



# Harmony Valley Farm

An update for our Community Supported Agriculture Members - Since 1993

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## VEGETABLE FEATURE:

### Orange Kabocha Squash

By Andrea Yoder

This week we're packing one of our longtime favorite squash varieties, orange kabocha. You'll recognize this squash by its bright orange skin and rounded, disc-like shape. This variety is also sometimes called a Japanese Pumpkin and is similar to other squash varieties such as orange kuri and buttercup. The flesh is dark orange in color and has a silky, custard-like texture when cooked.

This is a versatile squash and may be used for a variety of preparations including soup, puree, baked goods, curries, stews or simply roasted. Most of the time this variety may be used in recipes that call for buttercup, butternut, or orange kuri as well as any recipe calling for pumpkin. The flavor of this squash is excellent and surpasses even the best tasting pumpkin.

There are several ways you can cook this squash. My easy, low maintenance method is to just cut the squash in half, remove the seed cavity and put the squash halves, cut side down, in a baking dish. Add a little bit of water to the pan and bake the squash at 350°F until the squash is soft and tender when pierced with a fork. Remove from the oven and turn the halves over so they can cool. Once cool enough to handle, scoop the cooked flesh out of the shell and either mash or puree the flesh. You can use it to make a simple squash puree seasoned with spices of your choosing and a pat of butter. Orange kabocha puree can also be used in baked goods and desserts. This rich, sweet flesh makes a delicious pie filling and yields rich, moist, flavorful quickbreads, muffins, pudding and soufflé.

Aside from baking, kabocha squash may also be roasted or simply steamed. In Japanese cuisine, kabocha squash are also referred to as Japanese pumpkins. Known for their simple, clean preparations, you'll find Japanese recipes for kabocha squash to be equally as simple with just a few ingredients. Slices or chunks of kabocha squash are often steamed or simmered in a simple dashi broth with kombu seaweed and sometimes miso, soy sauce and sometimes sake. This is a classic and common way to prepare kabocha squash in Japan. It is often a component in Japanese bento boxes (healthy Japanese take out) and is often served as a side dish. You can also roast kabocha squash as you would prepare any other root vegetable or potato for roasting. When prepared this way the exterior of the squash gets nice and crispy while the flesh inside stays moist and sweet.

## What's In The Box?

**GREEN TOP RED BEETS:** This will be the last delivery of green top beets as we are nearly done with beets for the season. Take advantage of the nutrient dense beet greens and use them in pasta dishes such as this recipe for **Beet Pesto & Greens Pasta** featured in this week's **Cooking with the Box** article.

**PORCELAIN GARLIC:** Pair fresh garlic and fresh herbs to make a flavorful sauce for meat, grain or vegetable dishes. Check out this week's blog article and find a recipe for **Skirt Steak with Cilantro Garlic Sauce**.

**RED & YELLOW ONIONS:** This week take advantage of the beautiful red onions and use them raw in fresh salads and salsas. Put the yellow onions to use in dishes calling for a base of sautéed onions.

**ORANGE UKRAINE PEPPERS:** These are the smaller, blocky peppers with orange red skin. This is a sweet pepper, good for roasting, stuffing, cooking and eating raw!

**RED OR ORANGE ITALIAN FRYING PEPPERS:** These are the long, slender pointy peppers that are either dark red or bright orange. These are some of our sweetest peppers and may be eaten raw or cooked.

**GRAPE TOMATOES OR VARIETY OF LARGE TOMATOES:** We're nearly finished picking grape tomatoes for the season, but we hope to continue picking slicer varieties and roma tomatoes for a few more weeks. We're crossing our fingers that this week's wet, humid weather conditions don't impact the tomatoes too much!

**PURPLE VIKING POTATOES:** This is an all-purpose potato, and one of our favorites. The white, flavorful flesh is neither waxy nor starchy, rather it's kind of in between. Use them to make the **Sweet Pepper Mashed Potatoes** mentioned in this week's **Cooking With the Box** article.

**JALAPEÑO PEPPERS:** This week you'll be looking for 2 hot, little jalapeño peppers in your box. Use them to make the quick-pickled jalapeños included in this week's featured recipe for squash quesadillas!

**POBLANO PEPPERS:** These are the dark green, blocky peppers taper to a point at the base. They do have a medium level of heat. Check out our **feature article about poblano peppers** featured several weeks ago.

**CARROTS:** Use them to make a tasty **Carrot Coffee Cake** for Sunday brunch. Afterall, it's always recommended to include more vegetables in your day!

**LEEKs:** Check out **last week's feature article** for more information and recipes!

**RAINBOW OR RED CHARD:** Pair chard and poblano peppers together to make **Creamy Chicken and Greens with Roasted Poblanos and Caramelized Onions**.

**ORANGE KABOCHA SQUASH:** This is the bright orange squash in this week's box. It's also **this week's featured vegetable**.

**DELICATA OR SUGAR DUMPLING SQUASH:** Delicata squash is oblong and narrow in shape while Sugar Dumpling squash are round. Both varieties have light yellow, sweet flesh and may be used to make the quesadilla recipe in this week's newsletter!

**SWEET CORN:** We are nearly finished with sweet corn for the season. Cut the sweet kernels from the cob and use it to make a simple pasta salad.

**CILANTRO:** Use fresh cilantro in salsa, salads, or as a garnish for tacos, pizza, etc. Both the stems and the leaf are flavorful and may be used.

While this squash can usually be held for longer storage, I would encourage you to eat this week's selection sooner than later. We've already seen some of them starting to deteriorate, so watch them carefully and if you notice any spots starting to form on the exterior, cut that area out of the squash and cook the remainder immediately.

### Fall Flan with Maple Yogurt and Caramel Pecans

Yield: 6 servings

|   |                                       |   |                    |
|---|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------|
| <u>The Flan:</u>  | ⅓ tsp ground ginger                   | Sea salt                                      | Sea salt           |
| 1 cup cooked, mashed<br>winter squash (kabocha or<br>butternut) or sweet potatoes | ¼ cup maple syrup<br>4 eggs           | <u>Caramel Pecans &amp; Maple<br/>Yogurt:</u> | 1 cup yogurt       |
| ½ tsp ground cinnamon   | 1 cup buttermilk (or plain<br>yogurt) | 1 tsp butter                                  | 1 Tbsp maple syrup |
| ⅛ tsp freshly grated nutmeg   | 2 tsp vanilla extract                 | ½ cup pecans                                  |                    |
|   |                                       | 1 tsp sugar                                   |                    |

1. Heat the oven to 325°F. In a blender, combine the squash or sweet potato, spices, maple syrup, eggs, buttermilk, vanilla, and ¼ tsp salt and puree until smooth. Divide the puree among six custard dishes.
2. Put the custard dishes in a baking pan and pour hot water into the pan until it reaches at least an inch up the sides of the dishes. Bake in the center of the oven for 45 minutes. The flans should be set and barely quiver when shaken. Remove from the oven and let cool.
3. While the flans are cooling, melt the butter in a small pan over low heat. Add the pecans, dust them with the sugar, and turn to coat evenly. Cook, stirring frequently, until the sugar has melted, caramelized, and coats the nuts. Turn the nuts out onto a plate, add a pinch or two of salt, and let cool. Chop finely or coarsely, as you like.
4. In a small bowl, combine the maple syrup and the yogurt. Taste, and add more maple syrup if you wish. Serve the flan topped with a spoonful of maple yogurt and a little heap of chopped crisped pecans.

This recipe is an adaptation of one originally published by Deborah Madison in her book, *Vegetable Literacy*.

### Squash & Poblano Quesadilla with Pickled Jalapeños & Chipotle Crema

Yield: 4-6 servings

|   |   |                                       |  |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| 2 tsp garlic powder   | 2 poblano peppers, deseeded<br>and sliced | ½ cup water                           | <u>Chipotle Crema:</u>                 |
| 2 tsp chili powder  | 1 medium red onion, sliced<br>thinly      | 1 ½ cups shredded cheddar<br>cheese   | ½ cup sour cream                       |
| 1 tsp paprika   | 3-4 Tbsp sunflower oil,<br>divided        | 8-12 small corn or flour<br>tortillas | ¼ tsp chipotle powder                  |
| 1 tsp ground cumin  | 1 clove garlic, chopped                   | <u>Pickled Jalapeños (optional):</u>  | Juice of ½ a lime                      |
| 2 tsp brown sugar   | 1 can (16 oz) refried black<br>beans      | 1 jalapeño, thinly sliced             | Salsa, for serving                     |
| 1 tsp salt  |   | ¼ tsp salt                            | Chopped fresh cilantro, for<br>serving |
| 1-2 delicata or sugar dumpling<br>squash, thinly sliced (about<br>4 cups) |   | ¼ cup white vinegar                   |  |

1. Preheat the oven to 425°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. If making the pickled jalapeño, put salt and vinegar in a bowl, stir to dissolve the salt. Add the jalapeño slices and let set until ready to serve.
3. Prepare the spice mixture by combining garlic powder, chili powder, paprika, cumin, brown sugar and salt in a small bowl. **Note:** Half of the spice mixture will be used for roasting the squash and onions. The remainder will be used for the refried beans.
4. Place squash slices in a mixing bowl. Drizzle with sunflower oil and sprinkle with about ¼ of the spice mixture. Toss to combine and coat the squash pieces evenly, then spread in an even layer on one of the baking sheets. Repeat the process with the sliced onions and poblano peppers, spreading them in an even layer on the second baking sheet.
5. Roast the vegetables for 20 minutes or until slightly browned and cooked through. Once the vegetables are done, remove from the oven and cool slightly.
6. While the vegetables are roasting, prepare the refried beans. Add 1 Tbsp oil to a small pot over medium heat. Add garlic and sauté for 1-2 minutes. Add the remaining spice mixture and the beans. Stir for a minute. Add water and bring to a simmer. Let the beans simmer over low heat for 10 minutes with the lid on. Remove from heat and set aside.
7. While the beans are simmering, make the crema. Combine sour cream, chipotle powder and lime in a bowl. Stir to combine. Set aside.
8. Prepare the quesadillas: Spread a thin layer of refried beans on each of four-six tortillas (depending on the size). Divide and evenly spread the squash, onions and peppers on each tortilla. Top each with shredded cheese, then press another tortilla on top, gently.
9. Heat a nonstick skillet or griddle over medium heat. Add just enough oil to lightly coat the pan. Once the oil shimmers, carefully place the quesadilla in the pan, cheese side down. Cook until the bottom side is golden brown, then carefully turn the quesadilla and repeat on the other side. Repeat the process until all quesadillas are toasted.
10. Cut each quesadilla into halves or quarters and serve, hot, with the crema, pickled jalapeño slices, cilantro and salsa of your choosing.

Recipe adapted from [tuttalavita.ca](http://tuttalavita.ca)