

ZUCCHINI

EVERYONE'S FAVORITE GREEN SQUASH

POLLINATION

Zucchini plants produce both a male and female flower. Insects pollinate the female flower by visiting a male flower first. The pollen from the male flower is what causes the female flower to produce zucchini.

WHEN TO HARVEST

Bigger isn't always better as far as a zucchini goes. Small and medium zucchinis are the most flavorful and the darker the skin, the richer the nutrients. So try not to let your zucchini get too big, pick them when they're less than 8 inches long for the best taste!

NUTRIENT DENSE

Zucchini is low in calories but not in nutrients. One cup of cooked zucchini contains 40% of the recommended daily intake of vitamin A. Zucchini is also a good source of vitamin C and potassium.

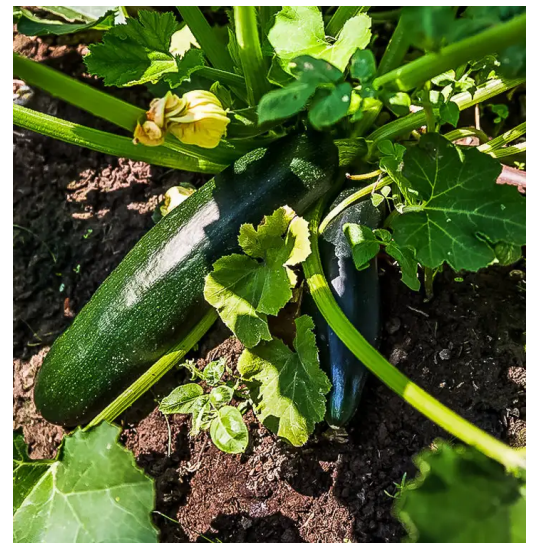


DID YOU KNOW?

Americans love zucchini so much, we gave it a day of its own! August 8th is National Zucchini Day. This celebration is different than National Zucchini Bread Day, which is April 25th!

GROWING TIPS

- Find an area in your garden or yard that gets plenty of sun to plant your zucchini.
- Plant zucchini seeds at least 2 feet apart - these plants love space to grow and grow!
- Water your zucchini often. Inconsistent watering can cause the zucchini to produce bitter and tough fruit.
- Once the plant starts producing fruit, keep an eye on it daily to be sure the zucchini don't get too big.



LAYERED RATATOUILLE

RECIPE INSPIRED BY
SARAH OZIMEK

Combine multiple veggies from the garden in this fresh summer beauty!

Ingredients:

- 2 cups diced tomatoes
- 2 Tbsp tomato paste
- 1 small onion, minced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp fresh thyme leaves (or 1 tsp dry)
- 1/2 tsp pepper
- 2 medium zucchini, thinly sliced*
- 2 medium yellow squash, thinly sliced*
- 2 small eggplant, thinly sliced*
- 2 red bell peppers, seeded and cut into 1" squares

*Look for eggplant, zucchini and summer squash that are roughly similar in size and shape, this makes layering them together in the skillet much easier



Directions:

1. Preheat your oven to 375F.
2. Spread 1 Tbsp olive oil in the bottom of a 9 inch cast iron skillet or shallow baking dish. In a small bowl, mix the diced tomatoes, tomato paste, onion, garlic, thyme and pepper. Pour the mixture into the base of your skillet.
3. Layer the sliced vegetables vertically around the skillet, packing them as tight as you can. (We find that it is easier to layer the zucchini, squash, and eggplant in the skillet and then go back in and tuck the red peppers within the layers after the other vegetables have been filled in.)
4. Place the skillet in the oven and bake for 45 minutes or until bubbly and the vegetables are softened and starting to brown slightly.

ZUCCHINI PICKLES

You can only eat so much zucchini bread... Try this unique variation on the cucumber classic for a different way to eat up that bumper crop!

Courtesy of Nancy Fuller

Ingredients:

- 2 cups distilled white vinegar
- 3 Tbsp kosher salt
- 2 Tbsp yellow mustard seeds
- 6 sprigs fresh dill
- 4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 3 medium zucchini, sliced into 1/2-inch-thick rounds
- 1 small red onion, halved and sliced into thin half-moons

Directions:

- In a medium saucepan over medium heat, bring the vinegar, salt, mustard seeds and 3 cups water to a simmer. Cook until the salt has dissolved, about 5 minutes.
- Divide the dill, garlic, zucchini and onions evenly between 2 quart-size mason jars.
- Pour the hot liquid into the mason jars to cover the ingredients and let cool to room temperature, about 1 hour. Serve immediately or cover with lids and store in the refrigerator.

