

Feature of the Month - August 2010

Summer Squash

In most areas of the country, summer squash is now plentiful. While zucchini and yellow crookneck squash are probably the most popular varieties found in grocery stores, pattypan is another favorite often found at farmer's markets. Summer squash is most flavorful when freshly picked and small to medium in size; the larger it grows, the less flavor it holds. It can be enjoyed raw or pickled, but some of the best flavor comes when it is cooked. Squash can be used in casseroles and soups, and even on pizza. Zucchini also lends itself well to baked goods such as breads and muffins. Our favorite use of summer squash is probably when it is sautéed - with green beans, added to a stir fry, or allowed to take center stage as in the recipe that follows. The tender skin of the summer squash means that it does not keep long, and though available, summer squash that travels distances to reach stores in the winter months does not have much flavor. So make the most of this summer treat while it's here, enjoying the abundance! (For more information and recipe ideas on summer squash, see pages 61, 62, 80-81, 121, and 136 of [Simple Choices for Healthier Eating](#).)

Sautéed Squash

Oil (choose one that is designed for high-heat cooking such as safflower or sunflower oil)

Sliced onions

Freshly minced garlic (or garlic salt/powder)

Dried seasonings (favorite combinations are parsley & paprika OR oregano, basil, & cayenne)

Sliced summer squash (any variety)

Salt and pepper

1. Sauté onions, garlic, and dried seasonings in oil over medium-low heat. Allow them to "sweat" until fragrant, stirring often.
2. Turn up the heat a little and add squash. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and more seasonings. Sauté while stirring often. Add additional minced garlic and sunflower seeds during last few minutes. Serve immediately.
3. Complements almost any quick and easy summer meal; or, consider adding a protein (e.g., chicken, tofu) along with more seasonings to make a complete skillet meal.