

Winter Squash/Pumpkin

Produced by:



— THE LAND
CONNECTION



When to Plant Seeds:

Plant seeds indoors in late April or early May

When to Plant Starts or Seedlings Outdoors:

June 1, using plants that are at least 3-4 weeks old

Container Size for Container Gardening:

Use a 8-10 gallon container that is approximately 12-14 inches wide and 16 inches deep

Ground Spacing for In-Ground Gardening:

24-48 inches of space between plants

Hours of Sunlight: 12+ per day

Amount of Water: 9-12 cups per week

Harvest:

Days Until Harvest: 75-100 days from planting outdoors

Harvest in October when leaves of the plant begin to turn brown. Cut the fruit from the vine around the first frost. If the weather is nice, let the fruit cure in the field for about a week. If it is rainy or below 32 degrees Fahrenheit, bring the fruit inside to cure at 80 degrees Fahrenheit with good airflow. After this curing time, the fruit can be stored at 55 degrees Fahrenheit with good airflow for several months.



The information provided in this card is not exact for every growing experience and was designed for Champaign, Illinois in Zone 5b. You should read your seed packet or consult your local Extension agent for questions specific to your growing conditions.

Planting:

Plant seeds in 2-inch square by 3-inch deep containers with potting soil or seed starting mix. The containers should be made from compressed paper, coir, or peat because squash do not like having their roots disrupted. Entire containers should be planted when the time comes. Seeds should be planted 1/4 inch below the soil and kept damp and warm (86 degrees Fahrenheit) until plants appear. After the danger of frost has passed, overnight temperatures are around 50 degrees Fahrenheit, and plants are 3-4 weeks old, you can plant in ground 24-36 inches apart or one plant per 12-inch wide by 16-inch deep container. If growing in containers, look for plants with smaller fruit sizes.

Care:

Keep the area around the plant free of weeds. Use a liquid fertilizer 4 weeks after growing begins. Give plants a little water every 3-4 days, either from rain or faucet, trying to maintain about 9-12 cups of water per week. Water plants in the morning, if possible, since plants produce nutrients during the day and need water to do this. Reduce or stop watering near the end of September or when the first frost is in the forecast.

Pests & Disease:

Squash bugs are the main pests of concern. Watch for bronze egg clusters under the leaves. Crush any eggs you find. Use a fabric row cover until flowering begins. This allows the plant to grow big enough that it can survive damage from the bugs. Removal of the fabric is also important for the squash to be pollinated. Look for disease resistant seeds. Keep water off of the leaves to help prevent disease.