

Seasonal Eating
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Squash: Summer's Bounty
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Here a squash, there a squash, everywhere a squash, squash. When the zucchini, yellow squash and patty pans start maturing in the garden, the harvest is plentiful and the question of the day is "What do I do with it all?". The good news is that these summer squashes are so versatile. They can be used in dishes from salads and appetizers to breads and desserts.

The farmers' market has plenty of squash to purchase if you don't grow your own. The other day I bought several patty pan squash. These are the whitish, flat, circular squash with scalloped edges. They may seem like a winter squash but are actually a summer

squash with tender flesh inside and an edible rind, just like a zucchini or yellow squash. For dinner we sliced it thinly and sautéed it in a little butter with dried basil, thyme, salt and pepper until tender. Delicious! You can do the same with the other summer squashes.



The tender texture of summer squash is great for adding to a salad, just cut it up raw into cubes. You can also slice it into rounds and use it on a vegetable tray with dip.

Shredded zucchini can be used in quick breads and even in chocolate cakes where it adds moisture. If you are like my family and prefer to bake when it is cooler outside, like in November when we bake quick breads to use for the holidays, try freezing your zucchini. Grate the zucchini and then steam blanch it for 1-2 minutes until translucent. Pack in measured amounts for baking (check your favorite bread recipe) leaving ½" headroom. Cool by placing the containers in cold water and then seal and freeze. If watery when thawed, discard the liquid before using in your recipe.

Stuffed squash is a good use of the small, tender squash. Scoop out the flesh, leaving a ¼" rim. Bake the shells at 350 degrees for about 15 minutes. Meanwhile, sauté the chopped flesh with a little onion and garlic until tender. Stir in cheese and breadcrumbs and stuff back into baked shells. Top with breadcrumbs and bake again until browned and tender, about 30 more minutes.

One of my favorite ways to use summer squash is in Squash Casserole. When my family was in Michigan last summer, my Mom and I made our favorite squash casserole for my relatives one night. What is considered a staple recipe here in the south was a whole new concept in the north. They had never had a squash casserole

and it was a hit with an empty pan to prove it. There are many variations of recipes for squash casserole but here is my favorite. The panko crumbs give it a crispy, browned top and it is full of flavor with the onion, cheese and soy sauce.

For more ideas on using summer squash, visit the Bedford County Extension website Seasonal Eating page. Due to the Bedford County Fair, there will not be a Seasonal Eating Demonstration in July. So enjoy the summer harvest and the Seasonal Eating Cooking Demonstrations will resume the third Wednesday in August.

Yellow Squash Casserole

- 2 pounds summer squash, sliced
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2/3 cup water
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 1/2 teaspoon soy sauce
- 1 1/2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese, divided
- 1 cup panko bread crumbs, divided
- 1/4 teaspoon paprika

In large saucepan, combine squash, onion, water and salt and cook until tender. Drain water and lightly mash squash and onion in mixing bowl with a potato masher or fork. Add butter, pepper, sugar, eggs, soy sauce, 1 cup grated cheese and 1/2 cup bread crumbs. Pour into greased 9" x 13" dish. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes. Top with remaining 1/2 cup cheese and 1/2 cup bread crumbs. Sprinkle with paprika and continue baking 10-15 minutes. Serve hot.

Photo by Virginia Craddock