

Kentucky Summer Squash



Season: June through October.

Nutrition Facts: Squash is low in calories, containing only 20 calories per 1 cup raw. It contains vitamins A and C and is naturally free of fat, cholesterol, and sodium.

Selection: Popular summer squashes include yellow crookneck, yellow straight-neck, zucchini, cocozelle, and patty pan. Summer squash should be picked or purchased when small and tender; both skin and seeds are eaten. The peel holds many of the nutrients so do not peel. It should be harvested at 6 to 8 inches in length. Patty pan squash are ready when they are 3 to 4 inches or less in diameter.

Storage: Harvest and place unwashed in plastic bags. Store in the crisper drawer of the refrigerator. Wash the squash just before preparation. The storage life of summer squash is brief; use within two to three days.

Preparation: Summer squash is a mild-flavored vegetable and combines well with herbs and seasonings. Try it with basil, allspice, rosemary, and marjoram. Cook summer squash as a vegetable or use in stews, casseroles, and main dishes. Summer squash can be grilled, steamed, boiled, sautéed, fried, or used in stir fry recipes.

Freezing: Select small squash with small seeds and tender rind. Wash and cut into ½-inch slices. Heat in boiling water for 3 minutes. Cool promptly in cold water and drain. Pack in containers leaving ½-inch headspace. Seal and freeze.

Summer Squash Casserole

3 cups summer squash, any type, chopped
1 cup cracker crumbs
1 cup cheese, shredded
2 tablespoons margarine, melted
2 tablespoons onion, chopped
2 large eggs, beaten

Combine all ingredients and mix well. Put in a greased baking dish, cover, and bake at 350°F for 1 hour.

Yield: 6 ½-cup servings

Nutritional Analysis: 170 calories, 8 g protein, 16 g carbohydrate, 8 g fat, 15 mg cholesterol, 290 mg sodium.

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Adapted from University of Kentucky, Kentucky Summer Squash (FSHE-15).

Recipe: Kentucky Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, "The Market Basket," University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture.

For more information, contact your county's Extension agent for Family and Consumer Sciences or visit the Web site for Family and Consumer Sciences, College of Agriculture, University of Kentucky, at <www.ca.uky.edu/agcollege/fcs>.