

Pre-School Pages



A newsletter for parents of pre-schoolers
packed with food, facts & fun
from your local county extension office

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Let's Eat

Winter Squash & Pumpkins



Winter squash, which includes acorn squash, butternut squash, pumpkin, and other varieties, is low in fat and sodium. It is an excellent source of vitamin A and fiber.

When selecting, keep in mind that winter squash should be heavy for its size with a hard, tough rind that is free of blemishes or soft spots.

It can be stored in a cool, dry place for up to one month.

To steam, wash, peel, and remove seeds. Then cut squash into 2-inch cubes or quarter, leaving rind on (it will remove easily after cooking). Bring 1 inch of water to a boil in a saucepan and place squash on a rack or basket in the pan. Do not immerse it in water. Cover the pan tightly and steam the squash 30 to 40 minutes or until tender.

To bake, wash squash and cut it length-wise. Smaller squash can be cut in half; larger squash should be cut into portions. Remove seeds and place squash in a baking dish. Bake at 400°F for 1 hour or until tender. Seeds can be toasted at 350°F for 20 minutes.

Pumpkin Pudding

Serving Size: 3/4 cup

Yield: 6 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 (15 ounce) can pumpkin (or 2 cups cooked mashed squash such as Hubbard)
- 2 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice (or 1 teaspoon cinnamon, 1/2 teaspoon ginger, 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg and 1/4 teaspoon cloves)
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1 1/2 cups low-fat milk
- 1 small package instant vanilla pudding

Instructions:

1. Remember to start by washing your hands. In a large bowl mix pumpkin, salt and pumpkin spice together.
2. Slowly stir in milk and mix well. Add instant pudding mix and stir for 2 minutes until it thickens. Refrigerate until serving time.

Nutrition Facts: Per Serving (3/4 cup): calories, 120; fat, 1 g; cholesterol, 5 mg; sodium, 320mg; carbohydrate, 25 mg; dietary fiber, 2 g; vitamin A, 220%.

Source: USDA SNAP-Ed Connection.
Adapted from Oregon State
University Cooperative Extension



Go Green this Thanksgiving

This Thanksgiving go *green* by following these simple tips:

- Use items from your backyard or the local farmers' market to decorate. Hay bales, mums, pumpkins, gourds, fodder shocks, dried flowers, and leaves and branches can be used throughout autumn.
- Buy local! Prepare a Thanksgiving Day feast using locally grown, seasonal foods.
- Use reusable plates, cups, utensils, and napkins.
- If you are traveling, save energy (and money) by turning down your thermostat.
- Place leftovers in reusable containers to send home with guests.
- Save energy by turning off the TV and getting outside. Play a game of flag football, take a walk, or simply sit out in the sunshine and enjoy the company of family and friends.
- Last but not least, give thanks for family, friends, and blessings in your life.

Source: Ashley Osborne, Extension Associate for Environmental and Natural Resource Issues, University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture

Play Time

Fall Nature Walk

Fall is a good time for a family walk. If you live where you can walk in the woods or fields, you can gather dried weeds, interesting pods, and pieces of bark. Even in the city you can find differently shaped leaves, acorns, etc. Bring your treasures home and let your child set up an arrangement to enjoy. Take along baskets or bags to collect interesting things.

Be on the lookout for possible hazards such as poison ivy, hidden rocks, or stumps. Look at the different kinds of seeds and the way they are carried from place to place by the wind, on



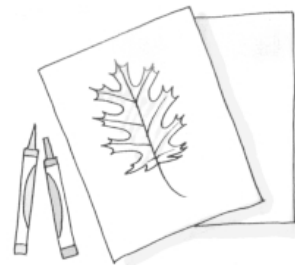
people's clothes, etc. You might be lucky enough to see a squirrel hiding nuts for the winter, too.

Source: Penn State Cooperative Extension Service

Crayon Leaf Prints

Materials

paper
crayons
scissors
paste



Directions

Lay your leaf, vein side up, on a table or other smooth, hard surface. Place a sheet of paper over the leaf. Color the paper on top of the leaf, rubbing evenly over the entire leaf. The leaf and its veins will show clearly on your paper. Cut out the colored leaf and paste it on a fresh piece of paper. Crayon leaf prints can be used for stationary and for leaf collections. They are especially pretty if you choose the bright autumn leaf colors for your prints.

Fall Yard and Garden Cleanup

Your child can help pull up dried-out garden vegetables and flower plants. He can help save seeds from the flowers for next year's garden. Marigold seeds are easy to remove and to save in a bag for next year's garden. Give him a shovel and he can help turn over the garden for next year. Don't forget his help when you harvest fall vegetables like turnips, carrots, or cabbages. Your child will love to help rake leaves—and jump in them, too!



Source: Penn State Cooperative Extension Service

Sincerely,

Laura Het
County Extension Agent
for Family & Consumer Sciences

