



## Using, Storing and Preserving



# Winter Squash

*Michigan-grown winter squash is available September through November.*

Prepared by:

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### Recommended varieties

Acorn, banana, buttercup, butternut, Golden Delicious, Hubbard and spaghetti squash are recommended for freezing.

### Storage and food safety

- Purchase squash with stems that are not shriveled, blackened or moist.
- Wash hands before and after handling fresh produce.
- Scrub winter squash with a vegetable brush using cool running water before cooking or cutting. Do not use soap. Do not wash squash before storing.
- Keep squash away from raw meat and meat juices to prevent cross-contamination.



- Store whole winter squash in a cool (45 to 50 degrees F.) place. If stored properly, most varieties will keep up to 3 months.
- Store cut squash in the refrigerator and use within a week.
- For best quality and to preserve nutritional value, preserve only what your family can consume in one year.

### Yield

1 pound	=	one large acorn squash
One small acorn squash	=	2 half-cup servings
3 pounds winter squash	=	2 pints canned
10 pounds	=	a canner load of 9 pints
16 pounds	=	a canner load of 7 quarts

#### Lawn or garden questions?

Visit [migarden.msu.edu](http://migarden.msu.edu).

Call toll-free 1-888-678-3464.

Find out more about Michigan Fresh at  
[msue.anr.msu.edu/program/info/mi\\_fresh](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/program/info/mi_fresh).

## How to preserve

### Canning

#### Winter squash, cubed

Squash should have a hard rind and stringless, mature pulp of ideal quality for cooking fresh.

Wash, remove seeds, cut into 1-inch slices, and peel. Cut flesh into 1-inch cubes. Boil 2 minutes in water.

**Caution: Do not mash or puree.** Fill jars with cubes and cooking liquid, leaving 1 inch headspace. Wipe jar rims, adjust lids and process following the recommendations below:

### Freezing

#### Winter squash (*acorn, banana, buttercup, butternut, Golden Delicious, Hubbard, spaghetti*)

Select firm, mature squash with a hard rind. For spaghetti squash, mashing the cooked pulp is not necessary.

Cook until soft in boiling water, in steam, in a pressure cooker or in an oven. Remove pulp from rind and mash. To cool, place pan containing winter squash in cold water and stir occasionally. Package leaving ½ inch headspace, remove air, seal, label, date and freeze.

#### **Recommended processing time for winter squash in a dial-gauge pressure canner.**

			Canner pressure (PSI) at altitudes of			
Style of pack	Jar size	Process time	0 - 2,000 ft	2,001 - 4,000 ft	4,001 - 6,000 ft	6,001 - 8,000 ft
Hot	Pints	55 min	11 lb	12 lb	13 lb	14 lb
	Quarts	90 min	11 lb	12 lb	13 lb	14 lb

#### **Recommended process time for winter squash in a weighted-gauge pressure canner.**

			Canner pressure (PSI) at altitudes of	
Style of pack	Jar size	Process time	0-1,000 ft	Above 1,000 ft
Hot	Pints	55 min	10 lb	15 lb
	Quarts	90 min	10 lb	15 lb

Let jars sit undisturbed for 24 hours, check lids to be sure they've sealed, remove rings, wash jars, date, label and store.

## References

Information in this bulletin is based on Food Preservation Series — *Winter Squash* (Michigan State University Extension, October 2006)

National Center for Food Preservation. <http://nchfp.uga.edu/>

Address, Elizabeth and Judy A. Harrison. *So Easy to Preserve* Bulletin 989, 6th Edition. Cooperative Extension University of Georgia, 2014.

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*This bulletin replaces WO1052 Using, Storing and Preserving Series-Winter Squash (Michigan State University Extension, 2006).*