



Fall/Winter 2019-2020

Inside

- ▶ **Food Bites**
How to Prepare
Winter Squash
- ▶ **Kid's Korner**
Pumpkin or
Squash Bread
- ▶ **Ask Eat Well**
Debra Spurling,
Hancock County
- ▶ **Food Safety Corner**
Safe Root
Vegetable Storage
- ▶ **Eat Well Recipe**
Curried Lentil
Squash Soup



Eat Well!

A Newsletter for Healthy Eating!

Cost of Convenience: Root Vegetables

Amber Elwell, UMaine Dietetic Intern

The fall season is a time when root vegetables are widely available. In Maine, root vegetables are harvested between September and November. During this time, root vegetables are plentiful and at their freshest, tastiest, and lowest cost.

What are root vegetables?

- Root vegetables are the underground part of the plant.

- Some of the most popular root vegetables include beets, carrots, garlic, onions, sweet potatoes, white potatoes, turnips, squash and parsnips.
- Root vegetables are high in fiber, low in calories, and high in vitamins A, C and folic acid.
- Root vegetables tend to be less expensive in the fall and winter compared to other vegetables that are no longer in season.

Item	Price
Whole butternut squash	\$0.79/pound
Frozen cubed butternut squash	\$1.27/pound
Peeled and cut butternut squash	\$5.49/pound
Whole onion	\$1.49/pound
Frozen diced onion	\$1.99/pound
Fresh diced onion	\$7.97/pound
Whole potatoes (Russet)	\$0.69/pound
Frozen potatoes in steamer bag	\$2.96/pound
Canned whole potatoes	\$0.90/pound
Whole carrots (#5 bag)	\$0.79/pound
Baby carrots	\$1.99/pound
Canned, sliced carrots	\$0.93/pound
Frozen carrots	\$1.49/pound

*Based on prices in local grocery stores in northern and southern Maine in October 2019.

Continued on page 2



Price Comparison for Root Vegetables

Whole, fresh root vegetables are usually less expensive when compared to root vegetables that have been processed. For more information about storing root vegetables, check out the Food Safety Corner article in this newsletter.

Sources

- Rodgers DR. Food Preservation. Back to Basics, Lesson 1. University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Service. 2013
- Thrifty Meals for Small Families. The University of Maine Cooperative Extension. <https://extension.umaine.edu/publications/4331e/>.

Food Bites

How to Prepare Winter Squash

Kate Yerxa, Extension Educator

Acorn, butternut, buttercup, Hubbard, and spaghetti are all different varieties of winter squash. The thick and tough outer skin of winter squash can make it difficult to prepare. The steps below will make using winter squash easier.

1. Wash squash under running water and dry with a clean towel.
2. Pierce the squash several times with a sharp knife and place on a microwave-safe plate or dish.
3. Microwave the squash on high for 6-8 minutes. Allow it to cool enough to be touched.
4. Cut off the top inch of the squash including the stem, and discard the stem.

5. Cut the squash in half. Scoop out the seeds with a spoon.
6. Place the two halves face down on the microwave-safe plate or dish with ½ cup of water. Microwave on high for 5 minutes. Check if the squash can be easily scooped with a spoon. If not, cook another 3-5 minutes or until the flesh is the texture of a cooked potato. Set aside to cool.
7. Once the squash is cool enough to touch, dice the squash with a knife without cutting through the skin and scoop out the diced pieces. Or scoop out the flesh and mash with a fork.



This material is provided by Iowa State University Extension and Outreach. For more tips like this, visit <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings/recipes/how-prepare-winter-squash>



Kid's Korner

Pumpkin or Squash Bread

Pumpkin or squash breads are healthy and delicious fall treats!

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 3/4 cup pumpkin or squash purée
- 2 eggs
- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 cup raisins (optional)
- 1/2 cup chopped nuts (optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Preheat oven to 350°F.
3. In a large bowl, beat together the sugar, oil, pumpkin or squash and eggs. Wash hands after handling eggs.
4. In a medium bowl, stir together the flour, baking powder, baking soda and cinnamon. Fold this into the other mixture just enough to moisten the dry ingredients. (Optional: Stir in the raisins and nuts).
5. Pour the batter into a greased 9 inch x 5 inch loaf pan.
6. Bake for 50-60 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

Makes 12 servings Serving Size: 1 slice

Cost per recipe: \$1.77 Cost per serving: \$0.15

Nutrition Facts

12 servings per container	
Serving size	1 slice (53g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	150
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 6g	8%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 120mg	5%
Total Carbohydrate 22g	8%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Total Sugars 9g	
Includes 8g Added Sugars	16%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 62mg	4%
Iron 1mg	6%
Potassium 30mg	0%

*The % Daily Value tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.



Ask EFNEP!

Debra Spurling

Community Education Assistant, Hancock County Office

Debra has worked for the University of Maine Cooperative Extension's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program in Hancock County for 23 years. She lives with her husband on Mount Desert Island in the house where she grew up. She enjoys gardening and supervising her husband on their home improvement projects.



Q. There are so many types of winter squash in Maine, what is the difference between them?

A. Winter squash vary in size, shape, thickness of skin, and texture of their flesh. Below are a few of my favorite winter squash, their flavor, and how to use them.

Flavor and Best Way to Use

The **acorn squash** gets its name because it looks like an acorn. Acorn squash doesn't need to be peeled before preparations because it has smooth flesh that turns sweet, nutty, and tender when baked.

Butternut squash is one of the most popular types of winter squash. Butternut squash has a mild, sweet taste. It is eaten puréed and is great sliced or cubed, steamed or roasted.

The **delicata squash** also has thin skin that becomes very tender when cooked. The flesh is creamy with a sweet, corn-like flavor. Roast or saute slices with the skin on.

Hubbard squash are large in size and have bumpy, extra-thick skins. The flesh is sweet and tender when cooked. Steamed Hubbard squash makes a great addition to soups and pies.

Spaghetti squash is best known for its stringy, spaghetti-like flesh. Cook until the flesh is tender and can be pulled apart with a fork to make spaghetti-like strands. Then combine with different sauces, meats, or other vegetables, as you would pasta.



The EFNEP newsletter is published two times a year for current, past and future UMaine Extension **Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program** participants. For more information on the EFNEP program, contact your County Extension office. **Managing Editor:** Kate Yerxa, MS, RD, **Design and Layout:** Phoebe Nylund. **EFNEP Committee:** Kathleen Savoie, MS, RD, Extension Educator; Kate Yerxa, MS, RD, Extension Educator; and Brenda Bracy, Community Education Assistant. This material was funded by the National Institute for Food and Agriculture's (NIFA) Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP).

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Food Safety Corner

Safe Root Vegetable Storage

Kate McCarty, Food Preservation Professional

Root vegetables, such as potatoes, carrots, parsnips, and turnips, can be used in many ways. In the fall when these vegetables are ripe they cost less and can easily be kept for later use.

To store root vegetables

- Choose fresh, ripe vegetables with no signs of rot.
- Do not wash vegetables before storing them. Wash them before *using*.
- Store root vegetables in a cool, dry place in bags or boxes.
- Check often and throw away vegetables that are soft or rotten.
- Use vegetables within 6 to 9 months.

For more information

Download a free copy of Bulletin #4135, Storage Conditions: Fruits and Vegetables, or request a copy from your local county University of Maine Cooperative Extension office.

For videos and workshops on how to store root vegetables, visit the UMaine Cooperative Extension website umaine.edu/food-health/food-preservation/how-to-videos/.



What Causes Green Potatoes and are they Safe to Eat?

The green color often seen on potatoes is caused when they are exposed to light. Light causes potatoes to make chlorophyll and also solanine. Solanine has a bitter taste and is irritating to the digestive system. If solanine is consumed in large quantities it can cause paralysis. If potatoes taste bitter, do not eat them.

Small green spots and sprouts or eyes should be completely trimmed off potatoes. Do not use potatoes that have more than small spots of green color. Do not use any green potatoes, trimmed or not, if you are serving children. Children weigh less than adults and would be more susceptible to solanine.

To prevent potatoes from turning green, store them in a cool, dark space that has good air circulation. Avoid purchasing potatoes that have already started to turn green.

Adapted from: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/is_it_safe_to_eat_a_green_potato



Eat Well Recipe

Curried Lentil Squash Soup



INGREDIENTS

- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- 1 large onion, diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon fresh grated ginger, or 1 teaspoon of ground ginger
- 3-4 cups winter squash, peeled and cut into 1 inch pieces
- 2 tablespoons curry powder
- 4 cups low sodium vegetable or chicken broth
- 1½ cups water
- 12 ounce package dry red lentils

DIRECTIONS

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. In a stock pot or large soup pot, heat oil over medium heat and sauté onions, garlic and ginger for 3 to 4 minutes.
3. Add squash and curry powder and sauté 5 minutes.
4. Add stock and water, bring to a boil and reduce to a simmer for 10 minutes.
5. Stir in lentils and cook 15-20 minutes, until lentils and squash are soft.

Optional - Purée in a blender or mash with a potato masher.

Makes 11 Servings Serving Size: 1 cup Cost per Recipe: \$7.01 Cost per Serving: \$0.64

Nutrition Facts

11 servings per container	
Serving size	1 cup(s) (316g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	170
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 1.5g	2%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 80mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 34g	12%
Dietary Fiber 7g	25%
Total Sugars 3g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 9g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 78mg	6%
Iron 3mg	15%
Potassium 245mg	6%

*The % Daily Value tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.