

WORDS THAT DESCRIBE **WINTER SQUASH**

FLAVOR • COLOR • TEXTURE

starchy

subtly sweet

fragile

chewy



moist

creamy



earthy

mellow

nutty



mild



rich

tender

buttery

smooth



Looking Back

History

Many winter squash types are thought to have originated near the Andes in what is now northern Argentina, and in Mexico, Peru, and in Central America, with original seeds and rinds dating back 12,000 years to caves in Ecuador.

Archaeologists also have found remains of squash in cliff dwellings in southwestern US. They were spread by travel and migration.



What's in a Name?

Cucurbita, aka...

Cucurbita means gourd. The second word identifies the type of winter squash: Cucurbita maxima (hubbard, buttercup); Cucurbita moschata (butternut), Cucurbita pepo (acorn, pumpkin), Cucurbita pepo (mature zucchini).

The hard, protective rind allows storage in colder months, hence the name "winter" squash.



Maps and Migration

Around the World

Columbus brought winter squash to the Old World from his 1492 expedition. Many varieties then were bred around the Mediterranean Basin and in Australia.

"Grandes Heures d'Anne de Bretagne," from 1503-1508, is the first known European depiction of winter squash.

In 1878, agricultural consultants from the US brought the first winter squash, a hubbard, to Japan.



**The Spoken Word
Google Translates**

Words for Winter Squash

**The word "squash" comes from the
Narragansett word askutasquash, meaning
"eaten raw or uncooked."**

Latin: cucurbita hiemalis

Arabic: alqare alshitwiu يوتشلا عرقلا

Cantonese: 冬南瓜

French: courges d'hiver

Haitian Creole: kalbas ivè

Hindi: वटिर सूक्वैश

Japanese: 冬力ボチャ

Persian یناتسمزی یاولح ودک

Spanish: calabaza de invierno

Swahili: boga ya msimu wa baridi

Ukrainian: зимовий гарбуз



Heart and Soul

Art & Literature

Cinderella pumpkins are widely grown in France and were introduced to the US in the 19th century. They came to be called Cinderella pumpkins in the US, because their shape resembles that of the pumpkin from the 1950 Disney film.



Stirrup-spout bottle with squash, Moche artists, Peru, 200-500 CE,
The Metropolitan Museum of Art writes: "Moche artists were close observers of the natural world. This bottle takes the form of a loche, a kind of butternut squash."

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/314682>



A Closer Look

Botany

Although cooks and chefs think of squash as a vegetable, they are a fruit, because they contain seeds and grow from the flowering part of the plant.

The squash family includes cucumbers, melons, pumpkins, gourds, and watermelon.

Neolithic farmers of the New World likely selected from wild squash desirable traits: bigger size, bigger seeds, sweeter flesh.



Ripe for the Picking

Season's Best

Winter squash are mature and ready for harvest in late September and into October in New Jersey, but throughout its growing season, almost every part of the squash plant is edible: the leaves, tendril shoots, stems, flowers, seeds, and fruit. Their tough skins allow them to be stored for weeks or months.



Soil+Sun+Water

In the Garden

Plant the three kinds of seeds in full sun and in well-drained soil. Winter squash are ready to harvest after around 100 days from planting.

Companion/guild plantings: In Aztec, Incan, Mayan and Native American cultures, squashes were/are grown with corn and beans, as the "Three Sisters." The corn provides a growing structure for climbing beans. Bean vines assist in root support for corn and fix nitrogen in the soil to fertilize the corn and squash. The large and sprawling squash vines acted as living mulch.



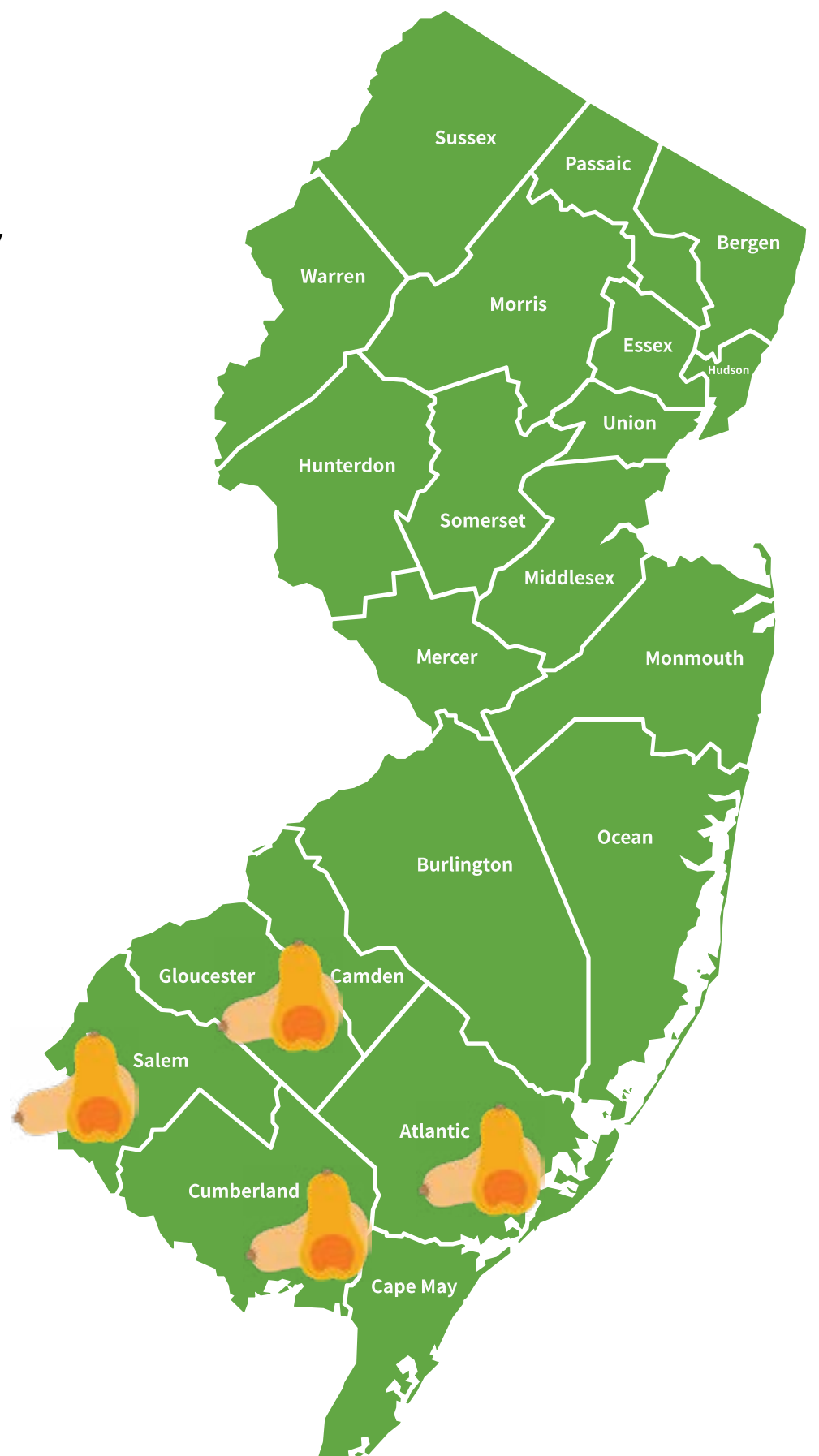
By The Numbers

Math & Money

China and India are the world's leading producers of squash, pumpkins, and gourds, followed by Ukraine, Russia, and the US.

Only tomato, bean, cucumber and lettuce are consumed in greater quantities than squash in the US.

The bulk of winter squash production in New Jersey is butternut squash, followed by acorn squash and spaghetti squash. Most winter squash crops are grown in Gloucester, Cumberland, Salem, and Atlantic counties.



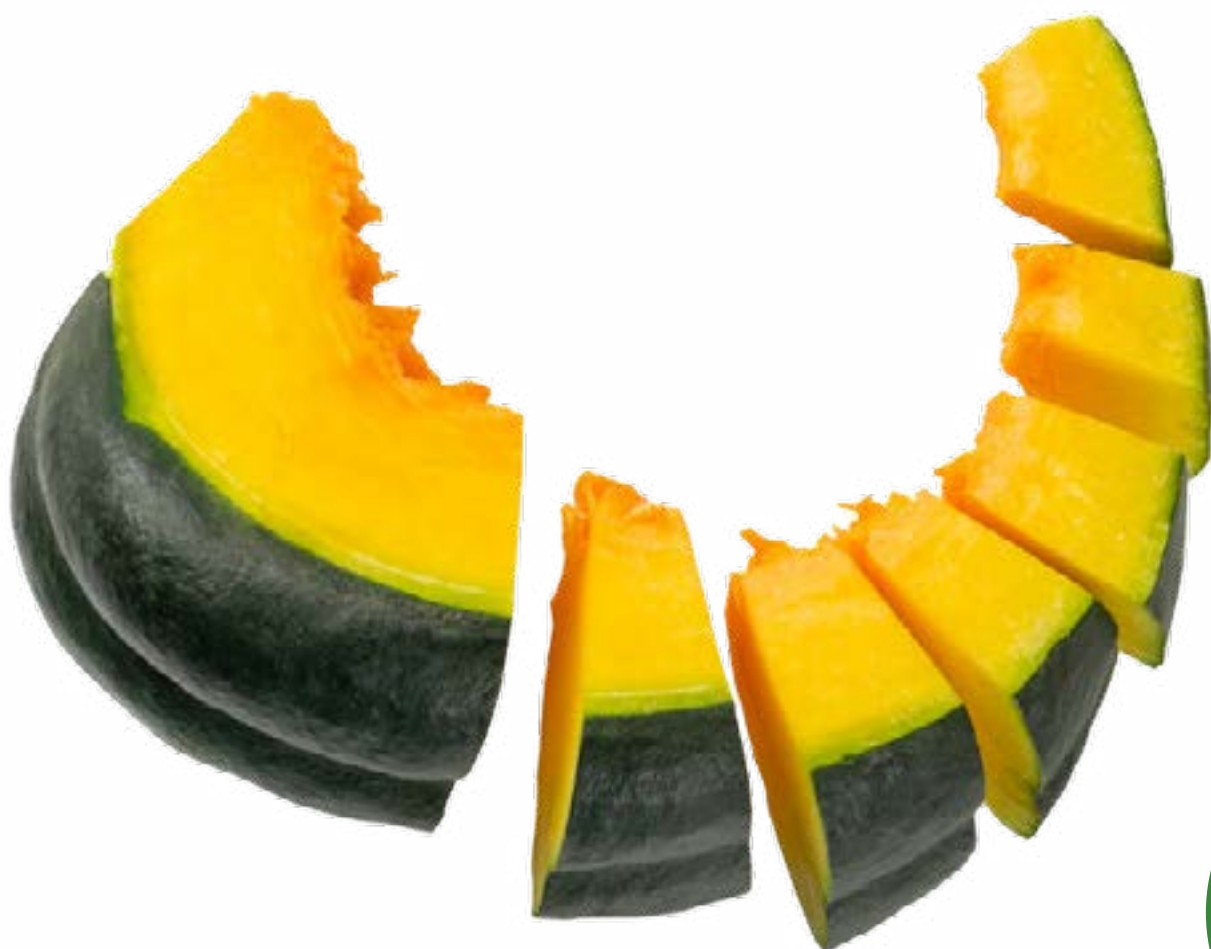
In the Kitchen

Winter squash often are eaten roasted, steamed, pickled, and stewed.

The skins of acorn squash, delicata squash, and kabocha squash are edible.

Microwave whole squash for 1-2 minutes to make it easier to cut. Use a sharp, serrated knife to slice through the skin. Peel after roasting if needed.

Kabocha often is steamed or simmered, which adds moisture to its dry flesh; roasting caramelizes the sugars of other squash, from delicata to butternut to spaghetti.



Winter Squash and...

Ingredient Pairings

Winter squash pair well with apples, Jerusalem artichokes, beans, butter, carrots, celery, chickpeas, coconut milk, corn, cream, figs, gruyere, honey, leeks, lemon, lime, maple syrup, mascarpone, mushrooms, nuts, olive oil, onions, orange, parmesan, parsnips, pears, pecorino, pumpkin seed, ricotta, spinach, sweet potatoes, and yogurt.

FLAVORINGS THAT GO WELL WITH WINTER SQUASH

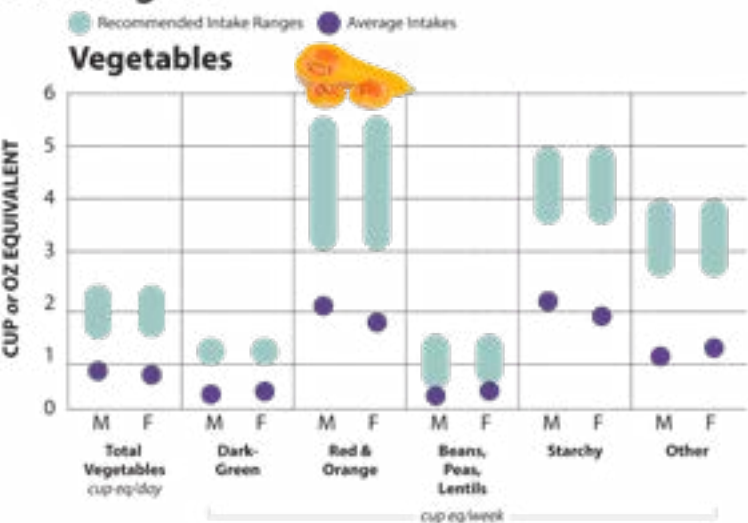
allspice • basil • bay leaf • cayenne • chervil • cinnamon • cloves
cumin • curry • dashi • garlic • ginger • mint • nutmeg • parsley
black pepper • red pepper flakes • rosemary • sage • salt
sesame oil • soy sauce • brown sugar • tarragon • thyme
vanilla • sherry vinegar



Nutrition for Body & Mind

Fuel for Learning
& Powerful Play

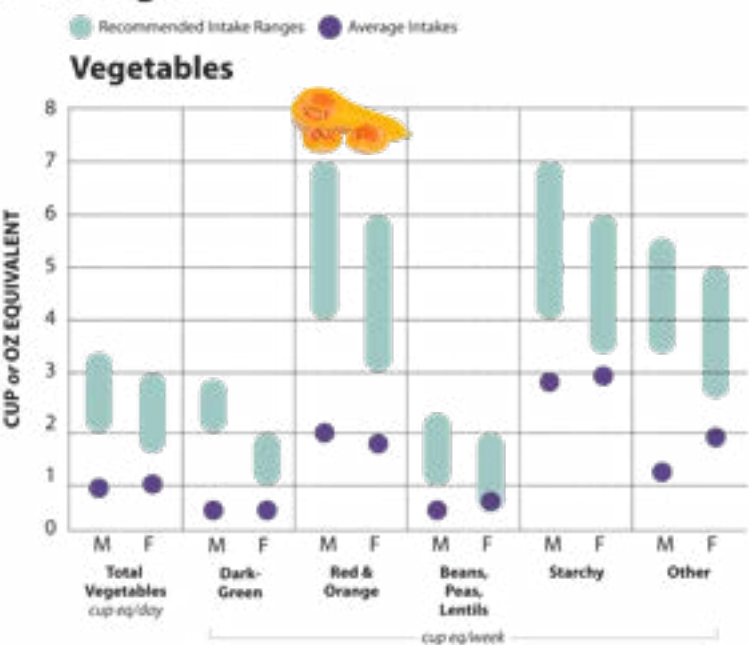
Average Intakes of Subgroups
Compared to Recommended Intake Ranges:
5 through 8



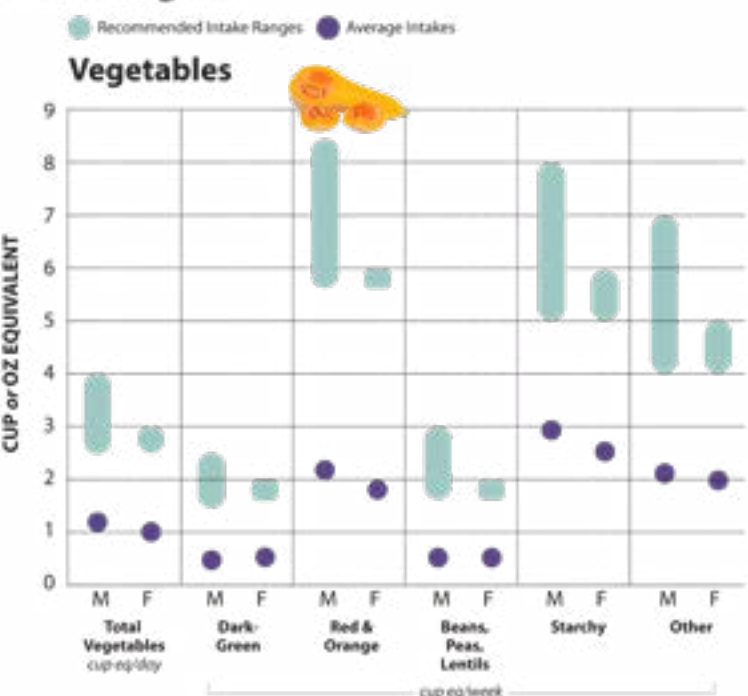
Winter squash is rich in vitamin A, vitamin C and a solid source of potassium, magnesium, and calcium.



Average Intakes of Subgroups
Compared to Recommended Intake Ranges:
9 through 13



Average Intakes of Subgroups
Compared to Recommended Intake Ranges:
14 through 18



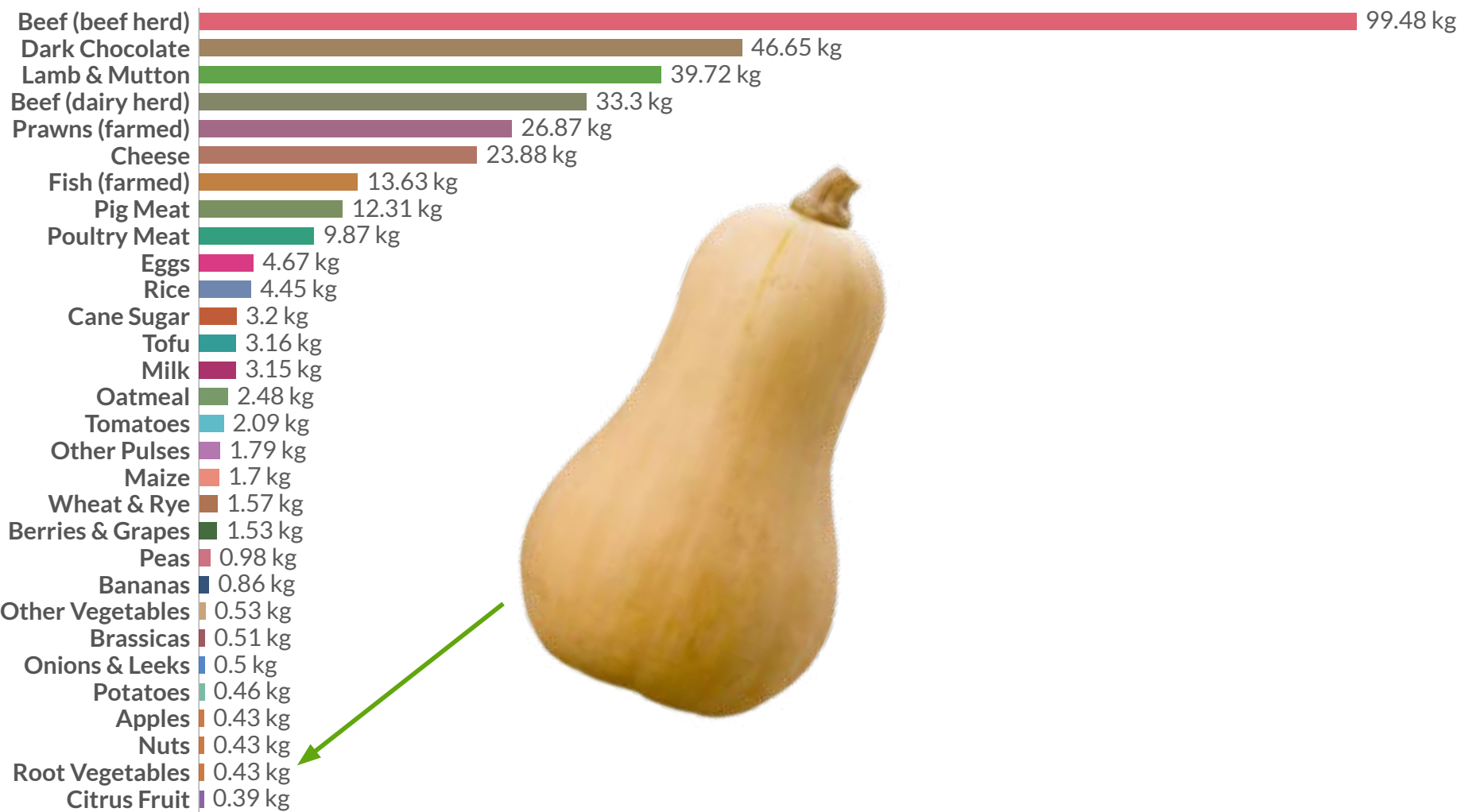
CLIMATE IMPACT OF WINTER SQUASH

ONLY THOSE GROWN LOCALLY AND SEASONALLY

Greenhouse gas emissions per kilogram of food product

Our World
in Data

Greenhouse gas emissions¹ are measured in kilograms of carbon dioxide-equivalents². This means non-CO₂ gases are weighted by the amount of warming they cause over a 100-year timescale.



Data source: Poore and Nemecek (2018)

OurWorldinData.org/environmental-impacts-of-food | CC BY

<https://ourworldindata.org/environmental-impacts-of-food>

The greatest emissions are caused by the conversion of land and by processes on the farm. When possible, choose foods in season, and from smaller farms.

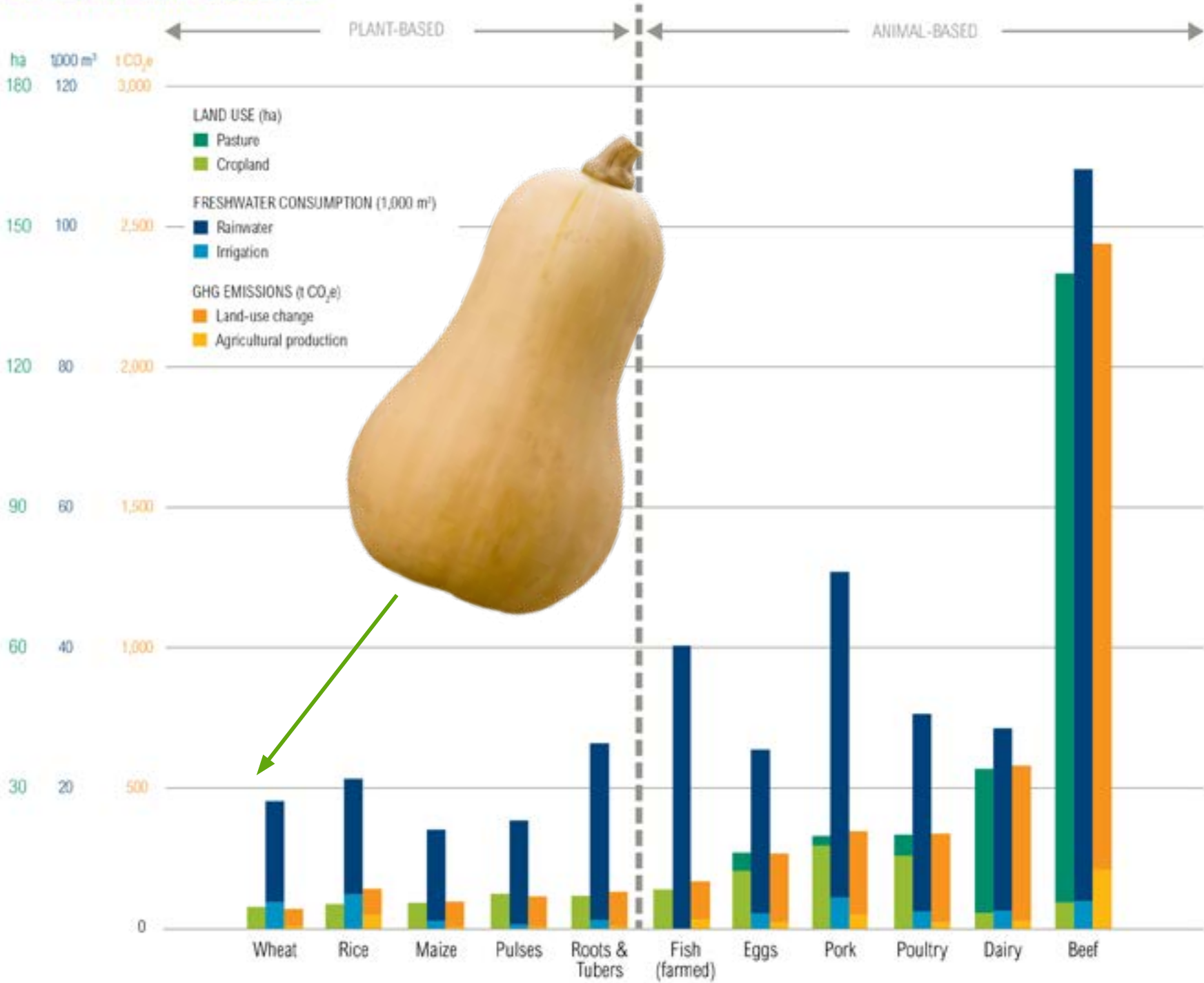


RESOURCE INTENSITY OF WINTER SQUASH

ONLY THOSE GROWN LOCALLY AND SEASONALLY

Animal-Based Foods Are More Resource-Intensive than Plant-Based Foods

PER TON PROTEIN CONSUMED



wri.org/shiftingdiets

WORLD RESOURCES INSTITUTE

<https://www.wri.org/data/animal-based-foods-are-more-resource-intensive-plant-based-foods>

The greatest emissions are caused by the conversion of land and by processes on the farm. When possible, choose foods in season, and from smaller farms.



Winter Squash Tasting

Begin with unseasoned roasted squash - whether spaghetti, acorn, butternut, delicata, or kabocha. Then season the squash with a pinch of salt. After reflecting on how seasoning changes the taste of the squash, then mix in a simple vinaigrette (1/3 lemon to 2/3 olive oil, 1 garlic clove, crushed, 1/2 teaspoon dijon mustard, salt, pepper) and notice how the vinaigrette changes the flavor and texture of the spaghetti squash.

Spaghetti squash flesh can be separated into tender, golden, spaghetti-like strands when cooked. A very mild squash, it takes on the flavor of whatever sauce or seasoning you use. Spaghetti squash is rich in antioxidants and high in vitamins and minerals—making it a great low-carb, low-calorie alternative to pasta. And be sure to save the seeds. They can be seasoned and roasted for a tasty, healthy treat.



Butternut squash has very sweet, tender, richly-flavored flesh that is packed with nutrition. It's a versatile squash that can be used to make savory dishes and sweet desserts. Challenging and time-consuming to peel, butternuts can be cut in half and roasted. Just scoop out the cooked flesh and use it for soups, pies, or as a side dish when seasoned and mashed.

Acorn squash has a mild, sweet, nutty flavor. Cut it half and scoop out the seeds, setting the seeds aside to roast. Season the squash and roast. Acorn squash even comes with its own bowl because, once cooked, you can eat it directly out of the shell! It's also tasty in soup, tossed with pasta, or stuffed with corn bread or sausage. Acorn squash is good source of vitamins, minerals, and fiber, especially if you eat the skin.



Credits

<https://www.seriousseats.com/winter-squash-shopping-guide>

https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/winter_squash_and_the_science_behind_them
<https://heritagegarden.uic.edu/squash-cucurbita>

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<https://www.croptrust.org/news-events/news/the-squashes-of-autumn-from-domestication-to-dessert/>

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<https://www.thespruceeats.com/what-are-cinderella-pumpkins-5193066>

<https://globaltableadventure.com/recipe/zimbabwean-pumpkin-squash/>

<https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1015468-simple-provencal-winter-squash-gratin>

<https://www.nybg.org/around-the-table/squash>

Garden State on Your Plate is a K12 program that uses local produce, school cafeterias, campus lands, and student demographics to illustrate and amplify curriculum. The program, designed to elevate the everyday quality of school foods and to increase participation in the National School Lunch Program, was created in 2010 by the Princeton School Gardens Cooperative in partnership with Princeton Public Schools, and with funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.



psgcoop.org