



Acorn squash and sweet potatoes are two vegetables which are plentiful now. These hearty yellow vegetables are full of carotene, which your body converts to Vitamin A. These yellow vegetables are as good for you as they taste.

They cook well in a microwave too, and can be prepared on high to utilize the microwave's great speed. Baked sweet potatoes and squash take just a few minutes to bake, instead of the hour or more they need in a range.

When cooking these vegetables whole, don't forget to pierce the skins in several places so they don't explode in your oven! To make peeling and slicing them for casseroles easier, partially precook them whole. Microwave for 4 to 5 minutes a pound, then let them cool enough to handle. The seeds in the squash are more easily removed after partial cooking too.

You don't often find a microwave recipe as golden and pretty as this Sweet potato casserole.

Sweet Potatoes and Apricots

- 2 pounds sweet potatoes (about 3 large or 4 medium)
- 1 16-ounce can apricot halves
- 1/2 cup coarsely chopped nuts, such as pecans or walnuts
- 3/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon grated orange rind
1 tablespoon cornstarch
2 tablespoons butter or margarine

1. Pierce potatoes and microwave on high for 10 minutes, turn over halfway through. Let cool enough to handle easily. Peel and cut in 1-inch slices.

2. Drain apricots, reserving juice. Arrange potatoes and apricots in a greased, 1 1/2-quart flat casserole or dish (8-inch square or 6x10-inches). (If there

are potato slices which are less done than others, put these near the edge or in the corners.) Sprinkle chopped nuts over top.

3. Combine brown sugar, salt, orange rind and cornstarch in a 2-quart measure and stir to mix. Stir in 1/2 cup of the reserved apricot juice until smooth, then add margarine. Microwave on high for 2 1/2 to 3 minutes, stirring twice, until sauce boils and thickens. Pour evenly over casserole.

4. Leave casserole uncovered and microwave on high for 4 minutes, until sauce bubbles hard around the edges. Spoon hot sauce from edges over the middle of the casserole. Microwave on high for 4 to 5 minutes longer, until bubbling and glazed all over and the potatoes are tender. Let stand, covered, for 5 minutes. Serves 4 to 5.

Tips: To double recipe: double ingredients and use a 2-quart casserole. In step 3, use a 4-cup measure and microwave for 5 to 5 1/2 minutes. In step 4, increase microwave time to 12 minutes, spooning sauce over middle twice.

• To make ahead of time: Prepare through step 3. Cover and refrigerate until needed. Add 5 to 6 minutes microwave time in step 4 (10 minutes if you've doubled the recipe). A flat casserole heats faster than a deep one.

Baked acorn squash can be filled with many delicious combinations. Two of my favorites are below. Molasses or maple syrup and chopped nuts are also good.

Baked Squash Halves

- For each 2 servings:
- 1 whole acorn squash
 - 1/3 cup filling
1. Pierce squash with a fork and microwave on high for 5 minutes. Cut in half, scoop out seeds, place

cut side up in small microwave bowls or a small casserole.

2. Combine filling ingredients and mix well (see below). Divide filling evenly in squash centers. Microwave on high for 5 to 7 minutes longer, until filling is hot and squash is tender. Cover and let stand 5 minutes before serving. (During the standing time the filling flavors the squash and it becomes more tender.) Each of these fillings will fill one squash (2 servings):

Sweet and Simple

- 2 tablespoons margarine, melted
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- Pinch salt
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon.

The following filling is lighter in calories and fats.

Light Fruit Filling:

- 1 small apple, peeled and chopped
- 1 orange, sectioned and chopped
- 1 tablespoon orange juice
- 2 teaspoons brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons margarine, melted

Tips: Acorn squash may vary in size from 1/2 pound each for small ones to over 1 pound each for the biggies. The exact microwaving time is difficult to give because of this variation. Here's a rough guide for increasing the quantities:

• For 4 servings: double ingredients and times. In step 1,

turn squash over halfway through.

• For 6 servings: triple ingredients. In step 1 increase time to 10 minutes and turn squash over halfway through. In step 3, microwave for 14 to 18 minutes. Rearrange squash halfway through

• For larger quantities: Complete through step 2, then bake at 350°F. in your range oven for 30 to 40 minutes until tender.

Note: The times above are for microwaves with 600-700 watts of power. For 500 W, add 10-15 seconds to each minute.

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Md. Women's Ag Forum Slated For Nov. 20

ANNAPOLIS — The second annual Women's Agricultural Forum will be held Thursday, Nov. 20th in Annapolis.

This year's program includes a workshop on effective lobbying, speakers talking about "Maryland's Best Product: Agriculture," a discussion on agricultural trends in international trade, and an outlook for Maryland's prospects in agricultural exports.

First held in 1985, the forum proved to be such a success that it will become a regular event each Fall. It is designed to provide an update on agricultural matters. The forum is open to all interested persons and is not limited to women only.

Registration begins at 9:15 at the forum site, the Holiday Inn on Riva Road, just west of Annapolis.

Those wishing to attend should contact Pat Stabler, c/o Forum, 600 S. Frederick Avenue, Gaithersbury, Maryland 20877. Her telephone number is (301) 948-6744. A \$10 registration fee, to cover a luncheon, has been set.

Sponsorship of the forum is by the University of Maryland's Cooperative Extension Service Home Economics Department, the Maryland Extension Homemakers Council, the Maryland Farm Bureau Women's Committee, the Maryland State Grange and the Maryland Department of Agriculture.



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