

ANOTHER
HERB HERBERT
FACT SHEET



SPECIAL INTEREST HERBS
GOURMET VEGETABLES
WINTER SQUASH

Cucurbita spp.



DESCRIPTION

Squash ranks as one of the easiest vegetables to grow

and is the perfect vegetable for novice gardeners with their training wheels on! It is a warm-seasoned vegetable and unlike the summer squash, the skin on a winter squash is not edible. The winter squash received its name as it isn't a very perishable fruit and can be stored for later consumption in the winter. The vegetable is ready for eating in its mature stage and when the skin is tough, not soft. The winter squash is generally cooked before eating. Varieties of the winter squash include:

Acorn Table King This winter squash comes from a very compact bush that produces dark skinned fruit with deliciously flavored yellow flesh. This variety is ideal for baking and storage.

Waltham Butternut. An excellent winter squash. The fruit is approximately 8 in/20 cm long and slightly bulbous at the bottom end and has a creamy yellow skin.

Spaghetti. Unusual variety when cooked because of its spaghetti-like appearance. The fruit, 8-10in/20-25cm long, has become a popular low-calorie addition to salads or with butter or cheese sauces. It can be covered with

cheese and eaten like pasta and can even be used as a base for maccoroni!



USES

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 kilojoule vegetable. Stir-frying or sautéing

is the best method of cooking because steaming and microwaving will emphasize their high water content. Another great and unusual way to enjoy squash is to barbecue them!



ROWTH

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 planting! Six plants will be plenty for a family of four.



CULTIVATION

The time to plant squash is after all frosts have passed. Winter Squash does best in full sunlight and well drained soil. Plenty of organic matter should be worked into the soil in early spring. Plant seedlings in hills spaced 3-4ft/90-100cm apart and about 2.5cm/1in deep with two plants per hill. Feed every two weeks with compost tea or seaweed extract. Once flowering, it will only take about 8 days for the vegetable to be ready for harvest. You can start picking them when the rind is quite hard.

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