

## PRESERVING PUMPKIN & WINTER SQUASH

Factsheet | HGIC 3281 | Updated: Mar 5, 2010

### Cooking

The easiest way to prepare the pulp of pumpkin or hard winter squash is to bake it in the oven. Wash the pumpkin or squash and cut in half crosswise. Remove its seeds and strings. Place the halves in a pan, shell side up. Bake in a 325 °F oven for one hour or more until the flesh becomes tender and begins to fall apart. Scrape the pumpkin or squash from the shell and put through a blender or food processor to form a smooth consistency. The pulp may be frozen for use later, but the pureed pulp cannot be safely canned. For canning, use only cubed pumpkin or winter squash.



The easiest way to prepare the pulp of pumpkin or hard winter squash is to bake it in the oven.

Adair Hoover, ©2018, HGIC, Clemson Extension

### Canning Cubed Pumpkin & Winter Squash

Pumpkin and winter squash should have a hard rind and stringless, mature pulp of ideal quality for cooking fresh. Small pumpkins (sugar or pie varieties) make better products. Winter squash varieties include acorn, banana, buttercup, butternut, golden delicious and Hubbard. **CAUTION**—Spaghetti squash will not stay cubed when cooked and must be frozen instead of canned.

Wash, remove seeds, cut into 1-inch slices and peel. Cut flesh into 1-inch cubes. Add to a saucepot of boiling water, and boil two minutes. **CAUTION**—**Do not mash or puree.**

Pack hot cubes into hot jars, leaving 1-inch headspace. Fill jar to 1 inch from top with boiling hot cooking liquid. Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rims. Adjust lids.

Process in a dial-gauge pressure canner at 11 pounds pressure (12 pounds pressure between 2,001–4,000 feet) OR in a weighted-gauge pressure canner at 10 pounds pressure (15 pounds if above 1,000 ft. altitude). Process pints for 55 minutes and quarts for 90 minutes.

To make pies using canned pumpkin, drain liquid from jars and strain or sieve cubes.

### Freezing

Select full-colored mature pumpkin and squash with fine texture and a hard rind. Wash and prepare as instructed above to cook in the oven. Or, wash, remove seeds, and cut into cooking-size sections. Then cook until soft in boiling water, in steam or in a pressure cooker. Remove pulp from rind and mash. (For spaghetti squash, mashing the cooked pulp is not necessary.) To cool, place pan with pumpkin or squash in cold water and stir occasionally. Package in freezer bags or freezer containers leaving ½-inch headspace. Seal and freeze.



Cooking pumpkins can be cooked and frozen or pressure canned for later use.  
Adair Hoover, ©2018, HGIC, Clemson Extension

## Drying & Roasting Seeds

Drying seeds and roasting seeds are two different processes. To dry, carefully wash pumpkin or squash seeds to remove the clinging fibrous tissue. Seeds can be dried in the sun, in a dehydrator at 115–120 °F for 1 to 2 hours, or in an oven on warm for 3 to 4 hours. Stir frequently to avoid scorching.

To roast, take dried seeds, toss with oil and/or salt and roast in a preheated oven at 250 °F for 10 to 15 minutes.

### Source:

Reynolds, Susan and Paulette Williams. *So Easy To Preserve*. University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service. Revised by Elizabeth Andress and Judy Harrison, 2006.

If this document didn't answer your questions, please contact HGIC at [hgic@clemson.edu](mailto:hgic@clemson.edu) or 1-888-656-9988.

## Original Author(s)

**Pamela Schmutz**, Former Retired HGIC Food Safety Specialist, Clemson University

## Revisions by:

**E.H. Hoyle**, PhD, Retired Extension Food Safety Specialist, Clemson University

*This information is supplied with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement of brand names or registered trademarks by the Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service is implied, nor is any discrimination intended by the exclusion of products or manufacturers not named. All recommendations are for South Carolina conditions and may not apply to other areas. Use pesticides only according to the directions on the label. All recommendations for pesticide use are for South Carolina only and were legal at the time of publication, but the status of registration and use patterns are subject to change by action of state and federal regulatory agencies. Follow all directions, precautions and restrictions that are listed.*

---

Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service offers its programs to people of all ages, regardless of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital or family status and is an equal opportunity employer.

Copyright © 2020 Clemson University  
Clemson Cooperative Extension | 103 Barre Hall Clemson, SC 29634  
864-986-4310 | [HGIC@clemson.edu](mailto:HGIC@clemson.edu)