

# Harvest of the Month ~ January ~Winter Squash



**Butternut**

## The Benefits of Eating Winter Squash

- Excellent source of Vitamin A, for healthy vision and healthy skin
- An excellent source of Vitamin C, B6 and manganese and a good source of potassium, vitamin K and folate. –Wow!
- Six grams of dietary fiber, an excellent source for this complex carbohydrate.

**Did You Know?** Every part of the squash plant can be eaten, including the flowers, leaves and tender shoots, which can be sautéed or included in soup.

## How Much Do I Need?

A serving of cooked winter squash is about one cup cubed.  
Recommended Daily Amounts of Fruits and Vegetables

| Kids, Ages 5-12     | Teens & Adults       |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 2½ - 5 cups per day | 3½ - 6½ cups per day |

## Story Time

Elementary children will enjoy the books listed below. -  
*-Carlos and the Squash Planet* (bilingual) by Jan Romero Stevens  
*-Pumpkin Soup* by Helen Cooper  
*-A Day at the Pumpkin Patch* by Megan Faulkner and Adam Krawesky

## Health and Learning Go Hand-in-Hand.

Students who eat school lunch eat more fruits and vegetables than students who bring lunch. Studies report improved test scores and memory function among students who eat a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables and get physical activity every day. At least a dozen varieties of winter squash are grown in the region. Try them all to pick your favorite.



## A Taste of Squash History

- Gourds, cucumbers and melons are all part of the Cucurbit Family, but all have different origins. Squash and pumpkins are native to the Americas, while cucumbers originated in eastern Asia and melons in Africa or Persia.
- Squash are one of the oldest cultivated crops in the Western Hemisphere. Seeds found in Mexico have been dated to 8,000 B.C.E.
- Squash were originally cultivated for their seeds, as early varieties did not contain much flesh and were very bitter.
- Squash were one of the “Three Sisters” planted by the Iroquois. The Iroquois myth describes three sisters that were inseparable. These plants — squash, maize (corn) and beans — were staples of Native American tribes.
- Winter squash first migrated to Europe from Peru by Spanish Explorer Francisco Pizarro in the early 16th century.
- Winter squash became a staple food of early colonists and eventually traveled West with pioneers.

**Acorn**

