

PLANT * GROW

- * Squash/zucchini plants enjoy full sun and prefer well drained, fertile, loose soil high in organic matter.
- * Seeds must be planted each year-annual plant.
- * Plants grow 1-3 feet tall and spread from 2-4 feet.
- * Plant seeds when soil temperature reaches 65°F or more. Squash/zucchini like warm soil and are very sensitive to frost and cool soil.
- * Plant seeds 1/2-1" deep in small hills. Plant 4-5 seeds per hill. Space hills 3-4 feet apart.
- * When plants are 2-3" tall thin plants to 2-3 per hill.
- * If planting in rows, space plants 12-24" apart.
- * Mulching around plants helps retain moisture and suppress weeds.
- * Squash/zucchini are monoecious (have both male and female flowers) and require bee and insect activity for successful pollination. Poor fruit set is often the result of poor pollination.
- * Squash/zucchini can be picked small or large. In general, summer squash are most tender and flavorful when very young.
- * If picked often, plants will produce up until frost.

Cornell University Home Garden Websites:

General gardening:

<http://gardening.cals.cornell.edu/>

Squash specific:

<http://www.gardening.cornell.edu/homegardening/scene6420.html>

PURCHASE

- * Summer squash and zucchini come in a variety of shapes and sizes.
- * Available in New York Farmers' Markets and home gardens from July-October.
- * Look for small, glossy, young squash that are heavy for their size.
- * Skins should be tender and not wrinkled, withered or soft.

ENJOY YOUR SQUASH

- * 1/2 cup serving of cooked summer squash/zucchini contains about 20 calories, no fat, and is a good source of fiber.
- * Summer squash/zucchini contains potassium, Vitamin A and Vitamin C.
- * Squash/zucchini can be prepared using a variety of cooking techniques including steaming, boiling, grilling, stuffing, barbecuing and microwaving. They also can be incorporated into baking mixes such as breads, cookies and muffins.

Websites for Healthy Eating:

USDA: www.myplate.gov

Cornell University Food & Nutrition Education in Communities (FNEC): <https://f nec.cornell.edu/>

PREPARE

- * Scrub squash and zucchini gently with cold water. Cut off both ends then slice, chop, grate or prepare following your favorite recipe.
- * Squash and zucchini may be enjoyed raw, or cooked in your favorite soup, salad, stir fry, main dish or dessert.
- * Squash flowers are also edible and are often prepared by stuffing.

PRESERVE

- * Store fresh summer squash and zucchini in the refrigerator for up to five days.
- * To freeze: Wash and cut in 1/2" slices. Water blanch 3 minutes. Cool immediately in ice water bath. Store in freezer zip top bags with air removed leaving 1/2 " headspace.
- * Grated zucchini (for baking): Wash and grate. Store in freezer bags with air removed in amounts needed for favorite recipes.

Food Preservation Websites:

National Center for Home Food Preservation: www.homefoodpreservation.com
CCE Herkimer County Food Preservation Resources: <http://blogs.cornell.edu/cceherkimer/programs/local-foods/food-preservation-resources/>



RECYCLE * COMPOST

- * Disease free squash/zucchini scraps provide a rich nitrogen source, nutrients and moisture to your compost.
- * Vegetable scraps are the "green" additions to your compost.

Composting Resources:

Cornell Waste Management Institute: <http://cwmi.css.cornell.edu/resources.htm>
Composting at Home publication: <http://cwmi.css.cornell.edu/smallscale.htm>

Warm Zucchini Salad

1 spray cooking spray
1 zucchini, sliced thin (3 cups)
1 green bell pepper, sliced (1 cup)
1 cup sliced mushrooms
1 teaspoon Italian seasoning (oregano, basil, marjoram)
1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar

Spray nonstick skillet with cooking spray and heat to medium-high. Add vegetables, cover and cook briefly (2-3 minutes) until tender but slightly crisp. Add seasoning and balsamic vinegar. Serve warm.

Yield: 10 servings; serving size 1/2 cup (10 calories, 0 grams fat, 0 grams trans fat, 0 grams fiber, 10 mg sodium)

Summer Pasta

1 Tablespoon vegetable oil or cooking spray
1 yellow squash, thinly sliced
1 zucchini, thinly sliced
1 large onion, thinly sliced
1/2 -1 cup salsa
2 cups pasta, cooked, drained
Parmesan cheese (optional)

Spray large skillet with cooking spray or add oil. Stir fry squashes and onion until tender. Add salsa. Heat until salsa is hot. Pour over cooked pasta and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese, if desired.

Yield: 16 servings; serving size 1/2 cup (40 calories, 1 gram fat, 0 grams trans fat, <1 gram fiber, 50 mg sodium)

Zucchini Bran Muffins

2 cups bran cereal (flakes)
1 cup shredded zucchini
3/4 cup milk (low fat)
1 egg
1/2 cup sugar
1/3 cup vegetable oil
1-1/2 cups flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon each ginger and cinnamon

Preheat oven to 375°F. In a large bowl, mix together bran cereal, zucchini, milk, egg, oil, and sugar. Set aside. Sift together flour, baking powder, and spices and then add to bran mixture. Stir until just moistened. Drop batter into 12 lightly oiled muffin pans about 3/4 full. Bake for 30 minutes or until muffins are brown on top and firm to the touch.

Yield: 12 servings; serving size 1 muffin (180 calories, 7 grams fat, 0 grams trans fat, 2 grams fiber, 150 mg sodium)

Herkimer County Farmers' Markets

<http://blogs.cornell.edu/cceherkimer/programs/local-foods/local-farmers-markets/>



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Creating Healthy Places

Summer Squash and Zucchini

