

# HARVEST *of the* MONTH BUTTERNUT SQUASH



February

We are featuring fresh, healthy, locally grown butternut squash in school lunches this month. Can you taste the difference?

Butternut squash is an excellent source of vitamin A and potassium. The bright orange color indicates that it is loaded with beta-carotene, which may lower the risk of certain types of cancer and may offer protection against heart disease. It is low in salt, fat, and has few calories.

## Healthy Serving Ideas

- Chop squash in half, scoop out seeds and place in a roasting pan with a 1/2 inch of water, bake at 400 degrees for 30 minutes. When soft, remove from oven and scoop out flesh, mash and serve as a side dish - or add sauteed onions and veggie broth and puree to make squash soup.
- Peel squash (or purchase pre-peeled squash), remove seeds and chop into 1/2" pieces. Toss with olive oil and salt, and place single layer on a roasting pan. Put into oven at 400 degrees for 20-25 minutes.
- Make toasted butternut squash seeds for a crunchy snack. Clean seeds and place on a roasting pan. Bake for 10-15 mins at 300 until slightly browned.

## Where to Find Butternut Squash in Massachusetts

Butternut squash is harvested in the fall, but it stores well. Local squash can be found at farmers' markets, farm stands, and stores. A list & map can be found here: [goog.glzUqmdb](http://goog.glzUqmdb)

## Fun Facts

Butternut squash is can be stored for over 3 months after being picked.

"Squash" comes from the Narragansett Native American word askutasquash, which means "eaten raw or uncooked."

Squashes come in many different shapes and colors including tan, orange, and blue.

*Harvest of the Month promotes a different Massachusetts-grown crop from local farms each month in school cafeterias across the state. To learn more about Harvest of the Month, visit [www.massfarmtoschool.org/hotm](http://www.massfarmtoschool.org/hotm).*

## Harvest of the Month Book Club

[Sophie's Squash](#) by Pat Miller

[Winter on the Farm](#) by Laura Ingalls Wilder

High School: [In Defense of Food](#) by Michael Pollan



You can purchase butternut squash "noodles", or make your own with a vegetable spiralizer. You can lightly boil these "noodles" and add sauce just like you would do with pasta.



*Thank you to Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts and the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources for helping make Harvest of the Month possible.*

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## Butternut Squash Purchasing Pointers

Pick a squash that feels heavy in hand. Its stem should be stout and firmly attached to the fruit. Avoid those with wrinkled surface, abnormal spots, cuts, and bruises.

Once cut open, store in refrigerator for 3-4 days.

Look for our March newsletter featuring dairy next month!