

## Squash in the Classroom

### Growing Native American Heritage: The Three Sisters

**Revisiting history to learn about foods, customs and stories.**

The Three Sisters is a legend and tradition of Native American tribes from the northeastern region of North America.

### Companion Planting

The three sisters (corn, beans and squash) are often grown together. The plants compliment each other, and each provides something the other needs. Beans fix nitrogen, grabbing it from the air and returning it to the soil, which plants need to grow. The squash leaves provide shade, which retains soil moisture, and the prickly stems help deter insects and other pests from enjoying the corn and beans. The corn provides a living pole for the beans to climb and helps anchor the stalks so they can survive strong winds. The three sisters also make a complete meal when eaten together: Beans provide the protein and amino acids that are missing in sweet, carbohydrate rich corn, while squash provides moist and delicious nutrient-rich flesh.



### Did You Know?

- Squashes come from the Cucurbit family (*Cucurbitaceae*), which includes melons, gourds, cucumbers, chayotes, pumpkins, winter and summer squashes.

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## November Harvest of the Month

# Winter Squash



### Try dozens of squash varieties this season!

1) Kabocha Squash; 2) Butternut Squash; 3) Red Kabocha Squash; 4) Carnival Squash; 5) Sugar Pumpkin; 6) Sweet Dumpling Squash; 7) Spaghetti Squash; 8) Blue Hubbard Squash; 9) Delicata Squash; 10) Red Kuri Squash; 11) Buttercup Squash; 12) Acorn Squash



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# Butternut Squash Fries Recipe

**Prep time:** 10 min  
**Cook time:** 45-55 minutes  
**Estimated Cost:** \$3.50  
**Serves** 4-6 as a side dish.

## Ingredients:

1 medium butternut squash  
(about 2 lbs)  
2 tsp olive oil  
1/4 cup brown sugar  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
3/4 tsp salt  
1/4 tsp pepper

## Directions:

Preheat oven to 400°F.

If desired, peel squash. Small pieces of peel are perfectly edible and not peeling will shorten your preparation time.

Slice squash in half, remove seeds. Cut squash into wedges approximately 1/3 in thick. When all squash has been cut, slice wedges into sticks, approximately, 1/3 in. thick.

Put all ingredients in a medium mixing bowl and toss, using clean hands or wooden spoon. When all fries have been coated, divide fries onto two 9x13" baking pans, making sure there is no more than a single layer of fries on each pan.

Place pans in oven for 45-55 minutes, flipping them after 20 minutes and checking on them after 40 total minutes have passed.



## Squash Buyer's Tip

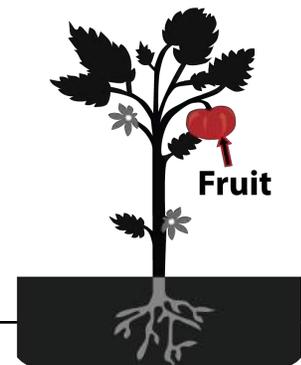
Select squash that feel heavy for their size, and have a matte - rather than glossy - finish. Check for unwanted blemishes and bruises, and a hard shell that cannot be pierced by a fingernail. Stems should be intact, tan and dry.



# Fun Facts About Winter Squash

## Plant Parts

- All squash are fruits! According to botanical science (the study of plants) all plants that contain seeds are fruits.
- All winter squashes have hard shells. This means that while we often eat the skin of summer squashes (zucchini, yellow crookneck, patty pan) we usually do not eat the skin of winter squashes.



## Nutrition

- Winter squash is a low-calorie, good source of complex vegetable carbohydrates and dietary fiber.
- It is an excellent source of vitamin A, a great source of vitamin C, potassium, dietary fiber and manganese, and a good source of folate.



## Shapes, Sizes and Colors



- Winter squash comes in dozens of varieties which display many different shapes, sizes and colors.
- Butternut squash, the sweetest and most mild of the winter squashes, tends to be the most common.
- Try finding Acorn, Delicata and Spaghetti squashes for a change of pace!

Looking for winter squash grown locally?

Visit [localdifference.org](http://localdifference.org) to search for local food, farms, and retailers.