



The United States grew 743.8 million pounds of squash for fresh market and processing in 2011. In 2010, Michigan farms produced 132 million pounds of squash, according to the Michigan Vegetable Council. Some common examples of winter squash are butternut, buttercup, turban, delicata, hubbard, acorn and spaghetti. In the northern states, winter squash farmers frequently sell directly to retail customers as it is more of a fall holiday crop.

Winter Squash is a good source of Vitamin A, fiber, low in calories, fat and sodium. One small serving can provide a third of the daily requirement for vitamin C. Winter squash can be a key ingredient in vegetable dishes, salads, soups, main dishes, breads and desserts. It's high beta-carotene content causes the golden-orange color of the squash's flesh.

Winter squash goes well with seasonings we associate with fall such as cinnamon, ginger, cloves and allspice. Many people like to sweeten acorn squash with brown sugar, maple syrup and/or honey. They also can be added to soups, stews, curries or used in making pies, cakes or other desserts.

Most winter squashes are vine type plants whose fruits are harvested when fully mature. They take longer than summer squash - 3 months or more - and are best harvested once the fall cool weather sets in. They can be stored for months in a cool basement. Other differences include the skin on the winter squash is not edible and it must be cooked before it's eaten.

Acorn Squash



As you might expect, the shape of

this popular winter squash resembles an enormous acorn. It has orange flesh and a ribbed skin that's green fading to orange. It is often prepared simply: sliced in half, baked with a little butter or olive oil, and eaten straight from its bowl-like shell. You can also roast, braise, and steam acorn squash.

Butternut Squash

Pale yellow (almost cream colored) on the outside with somewhat sweet, orange flesh, butternut are a large winter squash with smooth but thick skin. Popular ways to prepare butternut squash include baking, simmering, braising, and steaming.



Winter Squash

Hubbard Squash



A popular squash for boiling and mashing or pureeing, hubbard squash are very big with a thick shell that's bumpy and ranges in color from bright orange to deep green. The yellow-orange flesh, meanwhile, can be a bit grainy. Hubbard squash are rich in vitamin A and also have solid amounts of iron and riboflavin.

Spaghetti Squash



It's called "spaghetti squash" because, when cooked, the golden flesh separates out like strings of spaghetti. These pale yellow squash have a hard, smooth shell and are at their peak in early fall through the winter, though you can find them year-round. Spaghetti squash are commonly prepared in casseroles or baked whole (like a potato) and then the flesh separated into spaghetti-like strands and served with sauces.



Delicata Squash

Thin and pale yellow with telltale green striping, delicata squash have a tasty yellow flesh that is typically prepared by baking, frying, braising, or steaming. Also called "sweet potato squash," they are rich in potassium, iron, and vitamins A and C. Look for them from late summer through the fall.

Turban Squash

Often quite colorful, turban squash are also short and



squat with a distinctive turban-like protuberance at the top. Because of their unusual look, they are popular as decorative squash. But you can also bake, steam, or simmer turban squash.