

How to Cook Pumpkin

Have you ever wondered how to get from the pumpkin or squash you see at the farm stand to the “solid-packed” pumpkin in the can? Not sure what pumpkin to use for which type of recipe? Don’t know the difference between pumpkin varieties? Hopefully, this flyer will help.

First, **almost any eating pumpkin or winter squash can be used interchangeably in recipes.** (Spaghetti squash is a notable exception). While each has a slightly different flavor, texture, and water content, the variability does not usually affect the recipe. (**Two exceptions:** 1. Baking – if the squash is high in water content, the liquid in the recipe might need to be somewhat reduced; 2. Eating the flesh alone – use the best eating varieties only (Sunshine) if grilling, mashing, or not mixing the squash in a recipe). We really enjoy using each of the different varieties in our recipes to see if the result is unique. We encourage you to do the same.

Pumpkin and winter squash flesh is best cooked in two ways. **Baking** is the most reliable and easiest. Simply take the pumpkin or squash, cut it in half, remove the seeds and pulp, and place both sections face down on a cookie sheet. Bake for 30 minutes (or more for larger pumpkins) at about 350°. A fork should easily pierce the skin and flesh. After cooling, spoon out the now soft flesh and use as you would canned pumpkin (you may wish to puree it at this point, or add some water to adjust the consistency). The flesh can also be **boiled**. This method calls for skinning and seeding the pumpkin first, then cutting the flesh into 1 inch chunks. Place the chunks into a pot and add water enough to only cover the bottom quarter of the flesh (or risk the result being too watery). Boil until the chunks break down.

Now, with the pumpkin in this cooked, solid form, it can be used immediately, refrigerated (for about a week), or frozen (for up to a year).

Don’t hesitate to send us an e-mail with any questions.
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from **Blueberry Bay Farm**

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