Florida Fresh: Summer Squash

Claudia Peñuela

Nutrition Facts

Florida's Summer Squash are:

- High in vitamin C. Vitamin C helps to heal cuts and keeps teeth and gums healthy.
- High in vitamin A when left unpeeled. Vitamin A aids in normal vision, healthy skin, and protects against infections.
- A good source of vitamin B6 which helps us metabolize protein.
- Supplier of folate. Folate produces red blood cells and reduces a woman's risk of having a baby with certain brain or spinal cord birth defects.
- Supplier of potassium which helps to control blood pressure.
- Naturally free of fat, cholesterol, and low in sodium.

Note: Squash are divided into summer squash and winter squash. Florida produces more summer squash, including zucchini (part of the squash family) along with yellow.

Why Buy Locally?

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) estimates that the average farmers' market produce travels about 50 miles to its destination, compared to 2,000 miles for supermarket produce.

Buy locally and get these benefits:

- Freshness and good nutrition. Fruits and vegetables harvested in their peak have better flavor and nutritional characteristics.
- Social/cultural. Helps the community to be aware of the importance of agriculture.
- Environmental. Protects the natural resources such as green space, wildlife, water, air, and soil.
- Economic. Promotes local labor force.

Where Are Florida's summer squash harvested?

Most of Florida's zucchini are grown in North Central Florida, while most of Florida's yellow squash are grown in west-Central and South Florida. Summer squash adapts well to the warm climate. They should be harvested before they are fully mature.

2. Claudia Peñuela, nutrition assistant-EFNEP, Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences; Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences; University of Florida; Gainesville, FL 32611.

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When can you buy Florida summer squash?

You can buy Florida Summer squash from **September** through **June**. This is **ten months out of the year**!

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Select

✓ Glossy deep green, slim, and cylindrical shaped zucchini.
✓ Bright yellow, bottle-shaped or cylindrical shaped yellow squash.
✓ Summer squash that are tender and firm with no soft spots.
✓ Summer squash that are heavy for their size.

**Florida Fresh Summer Squash: From Market to Table**

**Colorful Squash and Tomato Gratin**

Yield: 6 Servings

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Lightly oil an 8-inch square baking dish.
2. Spread the garlic, shallots, and basil in the bottom of the prepared dish. Add salt and pepper.
3. Slice the yellow squash, zucchini, and tomatoes in straight alternating layers, repeating until all the vegetables are used in the casserole.
4. Sprinkle the top with the cheese, then the bread crumbs. Drizzle lightly with olive oil.
5. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, until the vegetables are tender. Let stand for 5 minutes before serving.

Nutrition info per serving: Calories **95 cal**; Total Fat **2g**; Cholesterol **2mg**; Sodium **266mg**; Total Carbohydrates **18g**; Protein **6g**. Good source of Vitamin A and Vitamin C.


**Zucchini Stir Fry**

Yield: 4 Servings

1. Peel the onion. Cut it into thin slices.
2. Slice the yellow squash and zucchini into thin round pieces.
3. Chop the red pepper into small pieces.
4. Heat the oil in a frying pan. Add the onion slices, cook over medium heat for 1 minute.
5. Add the spices and stir a few times.
6. Cook for 3 to 5 minutes till vegetables are just tender.

Nutrition info per serving: Calories **70 cal**; Total Fat **3.5g**; Cholesterol **0mg**; Sodium **15mg**; Total Carbohydrates **8g**; Protein **2g**. Good source of Vitamin C.