



Give Them More
of the
Good Stuff!

Respecting Indigenous Foods: Squash

Culture of Squash

Indigenous Peoples brought squash to what is now North America from what is now Central and South America thousands of years ago. It has become an important part of the lives and culture of tribes across the continent.

- Squash provides many nutrients for good health. Some varieties are eaten in summer and others store well for winter meals.
- Squash are baked whole in the coals of a fire or sliced and boiled. Strips of squash are dried in the sun and rehydrated in winter by soaking or boiling.
- Squash blossoms are eaten fresh and dried.
- Squash seeds are roasted and spiced for adding to pemmican or nut and fruit mixes.
- The hardened skins of squash can be hollowed out and used as ceremonial decorations and as storage containers.
- Dried squash strips can be used to weave mats.

Squash is an excellent source of fiber and vitamins A and C.



Chef Nephi Craig
BHT, ACRPS

Chef Craig, who is Western Apache and Diné, is dedicated to raising respect for Indigenous foods. His work helps Indigenous People reconnect to their food and landscape. Chef Craig created the Harissa Roasted Butternut Squash dish (see other side) using squash, chiles, quinoa and agave. As these Indigenous foods traveled the globe, they contributed to lasting changes within other world food cultures. In the words of Chef Craig, “Have fun and cook on!”

Stovetop Quinoa

Quinoa, an Indigenous whole grain, is the second layer of Chef Craig’s flavorful dish on the other side.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup **quinoa** (if not pre-rinsed, rinse well using a fine-mesh strainer)
- 2 cups **water**
- 1/4 teaspoon **salt** (optional)

Directions:

1. In a saucepan, bring water to a boil. Add quinoa and salt, if desired, and return to a boil.
2. Reduce heat to low, cover pan and simmer for 12 minutes.
3. Turn off heat and let stand until water is absorbed and quinoa has the texture you like, about 5 to 10 minutes.

Note: For a roasted flavor, toast the grains first. Stir around in the pan at medium heat for a few minutes before adding liquid.

Makes 3 cups



This material was funded by USDA’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. SNAP can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact Oregon Safe Net at 211. USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

2022 Oregon State University Extension Service prohibits discrimination in all its programs, services, activities, and materials on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, familial/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, genetic information, veteran’s status, reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Oregon State University, Oregon State University Extension Service is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.

Share on:



Enjoy Cooking Together

Create a flavorful dish by layering

- 1 Herbed Yogurt Sauce 2 Stovetop Quinoa and 3 Harissa Roasted Butternut Squash

Herbed Yogurt Sauce 1

Ingredients:

- 2 cups low-fat **plain Greek yogurt**
- 2 Tablespoons **olive oil**
- 2 Tablespoons **agave syrup**
- 2 Tablespoons chopped **parsley**
- 1 Tablespoon chopped **mint**
- 1 Tablespoon chopped **cilantro**
- 1 dash *each* **salt** and **pepper**

Directions:

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. In a medium bowl, combine all ingredients. Chill until ready to serve.
3. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Makes 2½ cups

Prep time: 10 minutes

Stovetop Quinoa 2

Directions on the other side.

Harissa Roasted Butternut Squash 3

Ingredients:

- 1 medium **butternut squash**, 3 pounds
- 2 Tablespoons **olive oil**
- 2 Tablespoons **harissa** spice mix, divided
- 2 Tablespoons **agave syrup**
- 1 Tablespoon **lemon juice**
- 2 Tablespoons toasted **pumpkin seeds**
- 1 Tablespoon toasted **pine nuts** (optional)
- 1 Tablespoon *each* torn **mint** and **cilantro**

Directions:

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
3. Peel squash, cut in half above the rounded end and cut each piece in half lengthwise. Scoop out seeds and cut into 1-inch pieces.
4. In a large bowl, stir together the squash, oil and 1 Tablespoon harissa until the squash is evenly coated.
5. Pour squash onto a rimmed baking sheet. Roast until edges begin to brown and pieces are soft when pricked with a fork, about 20 minutes. Stir in ½ to 1 Tablespoon harissa (use less for a milder flavor).
6. On a large dish, spread the yogurt sauce to form a shallow bowl. Add warm quinoa to the center and top with roasted squash.
7. Before serving, drizzle with agave and lemon juice. Sprinkle with seeds and nuts, if desired, and top with torn herbs.

Notes: Cooking with a group? Have kids and adults help with a part of the recipe.

Makes 6 cups

Prep time: 25 minutes

Cook time: 20 minutes

No harissa? Blend together: 1 ½ teaspoons **cayenne**; 1 teaspoon *each* **smoked paprika**, **cumin** and **coriander**; and ½ teaspoon *each* **garlic powder**, **ground caraway seed** and **salt**.

To learn more about Chef Craig and his accomplishments, visit Instagram @nephi_craig