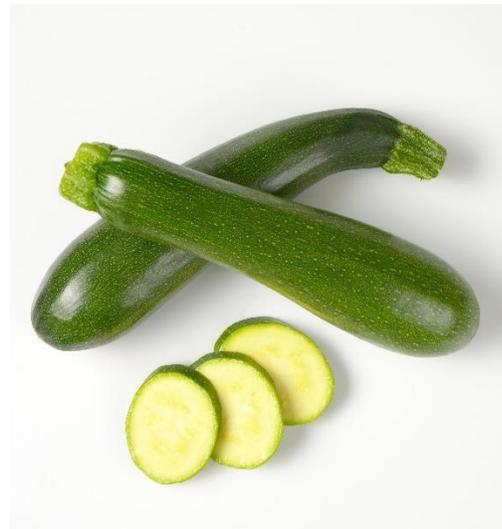


Summer Squash and Zucchini

History

“Summer squash” is typically used to describe a yellow squash available during the summer months. Zucchini is a green type of summer squash-the most popular, in fact. It was created by natural mutation. Both of these squashes are soft shell, meaning that their skin, or peel, is soft and can be easily eaten, unlike a pumpkin. The skin contains the majority of the nutrition found in the squash. Zucchini's flower and their bloom is a preferred food in Mexico. The skin, seeds, and flesh can all be eaten whether raw or cooked. Summer squash grows on a bush or vine, unlike winter squash. Squash is originally found in Mexico and other portions of Central America. Ten thousand year-old summer squash seeds have been found in Mexican caves. Explorers such as Christopher Columbus brought squash back from North America and spread the vegetable around the world. In the United States, squash grows in California, Florida, Georgia, and New York. China, India, and Russia are also large squash contributors. American Indians called squash “askutasquash,” meaning “eaten raw.” French called green summer squash (zucchini) “courgette,” whereas the British refer to it as “vegetable marrow.”



Varieties

Crookneck describes a squash with a rounder “body” and bent “neck.”

Straightneck describes a more cylindrical squash with a small and straight “neck.”

Opo is a long, cylindrical squash with light green skin and mild-flavored, white flesh.

Pattypan is disk shaped with scalloped edges and is known for having a buttery flavor.

Scallopini is a smaller, green, toy-top shaped squash with a sweet and peppery taste.

Sunburst is a smaller, bright yellow, toy-top shaped squash with a spot of green at the blossom end.

Fun Facts

- Squash is actually a fruit, since it flowers and contains seeds.
- American Indian tribes refer to beans, corn, and squash as the “Three Sisters.”
- Squash is a part of the Cucurbitaceae family along with melons, pumpkins, cucumbers, and gourds.
- The smaller the squash is in size, the more flavorful it will be.
- A zucchini can grow 1 inch per day.



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