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Pumpkins

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Pumpkins

Food \$ense Guide to Eating Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

Amanda Horrocks, Extension Assistant Professor

Utah Local Fresh Season: Available in local grocery stores during the fall months.

Availability: Pumpkins are readily available towards the end of summer and all through the fall season. Watch for sales around Halloween and Thanksgiving.

Eating: Due to their tough outer skin, pumpkins are cooked and only the inside flesh is eaten. Pumpkins are most commonly used to make bread, cookies, pies, pumpkin butter, custard, and soup.

Selecting: Select pumpkins that are firm and heavy for their size. Round pumpkins tend to be lighter and less meaty than oblong pumpkins.

Cleaning and Preparing: Clean the pumpkin when you are ready to use it. Rinse with cold running water. If the pumpkin has been waxed, scrub it well.

Storing: Store pumpkins in a cool, dark place. They have a 2 to 3 month average storage time.

Cooking: To make pumpkin puree, cut a medium (about 6 pound) fresh pumpkin into 5-inch square pieces. Remove the seeds and fibrous strings. Arrange the pieces in a single layer, skin side up, in a large, shallow baking pan. Cover with foil. Bake at 375° F for 1 to 1-1/2 hours or until tender.

Scoop the pulp from the rind. Place part of the pulp in a blender container or food processor bowl. Cover and blend or process until smooth. Transfer

the pumpkin into a strainer lined with cheesecloth or overlapping, large coffee filters. Set over a large bowl and press out any liquid. Cover the surface of the puree with plastic wrap and let it drain, chill overnight.

Microwave Instructions: Cut the pumpkin in half and remove seeds. Cut halves into 1-inch cubes. Place cubes in a shallow, 2-quart microwave safe dish and cover tightly with plastic wrap. Poke a few holes in the top of the plastic wrap to allow steam to escape. Microwave on HIGH for 20 to 25 minutes or until pumpkin is tender.

Nutrition Highlights: Pumpkins are a very good source of vitamins A and C, riboflavin, potassium copper and fiber.

Growing: Plant pumpkin seeds once weather has warmed and after any chance of frost has passed. Small, 2-5 lbs; medium, 8-15 lbs; and large, 15-25 lbs, pumpkins require approximately 100 days from planting till harvest.

Preserving: Pumpkin can be canned and frozen. For specific instructions go to http://www.uga.edu/nchfp

References

- 1. http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/index.html
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Breakfast Pumpkin Cookies

1-3/4 cups pureed pumpkin, cooked

1-1/2 cups brown sugar

2 eggs

1/2 cup vegetable oil

1-1/2 cups flour

1-1/4 cups whole wheat flour

1 Tablespoon baking powder

2 teaspoons cinnamon

1 teaspoon nutmeg

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon ground ginger

1 cup raisins

1 cup walnuts, chopped

- 1. Preheat oven to 400° F.
- 2. Mix pumpkin, brown sugar, eggs and oil thoroughly.
- 3. Blend dry ingredients and add to pumpkin mixture.
- 4. Add raisins and nuts.
- 5. Drop by teaspoonfuls on greased cookie sheet.
- 6. Bake 10-12 minutes until golden brown.

Source: recipefinder.nal.usda.gov

Baked Pumpkin

1 small pumpkin, peeled and cut into cubes

1 cup sugar

1 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon cinnamon

Preheat oven to 325° F. Place pumpkin cubes in a baking dish and sprinkle with sugar and salt. Cover pan with foil and bake until soft. Sprinkle with cinnamon.

Source: recipefinder.nal.usda.gov