Harvest of the Month provides resources for the cafeteria, classroom, and community to promote the use of local, seasonal foods.

**SUMMER SQUASH**

Educator | VermontHarvestoftheMonth.org

**Benefits**

Summer squash are an excellent source of potassium and vitamin A. They also contain vitamin C and folic acid.

**History of Squash**

Squash belong to the same family as melons and cucumbers. The fleshy and tasty squash that we eat today have descended from wild squashes that originated in Central America. Humans have been eating squash for more than 10,000 years.

**Fun Facts**

- Squashes are classified as either winter or summer squashes based on their storage length. Summer squashes are more delicate and do not keep for very long.
- Squashes aren’t vegetables, but fruits! They are in the same family as melons & cucumbers.
- The flowers of summer squash are also edible.

**Reading Corner**

Children’s Books

- *Sophie’s Squash*, by Pat Zietlow Miller & Anne Wilsdorf
- *The Giant Zucchini*, by Catherine Siracusa

**CLASSROOM CONNECTIONS**

**Math | Measuring Summer Squashes**

Supplies needed: Various-sized summer squashes, measuring devices (ruler, string, and scale), and handout for recording measurements.

Directions:
- Place a few squashes at each table.
- Measure the length, width, diameter, circumference, radius, and weight.
- Have students record their findings; as a class, make a chart that compares and contrasts the various summer squashes.

**English | Squash Sonnets**

Supplies needed: Different types of summer squashes (i.e. zucchini, patty pan squash, straightneck), knife, prepared summer squash treat (i.e. Zucchini muffins).

Directions:
- Pre-cut some squashes of different varieties in half, for viewing. For tasting, cut into strips to taste raw and/or roast before class to taste cooked.
- Using the five senses (sight, sound, taste, touch, and smell) have students compare and contrast the different squashes, and record their observations.
- Have students write sonnets based on their observations of the summer squashes.
- Share a summer squash treat as students read aloud their sonnets.

**Science | Plant Parts**

Supplies needed: Whole squash plant (preferably with roots, vines, leaves, flowers, and fruit), knife.

Directions:
- In a large group, ask students to look at the plant and share observations.
- Ask focusing questions such as How many plant parts does the plant have? Can you identify the parts of the plant? How do you think the plant is harvested?
- As a group, dissect the plant into specific parts. Cut open the squash and identify the seeds.

© Green Mountain Farm-to-School