



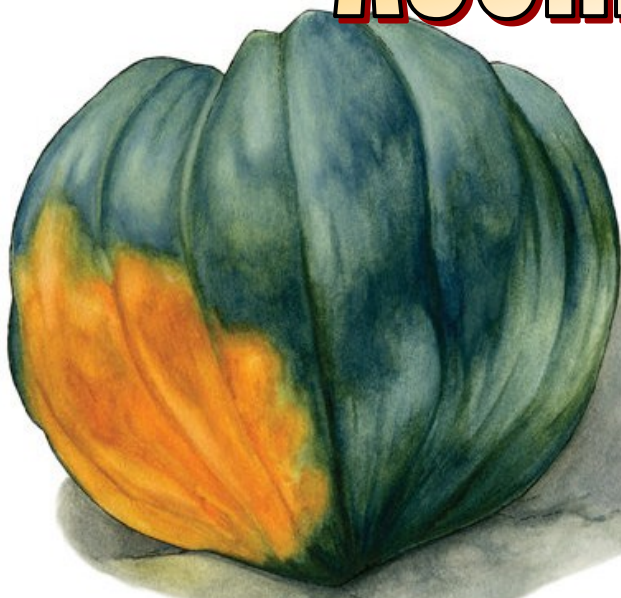
# ACORN SQUASH

History/Origin

- ★ Acorn squash is **native to the Americas**.
- ★ It was thought to be the **first food** cultivated by Native American Indians. They introduced squash to early European settlers.
- ★ Squash, along with beans and corn, is part of the **Indian triad** of the three most important food staples.
- ★ Squash seeds have been found in ancient Mexican archeological digs dating back over **4000 years**.
- ★ Acorn squash was not known to the Europeans until after the **voyages of Columbus**.



# ACORN SQUASH



## Botanical

- ☆ Acorn squash is an **edible gourd**. It grows on a vine.
- ☆ The **acorn squash** (*Cucurbita pepo*) is also called the **pepper squash** or **Des Moines squash**.
- ☆ Although it is **considered a winter squash**, acorn squash belongs to the same species as all **summer squashes**, such as zucchini.
- ☆ Squash got its name from the Narragansett Native American word **askutasquash**, which means “eaten raw or uncooked.” They were probably referring to the seeds of the acorn squash.



# ACORN SQUASH

Nutrition

- ★ Acorn squash is most **commonly baked**, but can be microwaved, sautéed or steamed. The **seeds** of the squash are usually toasted, and make a great snack. You can also eat the yellow trumpet **flowers**.
- ★ Acorn squash is an **excellent source** of:
  - ♥ vitamin A—helps to reduce lung cancer
  - ♥ folate—helps prevent heart-attacks and strokes
  - ♥ folic acid—important for brain health
- ★ Acorn squash is rich in **phytonutrients**, which help the body get rid of toxins and may help prevent cancer.





# ACORN SQUASH

Acorn squash are typically dark green in color, often with a single splotch of orange on the side or top.

Newer varieties are a colorful yellow and even white!

## *A favorite fall ingredient!*

- ★ As the name suggests, the shape of the acorn squash resembles that of an **acorn**.
- ★ When acorn squash was **first discovered** only the seeds were eaten. The flesh, at that time, was very thin and considered too hard to be of value.
- ★ Over the years, the **Indians** developed more of a fleshy squash.
- ★ It is ironic that today the seeds, which were once prized, are very **often thrown away**.

