# Summer Squash

Fun Facts:

- Summer squash varieties tend to have a bushy growth habit, unlike the rambling vines of many winter squashes.
- Summer squash varieties include zucchini (yellow and green), pattypan, crookneck, straightneck, tromboncino/zucchetta, and aehobak (Korean zucchini).

Nutrition Information:

- Although nutritional values vary between varieties, summer squash is typically about 94% water and very low in calories. It is a great source of vitamin A, vitamin C, potassium, and calcium.
- Summer squash is easily digested, nourishing, and quite refreshing when eaten raw or cold. It also replaces lost fluids, so it can be a welcome summer staple.

Preparation:

- Rinse and wipe down summer squash if needed. There is no need to peel. Cut off and discard the top and bottom.
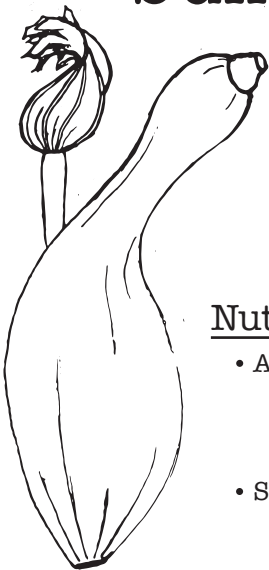
Cooking:

Raw: cut into slices or sticks and serve with hummus or other dip; grate and add to green salads or slaws; slice thin and put on top of pizza; or cut thick slices or cubes and add to soup at the very end to retain texture.

Steam: cut into 1- to 2-inch slices or sticks, steam for 10-15 minutes (5-10 minutes for thinner slices or cubes) until tender. Top with lemon juice, salt, and pepper.

Roast: cut in half lengthwise or into thick slices; toss in olive oil, salt, and pepper; spread out on a baking sheet; roast at 450°F for 15-20 minutes.

Grill: cut in half lengthwise; drizzle cut-side with olive oil, salt, and pepper; and place cut-side down on the hottest part of the grill for 3-4 minutes. Move to the edge/cooler side of the grill and cook for 8-10 minutes.

Bake: place 1-inch slices in boiling water for 1 minute, transer to ice water, and strain. Layer slices with other sliced vegetables in a baking dish, add sauce and cheese if desired, and bake at 350°F for 15-20 minutes.

Stuff: steam whole pattypan squash (top removed) or halves of other squash (cut lengthwise). Let squash cool, scoop out flesh, stuff with desired filling, and bake at 350°F for 15 minutes.

Storage:

• Summer squash dehydrates quickly. Store in a plastic bag at room temperature or refrigerate in a crisper drawer for up to 1 week.

• Damaged or bruised squash will deteriorate quickly.

• For long-term storage, cook and puree summer squash and freeze in air-tight containers. It is a particularly good base for winter soups.