All About Summer Squash!
Featuring Zucchini, Yellow, Patty Pan and Scallop

If you like summer squash then June is a good month to get it fresh. It grows well all over the state and is being harvested right now. Summer squashes come in a range of shapes and colors and can be prepared in a variety of ways. The following tips will help you to get the most out of this tasty vegetable.

Handling & Storing
Whether you are growing or buying summer squash, it should be handled with care. It is very thin skinned and easily damaged. Select small to medium sizes for the best flavor and texture. Squash can be stored for up to a week in the refrigerator.

Cooking
Squash can be eaten raw and is a perfect addition to a vegetable tray. It can be cooked a variety of ways including: sautéed, roasted, baked and deep-fried. You can even make a “pasta or noodle” with it. This technique works beautifully with zucchini and is created by cutting the squash into long thin strips or using a vegetable spiral slicer or mandolin so that it resembles noodles. Once prepped the noodles can be sautéed with garlic and olive oil for about 5 minutes. According to the Joy of Cooking, summer squash has an affinity for butter, cream or olive oil, grated parmesan, red pepper flakes and sauces typically used on pasta. It pairs well with tomatoes, onions, peppers, garlic, oregano, marjoram, basil parsley, dill, rosemary, sage and tarragon, as well as lemon, cheese, butter, olive oil and capers.

Eating Healthy
Summer squash is about 95% water and very low in calories. Many varieties offer vitamin C, potassium and beta carotene (when the skin is eaten).

Preserve It
If you are lucky enough to have more squash than you can eat it can be preserved for later use. There are no recommendations for canning summer squashes (unless pickled) and dehydrating yields fair to poor quality, but freezing provides great final product. For freezing, the squash can be prepared breaded for frying or sliced for use in recipes. Follow these simple instructions adapted from the National Center for Home Food Preservation: http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/how/blur/squash_summer.html

- Choose young squash with tender skin.
  Wash and cut in ½-inch slices. Blanch in boiling water for 3 minutes; cool in ice water. Drain and package into freezer bags or freezer containers, leaving ½-inch headspace.
- For frying: Follow the above instructions, but before packaging, dredge in flour or
cornmeal, spread in single layer on cookie sheet and freeze just until firm. Package quickly into freezer bags or containers, leaving ½-inch headspace.

- **Grated zucchini (for baking):** Choose young tender zucchini. Wash and grate. Steam blanch in small quantities 1 to 2 minutes until translucent. Pack in measured amounts into containers, leaving ½-inch headspace. Cool by placing the containers in ice water. Seal and freeze. If watery when thawed, discard the liquid before using the zucchini.

Additionally, it can be pickled and water bath canned with excellent results. For details on canning pickled squash, see [HGIC 3420, Pickled Cucumbers](https://www.hortic.ufl.edu/3420/).

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**Spiral Squash & Sauce**

1 small zucchini, sliced into a pasta shape  
1 medium yellow squash, sliced into a pasta shape  
1 clove of garlic, chopped  
1-tablespoon of extra virgin olive oil  
1-teaspoon red pepper flakes  
¼ cup Parmesan cheese, grated  
¼ cup pasta sauce, if desired  
Fresh ground pepper, to taste  
Sea salt, to taste

Sauté garlic in olive oil, for 1 minute, on medium high. Add squash and sauté for 3-5 minutes. Add sea salt, fresh ground black pepper and red pepper flakes. Top with parmesan cheese and marinara sauce.

**Source:**


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