

# Foods For Thought

From the Vegetable Garden Team of Eden Mill

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## Featuring:

### WINTER SQUASH



Presented by  
Harford County  
Master  
Gardeners  
and  
Family &  
Consumer  
Sciences  
Educator

## Mashed Butternut Squash

### Ingredients

Butternut or acorn squash  
1 T. olive oil or butter, melted  
Salt and pepper to taste  
Brown sugar (if desired)

For a savory version, leave out brown sugar and add 2 cloves of minced garlic, thyme and rosemary (fresh or dried).

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Using a large, sturdy knife, carefully cut your squash in half lengthwise. Scoop out the seeds and stringy bits from each half and discard (or



save for roasting). Transfer the squash, cut-side up into a baking dish and brush with olive oil or melted butter, coating the entire surface of the squash. Season with salt and pepper and brown sugar (if desired). Roast in the oven for approximately 45 minutes, or until soft, and fork-tender. Remove from oven and allow to cool. Scoop flesh from the skin and enjoy plain or in your favorite recipes.

*Nutrition Information per serving:*  
Calories 94; Carbohydrates 21g; Protein 1g;  
Fat 1g; Sodium 7mg; Fiber 3g

## Sausage Stuffed Butternut Squash

### Ingredients

1 medium butternut squash (about 3 lbs.)  
1 pound Italian turkey sausage links, casings removed (or any sausage of your choice)  
1 medium onion, finely chopped  
4 garlic cloves, minced  
1/2 cup shredded Italian cheese blend  
Crushed red pepper flakes, optional

Preheat broiler. Cut squash lengthwise in half; discard seeds. Place squash in a large microwave-safe dish, cut side down; add 1/2 in. of water. Microwave, covered, on high until soft, 20-25 minutes. Meanwhile, in a

large nonstick skillet, cook and crumble sausage with onion over medium-high heat until no longer pink, 5-7 minutes. Add garlic; cook and stir 1 minute. Leaving 1/2 inch thick shells, scoop flesh from squash and stir it into sausage mixture. Place squash shells on a baking sheet; fill with sausage mixture. Sprinkle with cheese. Broil 4-5 inches from heat until cheese is melted. Sprinkle with pepper flakes. To serve, cut each half in two.

*Nutrition Information per serving:*  
Calories 325; Fat 10g; Sodium 587mg;  
Carbohydrates 44g; Protein 19g; Fiber 12g

## Acorn Squash, the Microwave Way

### Ingredients

1 acorn squash  
2 T. butter  
2 T. brown sugar  
Chopped nuts and cranberries, optional

Cut acorn squash in half. Remove and discard seeds, rinse well in cool water. Place squash in a microwave bowl. Divide butter and sugar into each half. Microwave on high for 10



minutes. To check for doneness pierce squash (do not break through skin) with fork. If the fork slips in easily, the squash is ready to eat. Be careful the squash will be extremely hot. Top with nuts and berries.

*Nutrition Information per serving:*  
Calories 236; Carbohydrates 35g; Fat 7g;  
Sodium 108 mg; Fiber 3g; Protein 1.8g



## Who said this?

### Winter Squashes

*Butternut, honeynut, acorn, cushaw, delicata, turban, spaghetti and pumpkin...*

*Squashes hiding in the vines winding throughout a late summer garden.*

*The first frost in autumn slips in and leaves behind in the wilted leaves gold, green, striped, yellow, orange, red and warty jewels.*

*Gathering the bounty, the gardener imagines her kitchen filled with soups, muffins, breads, casseroles, and pies.*

*Oh, the sweet, rich aroma!*

**- Ginger Huller, Master Gardener**

*"There is a time in the last few days of summer when the ripeness of autumn fills the air, and Time is quiet and mellow."*

**- Rudolfo Anaya, American Author**

## Believe It or Not!

Scientifically speaking, squash is a fruit, not a vegetable. Fruits contain seeds and develop from the flowers of a plant. According to botanical classifications, tomatoes, avocados, eggplant, and cucumbers are all considered fruits.

"The king of the kitchen is butternut squash", claims Laura Sorkin in her book, [Vegetables, The Ultimate Cookbook](#) (2020 Appleseed Press). This may be true of this deliciously sweet and versatile vegetable. Butternut squash has the advantage of being both savory and sweet. Pair it with Brussels sprouts and roast for a nutritious side dish. Add it to stock, boil, and puree for a creamy soup. Replace pumpkin with it and bake a "butter-pumpkin" pie. However you cook it, butternut squash will not disappoint.



Acorn Squash vines taking over the garden



Butternut Squash ripening on the vine

September 7th is National Acorn Squash Day. Acorn squash is also known as pepper squash. Even though it is considered a winter squash, acorn squash belongs to the same species as all summer squashes including zucchini and yellow crookneck squash.

## What is...Winter Squash?

Although they are harvested in the fall, both butternut and acorn squashes are considered winter squash. They grow on trailing vines and are in the same family as pumpkins and gourds. The flesh inside both types is solid orange and firm; however, the flesh of the acorn squash may be yellow. Both are sweet and nutty in flavor. Both can be prepared in a variety of ways and are a great substitute for potatoes. These two winter squash varieties are very different in appearance. Butternut squash is relatively large in size. It has a bell-like shape with a long neck attached to a bulbous end. The smooth skin is light tan. The small seed cavity is in the bulbous end.

Acorn squash is smaller than butternut squash. It is about the size of a large coffee mug. It has an oval shape and a defined point at the bottom. The smooth skin has ridges like a pumpkin and is usually dark green but may be white or orange. It has a large seed cavity in the middle, which when removed creates ample space for stuffing. Another difference is that butternut squash has a long shelf life and will last 1-3 months in a cool pantry. Acorn squash will last 2-3 weeks.

## Health Benefits

Winter squashes are low in calories, and are fat and cholesterol free. They are a good source of fiber and are full of nutrition. Acorn squash is packed with vitamin C, B vitamins, and magnesium, a mineral vital to bone and heart health. Butternut squash is an excellent source of vitamin C and beta carotene, both of which act as antioxidants in your body. Antioxidants are molecules that fight free radicals in the body. Free radicals can harm the body if levels become too high. They are linked to illnesses such as heart disease and cancer. The high antioxidant content of butternut squash may prevent some chronic illnesses. *Source: Healthline*



# MASTER GARDENER

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