

ANOTHER
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FACT SHEET

SPECIAL INTEREST HERBS

GOURMET VEGETABLES

SQUASH - CROOKNECK ZUCCINI



Cucurbita pepo



DESCRPTION
Squash ranks as one the easiest vegetables to grow and is the perfect vegetable for novice gardeners with their training wheels on! These plants are generally soft, rounded, and come in a range of colours. Yellow summer squash is a type of yellow-coloured vegetable marrow that has mildly sweet and watery flesh, and thin tender skins that for many recipes don't need to be peeled off. Squash grows on vines that thrive in mild weather and reach between 2 - 3ft/60-90cm tall. Squash are harvested when they're immature and their skins are still tender and edible. All squash varieties love warm weather, but mature approximately 50 days after planting so can pretty much be grown in any climate.

kilojoule vegetable. Stir-frying or sautéing is the best method of cooking because steaming and microwaving will emphasise their high water content. Another great, and unusual, way to enjoy squash is to barbecue them! They're best served soon after picking as they don't store well.

Summer squash perform well in large pots of at least 30-inch in diameter and which can hold at least ten gallons.



CULTIVATION
The time to plant squash is after all frosts have passed. They should be grown in full sun and where the soil is well drained and moderately fertile. Plenty of organic matter should be worked into the soil in early spring. Plant seedlings in hills spaced 3-4 ft/90-100cm apart about 1in/1.5cm deep, two plants per hill. This will give the squash more sunlight and will help get the optimal amount of water. Young plants need to be covered if exposed to cold early in the season. Feed every two weeks with compost tea or seaweed extract. Avoid fertilizers that are high in nitrogen as they'll encourage l foliage instead of fruits. Once flowering, it will only take about 8 days for the vegetable to be ready for harvest. You can start picking as soon as they're about 6 in/15cm long, depending on the variety. Harvest scalloped varieties when they're about 4 inches in diameter and before they turn cream-colored.



GROWTH
Traditional gardening folklore says that radishes planted among squash will repel a wide range of pests. Squash ranks as one of the most productive members of the vegetable patch so don't go overboard with your plantings! Six plants will be plenty for a family of four.



NUTRITION
Nutritionally, squash are an excellent source of vitamin C and provide some protein and fibre as well as a range of vitamins and minerals. Their high water content (91%) makes them a very low



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