



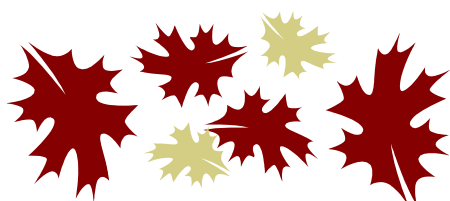
## The Many Colors of Squash



Fall is such a colorful time of year. The leaves on the trees are changing colors from green to shades of yellow, orange and red. The fall mums and asters are dominating the flower gardens with their beautiful colors of purple, burgundy, bronze, yellow and orange. Not to be out done, squash are adding their beautiful colors to the fall produce displays.

In addition to being interesting in shape and color winter squash also contributes to a healthy diet. Winter squash are harvested when their shells have grown hard and inedible. Because of these protective shells, winter squash can be harvested in the fall and stored several months in a cool, dry place.

Winter squash have yellow or orange flesh that provides vitamin A and fiber to our diet. A 1-cup serving will provide more than the amount of vitamin A that you need for the whole day, 6 grams of fiber – 20 to 25 percent of what you need for the day and only 80 calories.



### Varieties of Squash

There are many varieties of winter squash that range in size from a few ounces to several pounds. They range in color from pale yellow to bright orange. Here are some of the smaller squash that are easy to prepare for one or two people.



**Sweet Dumpling** has a mildly sweet taste and is one of the smallest weighting only about a half-a-pound. It resembles

a miniature pumpkin with its top pushed in, but is green and cream striped. It is a great size stuffing and baking for individual servings.

**Gold Nugget** is another small orange squash weighting about 1 pound. Both the skin and flesh are orange in color and resembles a small pumpkin.





**Acorn** is a small squash readily available. It is shaped like an acorn, with blackish-green or golden-yellow skin weighting 1 to 3 pounds. It is a favorite to cut in halve, remove the seeds, stuff and bake.

**Buttercup** are much sweeter than other winter varieties. It can be baked, mashed and can replace sweet potatoes in recipes. It is round and dark green in color.



**Spaghetti** This squash is a little unusual. It is shaped like a small watermelon, but golden-yellow in color. It has a mild, nutlike flavor and when cooked the flesh separates in strands like spaghetti.

This fall when you visit the grocery store, farmers' market or local produce stand check out the many interesting varieties of squash. Maybe try a new variety to add nutrients, flavor and color to your meal.

### Spaghetti Squash

Cut the squash in half lengthwise and remove the seeds. Place the cut side down in a baking dish; add a ¼ cup of water. Bake at 350°F for 45-60 minutes or until you can pierce the shell easily with a fork. Allow to cool slightly; using a fork, separate squash into strands that resemble spaghetti.

Spaghetti squash can also be cooked in the microwave. Cut in half remove the seeds place in a covered microwave safe dish. Microwave on high 10 to 12 minutes.

A 2-pound squash is enough for two people.

Nutrition Information for 1-cup cooked: 40 calories, 0 g fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 30 mg sodium, 10 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber.

### Ideas to use Spaghetti Squash

- Toss cooked spaghetti squash with ham and your favorite cheese sauce, then bake for a filling entrée.
- For a simple side dish, sauté the spaghetti squash in a small amount of vegetable oil and top with Parmesan cheese.
- Use the cooked spaghetti squash in place of pasta in soups, salads or casseroles.

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