

Home on the Range

Don't Squash These Recipes

Pumpkins and their cousins, winter squash, are two of Pennsylvania's major vegetable crops.

Growers in many areas are not expecting a bumper crop because of the dry weather. But with the 4,500 acres planted, consumers should have plenty of pumpkins to select from when shopping at farm markets, garden centers, and supermarkets.

Choosing a pumpkin is mostly a matter of taste. Many people prefer winter squash varieties for eating purposes. Although the large jack-o'-lantern-type pumpkin can be cooked for pies or other recipes, their flesh is stringy and eating quality poor compared to the smaller pie-type pumpkins, often called sugar pumpkins because of their sweetness.

Neck pumpkins, which are really squash, make tasty pumpkin dishes for pumpkin pie or bread.

Pumpkin or squash can be cooked in a number of different ways. After splitting the pumpkin or squash, remove the seeds and attached strings, the flesh can be cut out of the rind and cubed. The cubed flesh can be boiled, steamed, or microwaved until tender and then mashed.

For the smaller squash varieties, the fruit can be cut in half. After scooping out the seeds, the halves should be placed cut-side up in a shallow pan with a small amount of water or simply on a baking sheet, covered with foil, and baked in a hot oven until the flesh is tender. The halves can also be partially covered and cooked in a microwave oven until tender. The cooked flesh can be scooped out and mashed for use in recipes or a little butter and brown sugar can be placed on top of the halved squash during the baking process and the squash serves as is.

Pumpkin and squash are both good sources of vitamin A although squash has more than pumpkin (and can usually be substituted for pumpkin in recipes). They also have good amounts of fiber and help fulfill the recommended three to five servings of vegetables per day recommended by nutrition experts.

Here are some delicious ways to enjoy pumpkin and squash.

PUMPKIN WHOOPIE PIES

- 2 egg yolks
- 2 cups brown sugar
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon cloves
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ginger
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 cups cooked pumpkin
- 3 cups flour

Beat egg yolks, brown sugar, and vegetables together until smooth. Combine remaining ingredients and bake at 350 degrees for 12 minutes. Cool. Fill with filling.

Filling:

- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 4 tablespoons flour
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 1½ cup vegetable shortening
- 2 unbeaten egg whites
- 4 cups confectioners' sugar

Combine all ingredients for filling and spread between two cookies. Wrap in wax paper. Store or freeze.

Janet Wenger
Mifflintown
Tina Forry
Palmyra

DATE-NUT PUMPKIN BREAD

- 1 cup butter
 - 2½ cups granulated sugar
 - 4 large eggs
 - 2 cups canned pumpkin
 - 3 cups sifted all-purpose flour
 - 1 teaspoon salt
 - 2 teaspoons baking powder
 - ½ teaspoon baking soda
 - 1 tablespoon pumpkin pie spice
 - 8-ounce package diced dates
 - 1 cup seedless raisins
 - 1 cup pecans, chopped
- Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Grease and flour a large bundt pan; set aside.

In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar until smooth. While continuing to beat, add eggs one at a time. Then beat in pumpkin.

Sift together flour, salt, baking powder, baking soda, and pumpkin pie spice, and beat into pumpkin mixture. Fold in dates, raisins, and pecans. Transfer to prepared bundt pan and bake for 45 to 50 minutes or until tester comes out clean.

Cool on wire rack. Serve with butter or cream cheese. Very tasty.

B.J.L.



Autumn Chicken and Rice Stuffed Squash is a wholesome meal with great taste.

FROSTED PUMPKIN BARS

Bars:

- 4 eggs
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup salad oil
- 1 cup pumpkin
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 2 cups flour
- 1 cup nuts
- 1 cup raisins

Frosting:

- 3-ounces cream cheese
- 6 tablespoons soft butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ¼ pound confectioners' sugar
- 1 teaspoon milk (more if needed)

For bars: beat together eggs, sugar, and oil. Add pumpkin and mix. Mix the dry ingredients together and add to the pumpkin mixture. Add nuts and raisins. Bake in a greased and floured cookie sheet with sides at 350 degrees for 20-25 minutes. Check with a toothpick. When cool, top with the above frosting.

Evelyn Barnhart
Warfordsburg Grange #1889

BAKED BUTTERNUT SQUASH

- 1 small butternut, hubbard or acorn squash
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ cup brown sugar

Halve the squash lengthwise and remove seeds, and membranes. Place in shallow baking dish. Combine butter, sugar, cinnamon, and nutmeg, and divide between cavities of squash. Add ¼ -inch depth of hot water to dish and bake at 350 degrees for 50 minutes or until squash is tender. Serves two.

Mary Buffington, Kennett
Grange #19

CREAM CHEESE PUMPKIN PIE

- 8-ounces cream cheese
- ¼ cup sugar
- ½ teaspoon vanilla
- 1 egg
- 1½ cups cooked pumpkin
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon cloves
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup evaporated milk
- 2 eggs, beaten

Beat cream cheese, sugar, vanilla, and egg together. In separate bowl, mix pumpkin, sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, salt, milk, and eggs. Pour cream cheese mixture into unbaked 9-inch pie shell. Carefully ladle the pumpkin mixture on top of cheese mixture so it stays on bottom. Bake at 325 degrees for one hour. Cream cheese mixture should stay on bottom and pumpkin mixture on top.

Naomi Lauchnor
Washington Grange

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Featured Recipe

A sure sign of fall is the appearance of bright orange pumpkins and squashes in all shades of colors and different shapes.

Although new varieties of squash and pumpkin keep cropping up, most varieties are interchangeable in recipes.

Here is one that is sure to satisfy your desire for great taste, nutrition, and convenience in preparing.

AUTUMN CHICKEN AND RICE STUFFED SQUASH

- 12 boneless, skinless, chicken tenderloins
- 1 box long grain and wild rice
- 3 small acorn squash
- 2 teaspoons grated orange rind
- 2 tablespoons butter
- ½ cup sliced celery
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- ¼ cup orange juice

Heat oven to 350. Cut squash in half lengthwise, remove seeds. Place cut side down in lightly greased 15x10x1-inch pan. Bake 30 minutes. Prepare rice according to package directions, stir in orange rind. Set aside. Rinse fresh chicken under cold water and pat dry. Cut into 1-inch pieces.

In large skillet, melt butter; add celery and chicken. Cook 1 to 2 minutes until chicken is browned and juices run clear. Combine chicken mixture, cooked rice and dried cranberries in medium bowl; mix well. Spoon chicken and rice mixture into partially cooked squash halves. Drizzle with orange juice. Return to oven and bake 25 to 35 minutes, or until squash is tender when pierced with a fork.

Serves 6. Per serving: 289 calories; 17 g protein; 46 g carbohydrates; 6 g fat; 63 mg sodium.

Recipe Topics

If you have recipes for the topics listed below, please share them with us. We welcome your recipes, but ask that you include accurate measurements, a complete list of ingredients and clear instructions with each recipe you submit. Send your recipes to Lou Ann Good, Lancaster Farming, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522. Recipes should reach our office one week before publishing date listed below.

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