Tidbit

Summer squash are more delicate than winter squash; they cannot be stored as long but involve less preparation when cooking. They have a mild flavor and can be eaten raw or cooked any number of ways. Although zucchini is the most popular summer squash, there are many varieties available in Vermont such as crookneck squash, pattypan squash, and yellow squash.

Benefits

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

Selection Tip

When shopping for summer squashes, choose those with firm and glossy skin. Skip those with blemishes or dull color, as these are indications that the squash may not be fresh or have been exposed to cold temperatures.

Storage Tip

Unlike winter squashes, summer squashes are easily damaged. Be sure to handle them with care and wash just before using them. In the refrigerator, summer squashes will keep for about 1 week. If freezing, slice and blanch them first. If you plan on baking with your squash later, shred the raw squash and freeze in freezer-safe containers. Summer squash can be frozen for 3 to 4 months.

Cooking Tips

• To prepare a summer squash, wash the skin and cut off both ends. There’s no need to peel a summer squash, as its skin is soft.
• Summer squash can be halved, grated, cubed, or cut into strips.
• Use raw or cooked; Squashes can be steamed, baked, microwaved, or boiled.
• To enhance the flavor of summer squashes, season them with spices or herbs. Experiment with fresh or dried oregano, basil, or parsley.
Mini-activities

- Shave a squash using a vegetable peeler to make squash ribbons. Mix these ribbons into wide flat pasta. Toss with dressing & herbs for a delicious meal.
- Taste test and compare raw summer squash and cooked summer squash.
- Make a drawing of a raw, whole squash and label its parts (stem, end, skin). Slice the zucchini in half then draw and label its parts (flesh, seeds).

Kid-friendly eating tips

- Bake with summer squash—zucchini can be the main ingredient in bread and cookies.
- For a healthy entrée, make stuffed squash boats! Scoop out the seeds of a summer squash, stuff with veggies, beans, breadcrumbs, and cheese, and bake at 400 degrees for 20-25 minutes.
- Make crispy and crunchy zucchini chips for a snack. Thinly slice a large zucchini on a mandolin, brush the round pieces with olive oil, and sprinkle with sea salt. Bake at 425 degrees for 20-30 minutes or until crispy.
- Try “zucchini parm” for a fresh take on the classic Italian dish, chicken parmesan. Trade the meat for summer squash!

Recipes

Zucchini and Potato Bake
Yield: 6 Servings

Ingredients:
- 2 medium zucchini, quartered and cut into large pieces
- 4 medium potatoes, peeled and cut into large chunks
- 1 medium red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1 clove garlic, sliced
- ½ cup dry bread crumbs
- ¼ cup olive oil
- paprika to taste
- salt to taste
- Ground black pepper to taste

Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees
2. In a medium baking pan, toss together the zucchini, potatoes, red bell pepper, garlic, bread crumbs, and olive oil. Season with paprika salt and pepper
3. Bake for 1 hour in the preheated oven, stirring occasionally, until potatoes are tender and lightly brown,

Zucchini and Carrot Cake
Yield: 6-8 Servings

Ingredients:
- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 ¼ cups whole wheat flour
- 3 tsp baking soda
- 3 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 4 eggs
- ½ cup oil
- 1 ¾ cups brown sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2 cups applesauce
- 1 ½ cups shredded carrots
- 1 ½ cups grated zucchini

Directions:
1. Grate carrots and zucchini.
2. In a large bowl, mix flour, baking soda, cinnamon and nutmeg.
3. In a second bowl, lightly beat egg whites; stir in oil, sugar and vanilla. Add applesauce, carrots and zucchini and raisins. Mix well.
4. Add wet mixture to flour mixture, stirring just to blend.
5. Pour into greased sheet pans.
6. Bake in a preheated 350 degree oven for 45-50 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean. Let cool before serving.