

Seasonal Eating
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Summer Squash Keeps on Giving
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It happens every year. Whether you plant one summer squash plant or thirty, there always seems to be an overabundance of squash. Summer squashes like zucchini, yellow crookneck and pattypan produce all summer and so there is always squash around. The popular question is what to do with it all.

The summer squash is harvested before it reaches full maturity so its skin is still edible and doesn't need to be peeled. Winter squashes form a hard, inedible shell when harvested such as butternut, acorn and pumpkin.

Fortunately summer squash is very versatile and can be used in many ways. We are probably all familiar with sautéing and grilling squash slices, it can be grated and used in breads or hollowed out and stuffed or you can use it raw in salads or on a vegetable tray.

My new discovery this past year is soup made with summer squash. Cook it down with broth (I usually use chicken), add some seasonings and then puree it when it is all soft. I know this sounds strange but the squash actually has a lot of flavor and has the texture somewhat like tomato soup. Finish it off with a little grated Parmesan cheese and you have a delicious dinner. The full recipe is on the Bedford County Extension website and Seasonal Eating Blog.

The other day I used some squash to make a quick dinner with orzo and shrimp. Orzo is a rice shaped pasta that I cooked in chicken broth. Then I sautéed onions and squash, added some shrimp and tossed it with the orzo for a great weeknight dinner. See the recipe below.

So if you have a garden find some new uses for your prolific summer squash and if you don't have any, check out the Bedford County Farmers Market on Thursdays at 2:30 p.m. at the Celebration Pavilion on Celebration Drive in Shelbyville.

For more ideas on using seasonal produce, visit the Bedford County Extension website (bedford.tennessee.edu) and click on Seasonal Eating.

Shrimp and Orzo with Vegetables

3 cups chicken broth
1/2 cup orzo pasta
1 tablespoon olive oil
1/4 cup chopped carrot
1/2 medium onion, chopped
1 yellow squash, chopped
1/2 teaspoon Italian seasoning
Kosher salt
Black pepper
Pinch red pepper flake
8 ounces peeled and deveined raw shrimp
1/2 teaspoon Old Bay seasoning



In a large saucepan, bring chicken broth to a boil. Add the orzo and boil until al dente, about 8 minutes. While broth is coming to a boil, heat oil in a large skillet. Add carrot and onion and sauté over medium high heat until carrot is almost tender, about 5 minutes. Add the squash, Italian seasoning a pinch of salt and pepper and the red pepper flakes. Continue sautéing until squash starts to get tender, about another 10 minutes. Sprinkle shrimp with Old Bay Seasoning. Push the vegetables to one side and add shrimp to pan. Cook for a minute and then turn over and cook another minute. Using a slotted spoon, remove orzo from chicken broth and add to the skillet. Stir to combine and add some of the chicken broth to create just a little sauce to coat the shrimp and vegetables.