



## Winter Squash, Acorn

MyPlate Food Group: **Vegetable**



### Nutrition Information

- 1 cup of raw acorn squash counts as 1 cup from the ChooseMyPlate.gov Vegetable group.
- It all counts! Fresh, frozen, canned, and even vegetable juice- all types of veggies count toward your MyPlate goal.
- Based on their nutrient content, vegetables are organized into 5 subgroups: dark-green vegetables, starchy vegetables, red and orange vegetables, beans and peas, and other vegetables.
- Most vegetables are naturally low in fat. None have cholesterol. Sauces and seasonings may add fat, calories, and/or cholesterol.
- Starchy vegetables like acorn squash contain carbohydrates which give you energy.
- Acorn squash is an important source of many nutrients including vitamin A and antioxidants like lutein which is important for eyesight.

### Uses and Tips

- Acorn squash can be cubed and roasted in the oven for a hearty side dish.
- Serve cooked, mashed acorn squash as an alternative to mashed potatoes. Get creative and top with raisins, pineapples, or even nuts. Warm in the oven until the squash is warmed and toppings are lightly toasted.
- Pureed acorn squash can be used in place of pureed or canned pumpkin in many baked recipes.

### Storing Foods at Home

- Do not wash acorn squash until ready to eat.
- Acorn squash should be stored in the refrigerator in a plastic bag, loosely tied or knotted.

## MyPlate Facts

- Vegetables are naturally low in calories. Eat vegetables in place of foods that may be higher in calories to help lower calorie intake. For example, replace chips with crunchy carrots, celery, or cucumbers.
- Eating a diet rich in vegetables and fruits as part of an overall healthy diet may reduce the risk of heart disease, including heart attack and stroke.
- Eating a diet rich in some vegetables and fruits as part of an overall healthy diet may protect against certain types of cancers.
- Adding vegetables can help increase the intake of fiber and potassium, which are important nutrients that many Americans do not get enough of in their diet.
- Vary your veggie choices to keep meals interesting.



## USDA Foods

### Roasted Chicken and Root Vegetables

Makes 9 servings

#### Ingredients:

- 1 pound carrots or sweet potatoes
- 1 large onion
- 3 pounds skinless chicken pieces
- 1 pound acorn squash
- 1 clove garlic or 1 teaspoon minced garlic, or ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 large lemon
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- ¼ cup water
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper

**Directions:** Wash hands with soap and water.

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.
2. Cut lemon in half and squeeze the juice into a large bowl. Discard seeds. Add vegetables, water, oil, salt, and pepper to the bowl and mix.
3. Transfer vegetables to a pan. Leaving the leftover marinade in the bowl. Place pan with veggies in oven. Bake for 10 minutes.
4. While veggies bake, toss chicken in the remaining marinade. Let sit at room temperature for about 10 minutes.
5. Remove pan from oven. Add chicken pieces on top of veggies. Return to oven.
6. Continue roasting until chicken is cooked through and a food thermometer reads 165 degrees F, about 40 minutes more. As the chicken roasts, use a mixing spoon to turn the vegetables every 15 minutes.

*Recipe adapted from SNAP4CT.org*

### Apple Stuffed Acorn Squash

Makes 4 servings

#### Ingredients:

- 2 acorn squash (1-2 pounds each)
- 4-6 apples, washed and chopped
- 8-10 sprays of low- calorie butter spray
- 1 teaspoon ginger
- ⅛ teaspoon cinnamon
- ⅛ teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar

**Directions:** Wash hands with soap and water.

1. Wash whole squash. Pierce squash several times with fork. Place on paper towel and cook 6 minutes per pound in microwave on high.
2. Cut squash in half and remove seeds.
3. Place apples in microwave-safe bowl. Cook apples in microwave until soft (check after 2 minutes, if not soft yet, continue to cook for another minute).
4. Combine apples and remaining ingredients and mix. Fill each half of squash with apple mixture.
5. Cook 2 minutes more on high power in microwave. Stir apples and cook another 2 minutes on high power.

*Recipe adapted from University of Maryland Extension*