

Squash

Squash come in many different colors, sizes and shapes. They have a rind (thick skin) which protects the fleshy part of the vegetable. The center has seeds which are usually scooped out before eating.

Squash are vegetables. Depending on the variety, they either grow on vines or bushes.

Squash originated in North America over 5,000 years ago.

It was one of the "three sisters" planted by Native Americans, along with maize (corn) and beans. Squash was grown and eaten by early Europeans that settled in America.

Squash are in the same gourd family as melons and cucumbers.

VARIETIES

Squash are commonly divided into two groups:

- Summer squash — the rinds are rich in beta-carotene and can be eaten. Zucchini is the most popular variety in the United States.
- Winter squash — usually have a hard rind which is not eaten. Some popular varieties are pumpkin, butternut, acorn and spaghetti squash.



NUTRITION FACTS

- Fat free
- Cholesterol free
- Sodium free
- High in vitamin C

USES

Squash is often cooked, but some summer squash may be eaten raw (try with vegetable dip or add to salads). You may steam, sauté, grill or bake squash. Add to stir-fries, soups and casseroles. Bake in breads, cakes and pies. Sometimes the seeds are eaten.

Many squash are grown in Nebraska.



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