



Harvest of the Month: Winter Squash

Video Transcript

Video Available At:

<https://youtu.be/z2KmsgXrPil>

This month's harvest of the month is winter squash. Squash is one of the oldest cultivated crops in the Western Hemisphere and was originally grown for its seeds. Seeds found in Mexico have been dated as far back as 10,000 years old.

Differing from their summer squash cousins, such as zucchini, winter squash have skins that are hard and usually not eaten. Squash, gourds, cucumbers, and melons are all part of the Cucurbit family, but have different origins. Squash and pumpkins are native to the Americas, while cucumbers originated in eastern Asia and melons in Africa or Persia.

Winter squash is loaded with vitamins A and C and provide approximately the same amount of potassium as bananas! Vitamin A helps maintain good vision and keeps skin healthy. Squash are also a source of vitamin B6, magnesium, iron, and calcium.

Winter squash is harvested in the fall and can last into the winter if stored correctly, in a cool dry place. They can be stored for up to 6 months. While they can be grown at home, they take up considerable garden space and need full sun. Corn, beans, and squash are known as the "Three Sisters" by many Indigenous tribes in North America and are grown together, to maximize space and benefit soil health. Winter squash come in many varieties including, acorn squash, spaghetti squash, butternut squash, and pumpkins. You can roast squash, use them in soups, enjoy as a tasty side dish, include in desserts like pumpkin cookies...this veggie is as versatile as it is delicious!

Winter squash is in the vegetable food group. The USDA My Plate guidelines recommend eating between 1 to 3 cups of vegetables daily to maintain a healthy and active lifestyle. Winter squash is a flavorful and healthy addition to many meals. Let's learn a few ways to roast squash!

Winter squash is a nutritious source of many vitamins and minerals. Enjoy Montana Winter squash all month long. The Montana Harvest of the Month program showcases a different Montana-grown food each month in Montana communities. We hope you'll join us in tasting Montana this month.

Dig Deeper

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mtharvestofthemonth.org



The Montana Harvest of the Month program showcases Montana grown foods in Montana communities. This program is a collaboration between Montana Farm to School, Office of Public Instruction, Montana Team Nutrition Program, National Center for Appropriate Technology, Montana State University Extension, Gallatin Valley Farm to School, FoodCorps Montana, and Montana Department of Agriculture. More information and resources are available at: mtharvestofthemonth.org.

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