pumpkin, before the pulp has become dry.)
2. Preheat oven to 325° F.
3. Place the washed pumpkin seeds on a clean towel and pat dry.
4. Place the pumpkin seeds in a single layer on an oiled baking sheet, stirring to coat. If you prefer, use non-stick cooking spray instead of oil.
5. Sprinkle with just a little salt and bake at 325° F until toasted, about 25 minutes, checking and stirring after 10 minutes.
6. Let cool and store in an airtight container.

Makes 8 servings Serving size: 2 Tablespoons

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 2 Tablespoons (21g)	
Servings Per Container 8	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 130	Calories from Fat 100
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 11g	17%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 20mg	1%
Total Carbohydrate 3g	1%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Sugars 0g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 0%	Iron 10%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Saturated Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g
Calories per gram:	
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4	

Ask Eat Well!

Gail Cardarelli Community Education Assistant, Somerset County



Gail has worked for the University of Maine Cooperative Extension in Somerset County for two years working with families and youth. Gail enjoys gardening, crafting and being with her family.

Q. I love making soup when the weather gets colder. Can you suggest an easy soup recipe?

A. Below are directions that can be used to make delicious and nutritious soups with foods on hand.

"Make Your Own" Soup

1. Select food(s) from each box below. Start with 1 medium (chopped) onion cooked in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water or broth until slightly cooked. Add vegetables and protein. Add remaining ingredients (except fresh herbs).
2. Partially cover pot and simmer until grains and vegetables are tender (about 20–30 minutes). Add fresh herbs. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Simmer another 5 minutes. Serve.



Vegetables (any combination to make 2-3 cups chopped)

- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Corn
- Green Beans
- Green Pepper
- Mushrooms
- Peas
- Squash
- Zucchini

Protein - select ONE

- 1 (15 ounce) can of beans (pinto, kidney, black, or white beans), drained and rinsed
- 1 pound **cooked** lean ground beef, chicken, ham or sausage
- 1 can of beef, chicken or ham

Grain - select ONE

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup uncooked whole grain egg noodles, macaroni, or other pasta
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup uncooked white rice

Broth or Base - will need 4 cups (1 quart)

- 2 (16 ounce) cans low-sodium vegetable, chicken or beef broth
- 4 cups water and low-sodium vegetable, chicken or beef bouillon
- 1 can crushed diced tomatoes and 2-3 cups water

Seasonings - select one or more

- 2-3 teaspoons dried herbs (oregano, basil, cumin, thyme, rosemary, or parsley)
- Bay leaf
- 2-4 tablespoons fresh herbs
- Minced garlic
- Salt and pepper to taste

Food Safety Corner

Knife Safety By Emily Llyod, UMaine Dietetic Intern

When cooking with pumpkin or winter squash, using basic knife skills is important. Knowing how to use a knife correctly can help keep you safe in the kitchen.

Proper Cutting

- Before you use a knife, make sure it is sharp. A dull knife is dangerous because you need more pressure to cut with, which causes it to slip easily.
- Never hold food in your hand when you cut it, always use a cutting board.
- Use a cutting board that is secured to the counter with a wet cloth or paper towel so it doesn't slip.
- Hold the knife securely in one hand. Hold the item to be cut in place on the cutting board with your other hand. Bend fingers under while holding item to be cut to protect your fingertips.

Pay Attention

Always give your full attention when using a knife. Distractions should be avoided.

Cleaning

Make sure the handle of the knife is clean, dry and free of slippery substances. When you are done with the knife wash it immediately, with the sharp edge facing away from you. Never leave knives in dishwasher where they can easily be hidden. This could be a danger to you and others who may not realize they are in there.

Storage

Keep the knife away from the edge of the counter when using it. This helps decrease the risk of it falling off. When you are done with the knife, store it in a safe place, such as a knife block or kitchen drawer.



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