

# HARVEST OF THE MONTH

## WINTER SQUASH



Eat healthy. Move often. Live well.

Each month the Cambridge in Motion team sends a flyer with fun facts and a family newsletter to celebrate the Mass Farm to School partnership. We hope your family enjoys the fun and learning opportunities within!

This month we are learning about winter squash and the supplemental crops of dried beans & cabbage! Enjoy the fun resources, recipes, lessons and activities that keep your family exploring and thriving!

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### Fun Facts on Winter Squash, Dried Beans, and Cabbage!

What do **squash** have in common with cucumbers, melons, and pumpkins? They are all in the **Cucurbitaceae family!**

**Cabbage** is full of Vitamin C. Explorers sailing on ships in the 1600s brought **pickled cabbage** to prevent **scurvy**.

**Winter squash** are a good source of **Vitamin A and minerals**, and also contain **Vitamins B and C!**

In ancient Greece, public officials were **elected** by dropping **beans** in a jar!

The word squash comes from the Narragansett Native American word "**askutasquash**" which translate to "**eaten raw or uncooked.**"

## February Harvest of the Month Video!

Watch our [Cambridge in Motion monthly video series](#) featuring the Harvest of the Month! You'll watch our public health nutritionist bring to life the fun facts, make a quick snack, and give a nutrition or food preparation tip!

[Butternut Squash Video](#)



## Joke of the Month



**Q:** How do farmers fix their jeans?

**A:** With a cabbage patch!

## Fun & Games

**Mancala** is a strategy game that some historians date back to 7th century Egypt, where players use stones, **beans**, or seeds to move through a surface with holes. The player who ends up with the most beans wins! Mancala boards are easy to make and dried beans can be used as the pieces.

- [Mancala Rules](#)
- [Make a Game Board](#)



## For At-Home or Classroom Learning!

(1) **No Kimchi for Me:** Students will learn about the importance of cabbage to Korean culture, by listening to a read-aloud book and identifying characters, settings, and major events. (Grades K-2)

(2) **The Tallest Bean Plant:** Students will plant seeds and explore which conditions affect plant growth. They will design and conduct experiments and compare and contrast to understand what variables influence the health and growth of living things. (Grades 3-5)

## How the 3 Sisters Crops Benefit Each Other & the Soil



The crops of **corn, beans, and squash** are known as the **Three Sisters**. For centuries these three crops have been the center of Native American agriculture and culinary traditions. **Corn provides tall stalks** for the beans to climb so that they are not out-competed by sprawling squash vines. **Beans provide nitrogen to fertilize the soil** while also stabilizing the tall corn during heavy winds. Beans are nitrogen-fixers meaning they host rhizobia on their roots that can take nitrogen, a much needed plant nutrient, from the air and convert it into forms that can be absorbed by plant roots. **The large leaves of squash plants shade the ground** which helps retain soil moisture and prevent weeds.

## Food Waste Tip of the Month

### Make friends with your freezer!

The freezer can be a waste-free kitchen's best pal. Freezing food is basically like hitting the pause button. Try freezing dark leafy greens that are starting to wilt: chop them up, put them in a plastic bag in the freezer, then use them by the handful in smoothies, sauces, and curries.

### Some tips for becoming a successful food-freezing champion:

Freeze in portions, use airtight containers to reduce freezer burn, and do a survey of what's in the freezer every once in a while, since nothing lasts forever!



## Delicious Recipes!



A yummy idea for dinner this week - **Turkey Spaghetti Squash Bake!**

Looking for a no-cook side dish? Try this **Citrusy Cabbage Salad!**

If you have a slow cooker, try the **Acorn Squash with Sage Cranberry Rice Stuffing!**

Try these vegetarian **Black Bean Sliders** on slider buns or on their own!

Try this **Butternut Squash & Pesto** on pasta for a vegetarian dinner tonight (just add a little protein and you have a meal!)

On a cold night, try a side of **Whole Grain Mac, Cheese & Butternut Squash** to warm up!

Check out this card with recipes for both **Cuban Black Beans and Vegetable Chili with Beans!**

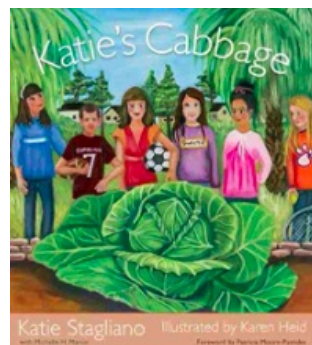
## Children's Book Spotlight

### Katie's Cabbage

Written by Katie Stagliano &  
Michelle H. Martin  
Illustrated by Karen Heid

For grades 2-5

"*Katie's Cabbage* is the inspirational true story of how a third grader from Summerville, South Carolina, grew a forty-pound cabbage in her backyard and donated it to help feed 275 people at a local soup kitchen. In her own words, Katie shares the story of the little cabbage seedling and the big ideas of generosity and service that motivated her to turn this experience into a national youth movement aimed at ending hunger one vegetable garden at a time."





# HARVEST of the MONTH February WINTER SQUASH



Harvest of the Month promotes a different MA-grown crop from local farms each month in school cafeterias across the state.

To learn more, visit: [massfarmtoschool.org/hotm](http://massfarmtoschool.org/hotm)

Winter squash has lots of water (87%) which helps keep your body hydrated. You are about 60% water!

## Healthy Serving Ideas

**Butternut Squash Purée:** Peel and chop squash. Toss in olive oil and roast at 400°F for 45 minutes or until soft. Blend or mash with a fork until smooth. Add butternut squash purée to macaroni and cheese or use as a pizza sauce.

**Butternut Hummus:** Combine 1 cup butternut squash purée, ½ cup tahini, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, 1/2 tsp. salt, and 1/4 tsp. pepper in a bowl and stir until smooth. Use as a spread for sandwiches or serve as a dip.

**Stuffed Acorn Squash:** Cut squash in half, scoop out seeds, place on baking pan. Drizzle with olive oil, bake at 400°F for 30-45 minutes. Remove from oven, add mixture of cooked quinoa or rice, fresh herbs, your favorite spices and shredded cheese. Return to the oven for 15 minutes until cheese melts.

## Where to Find Local Winter Squash

MassGrown Map (MDAR)

<https://massnrc.org/farmlocator>

## Harvest of the Month Book Club

Gr. K-5 : *Carlos & the Squash Plant* by Jan Romero Stevens

Gr. 6-8: *Farmer Will Allen* by Jacqueline Briggs Martin

Gr. 9-12: *The Food Activists Handbook* by Ali Berlow

## Fun Facts

- "Squash" comes from the Narragansett word askutasquash, which means, "eaten raw or uncooked."
- Almost every part of the squash plant is edible - leaves, flowers, seeds, and fruit!

## At-Home Activity

### Mapping Squash: Coloring & Geography

Originally from Central America, squash can help you learn about world geography. Use this lesson and map from Vermont Harvest of the Month to follow the history of this vegetable around the globe.

<https://bit.ly/HOTM-MappingSquash>



MASSACHUSETTS



Thank you to Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts and the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources for helping make Harvest of the Month possible.

## Winter Squash Purchasing Pointers

- Pick a squash that feels heavy. Its stem should be thick and firmly attached to the squash.
- Pick a squash with a matte feel to the skin rather than shiny. If it's shiny it's been picked too early!
- Don't buy a squash with wrinkled skin, strange spots, cuts, and bruises.

March Preview: Dairy!

[www.massfarmtoschool.org](http://www.massfarmtoschool.org)

Click [Here](#) to download our Harvest of the Month Family Newsletter!



Cambridge  
Public Health  
Department



Eat Healthy. Move Often. Live well.

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