

VEGETABLE OF THE WEEK

# ZUCCHINI & SUMMER SQUASH

Summer squash is a general term for 70 different types of fast-growing, tender-skinned, soft-fleshed squash. Zucchini is the most famous, followed by yellow squash (either straight or crookneck), and scallops (or patty pan) which look like flying saucers. If you get a giant-sized zucchini, use it for making zucchini bread. It will be too tough and seedy for other recipes. Substitutions: All summer squashes can be used inter-changeably.

**To store:** Store squash unwashed in a perforated plastic bag in the vegetable bin. In the refrigerator they keep for about a week and a half.

**Handling:** Rinse under water to remove the dirt or prickles, and slice off the stem and blossom ends. Then slice or chop. Scrape out seeds from baseball bat sized zucchinis before using them to bake.

**To use:** Because of their bland flavor, summer squash lend themselves to many cooking applications, taking on the flavor of whatever they're cooked with. Try using them as a substitute for rice, pasta or potatoes. Slice tender, young summer squash into salads. Try them in stir-fries, with pasta. Lightly steam (4-5 minutes) and dress them with fresh herbs or pesto. Or coat squash lightly in oil and roast at 350 degrees whole or sliced in half for 15-45 minutes. Stuff whole squash with your favorite stuffings.

**To freeze:** You can freeze pureed (seeded) zucchini in Ziplock bags, and grated zucchini for use in breads and muffins.

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