



PlumFresh Harvest Subscription

Season 8, Week 23
Saturday, November 11, 2023

We've had fun putting together the menus for the last bags of the season. We are drawing on a few producers to help us round out the bags and make them even more special. This week, we have the privilege of having Fresh Mozzarella Cheese from Piemonte Provisions. Piemonte is owned by Sandra Sarlinga and Fabian Lujan – and they just happen to be our next-door neighbor. We have known Sandra and Fabian since we were vendors together at Cobblestone in Old Salem. They were living in the Greensboro area at the time and Fabian was just beginning to make cheese and Sandra was making jellies and seasoning mixes. Their business has evolved over the years but their commitment to a quality product continues. We are delighted to share their mozzarella with you! How about Caprese Salad in November?!

REMINDER! There is only **ONE** more bag after today's. Our big Thanksgiving bag on **November 18th** will close out the season. Look for an email on Sunday to help you with your Thanksgiving menu planning. It's going to be a good one!

Here's what you'll find in this week's bag:

- Kale – *Darkibor Curly and White Russian*
- Sunflower Shoots
- Sweet Potatoes – *Bayou Belle*
- Tomato Mix – Slicers and Fruits
- Butternut Squash from Farmer Kip Grabs and Harmony Ridge Farms
- Fresh Mozzarella Cheese from Piemonte Provisions

Regular Bags Only

- Escarole -- *Eros*
- Lettuce – *Red Butter, Muir, Nancy*

Add/Sub Items:

- Apples -- Golden Delicious from Dawson's Orchard in Ararat, VA
- Asian Greens – *Tokyo Bekana*
- Garlic Granules and Powder -- *Lorz Italian*
- Mizuna
- Poblano Chile Peppers -- *Bastan*
- Hot Peppers – *Calabrian Long, Early Jalapeño, Serrano*
- Shishito Peppers
- Sweet Pepper -- *Jimmy Nardello, Lunchbox*
- Sweet Pepper -- *Red & Yellow Italian*
- Sweet Pepper Mix – *Lipstick, Truhart NR, Marconi*
- Potatoes – *Creamers, Bintje, German Butterball, Nicola, Norwis, Plum Gold*
- Red Kuri Winter Squash from Harmony Ridge Farms

Storage Tips

- Please make sure that you always wash all of your produce – while we wash many of our products (but not all) and we don't use chemical pesticides, there may be field dirt or other residue. And yes, you may even find a bug (or slug!) in your veggies! Please wash your veggies and fruit before eating.
- Keep your **Fresh Mozzarella Cheese** refrigerated. It may be frozen for longer storage.
- **Butternut Squash** should be stored in a cool, dry, dark place at around 50 degrees, but make sure they do not freeze. Under the best conditions, they should keep for 3-4 months. And they get sweeter in storage as the starch converts to sugar. Once cut, wrap in plastic, and store in the refrigerator for 5 to 7 days.
- **Sunflower Shoots** store well in their container. *Please rinse in clean water and spin dry in a salad spinner before using!*
- **Sweet Potatoes** should be stored in a cool, dark place, such as a loosely closed paper bag in a cupboard. Do not store in plastic or in the refrigerator.
- **Escarole, Lettuce, Tokyo Bekana, and Mizuna** should be stored in a plastic bag in the crisper section of your refrigerator.
- **Potatoes** should be kept in a cool, dry, dark place, such as a loosely closed paper bag in a cupboard. Do not store in plastic or in the refrigerator.
- **Store apples** in the refrigerator in a plastic bag. They are odor-absorbent, so keep them away from onions, potatoes and other strong-flavored items.
- Refrigerate **Peppers** unwashed in a sealed plastic bag in hydrator drawer for 1-2 weeks.
- **Tomatoes** belong on the counter – not in the refrigerator!

Things to know + How do I use this stuff?

- **Butternut squash** have always been one of Cheryl's favorite winter squashes. Her dad used to grow them just for her. We roasted the squash last night and it was delicious! The flesh was sweet and tasty and didn't even need any butter – just a pinch of salt did the trick. Yummmmmmm!
- Baking and roasting are the best ways to prepare them, since this method caramelizes the natural sugars and concentrates the flavors. To bake, slice in half lengthwise, scoop out seeds, spray with olive oil and place facedown on cookie sheet. Bake at 400 degrees for 45 minutes to an hour until shells are soft and starting to collapse. Remove and fill with butter, brown sugar, maple syrup, seasoning or other fillings. Another method is to bake, slice in half lengthwise, scoop out seeds, and place facedown in a roasting pan and add 1/2 inch of water to pan. Bake at 400 degrees for 45 minutes to an hour until shells are soft and starting to collapse.
- You can also peel and cube squashes such as butternut, then toss the cubes with olive oil, salt, and pepper. Roast at 385°F, turning once, until caramelized and tender.
- Winter squash also freezes well. Simply cook squash and mash or puree it. Then pour it into ice cube trays and freeze. Pop the frozen cubes into freezer Ziplock bags.

Please enjoy this week's adventure in fresh, Organic and local food!



Recipes

The Easiest Way to Break Down Butternut Squash

Bulbous, fibrous squash can be intimidating to prep: But we've devised a failsafe method.

Don't be daunted by butternut squash's bulbous shape and dense flesh. Follow our method, and you won't need to buy precut squash ever again.

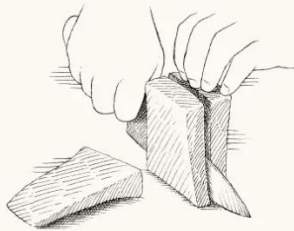


1. Trim and Peel : Holding sharp chef's knife with pinch grip, position front part of blade on squash about 1/4 inch from stem end. Push down and forward, using length of blade to cut through stem end. Rotate squash 180 degrees and repeat with bottom. Use vegetable peeler to peel skin.

TIP: For silky cooked squash, peel the white fibrous flesh just below the skin (about an 1/8-inch-thick layer) until the squash is completely orange.

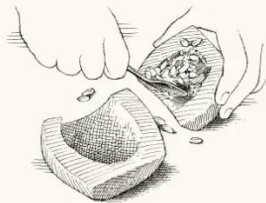


2. Divide: Holding bulb with 1 hand and continuing with pinch grip, cut in half where neck and bulb meet.

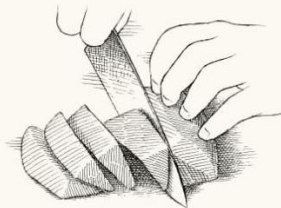


3. Cut Neck: Stand neck on 1 cut end for stability. Holding piece steady, place tip of knife on squash and apply gentle downward pressure to create even-size planks; thickness will depend on recipe. Rotate planks and cut into even-size pieces according to recipe.

TIP: If the squash neck is longer than 6 inches, cut it in half crosswise to create more-manageable pieces.



4. Deseed Bulb: Stand bulb on 1 cut end for stability. Holding piece steady, apply gentle downward pressure to cut in half. Use spoon to scoop out seeds.



5. Cut Bulb: Place each half cut side down. Hold squash with claw grip. Slice squash into even-size wedges according to recipe. As you cut, angle knife and follow curve of squash so each slice is an even thickness. (Knife blade won't be perpendicular to cutting board.) Rotate slices and cut into even-size pieces according to recipe.

From Cook's Illustrated: [The Easiest Way to Break Down Butternut Squash](https://cooksillustrated.com/recipes/the-easiest-way-to-break-down-butternut-squash/) | [Cook's Illustrated \(cooksillustrated.com\)](https://cooksillustrated.com)

UPDATE!

New tip from Cook's Illustrated! When you peel your butternut, make sure to get down to the pumpkin-orange interior of the squash. The fibrous flesh (~1/8 inch) just below the skin of the squash will keep it from roasting up tender from edge-to-edge. Just give it a few extra swipes with the peeler. Make sure that you don't have tough edges to your squash by taking this advice. Silky squash ahead!

ROASTED BUTTERNUT SQUASH WITH BROWNED BUTTER AND HAZELNUTS

Source: *Cook's Illustrated*, January/February 2014

SERVES 4 to 6
TIME 1½ hours

Notes from Cook's Illustrated: Taking a cue from famed chef Yotam Ottolenghi, we sought to create a savory recipe for roasted butternut squash that was simple and presentation worthy. We chose to peel the squash thoroughly to remove not only the tough outer skin but also the rugged fibrous layer of white flesh just beneath, ensuring supremely tender squash. To encourage the squash slices to caramelize, we used a hot 425-degree oven, placed the squash on the lowest oven rack, and increased the baking time to evaporate the water. We also swapped in melted butter for olive oil to promote the flavorful Maillard reaction. Finally, we selected a mix of toppings that added crunch, creaminess, brightness, and visual appeal.

SQUASH

- ☐ 1 large (2 1/2- to 3-pound) butternut squash
- ☐ 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

- ☐ ½ teaspoon salt
- ☐ ½ teaspoon pepper

TOPPING

- ☐ 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into 3 pieces
- ☐ ⅓ cup hazelnuts, toasted, skinned, and chopped coarse

- ☐ 1 tablespoon water
- ☐ 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- ☐ Pinch salt
- ☐ 1 tablespoon minced fresh chives

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

For plain roasted squash omit the topping. This dish can be served warm or at room temperature. For the best texture it's important to remove the fibrous flesh just below the squash's skin.

1. **FOR THE SQUASH:** Adjust oven rack to lowest position and heat oven to 425 degrees. Using sharp vegetable peeler or chef's knife, remove skin and fibrous threads from squash just below skin (peel until squash is completely orange with no white flesh remaining, roughly 1/8 inch deep). Halve squash lengthwise and scrape out seeds. Place squash, cut side down, on cutting board and slice crosswise 1/2 inch thick.
2. Toss squash with melted butter, salt, and pepper until evenly coated. Arrange squash on rimmed baking sheet in single layer. Roast squash until side touching sheet toward back of oven is well browned, 25 to 30 minutes. Rotate sheet and continue to bake until side touching sheet toward back of oven is well browned, 6 to 10 minutes. Remove squash from oven and use metal spatula to flip each piece. Continue to roast until squash is very tender and side touching sheet is browned, 10 to 15 minutes longer.
3. **FOR THE TOPPING:** While squash roasts, melt butter with hazelnuts in 8-inch skillet over medium-low heat. Cook, stirring frequently, until butter and hazelnuts are brown and fragrant, about 2 minutes. Immediately remove skillet from heat and stir in water (butter will foam and sizzle). Let cool for 1 minute; stir in lemon juice and salt.
4. Transfer squash to large serving platter. Drizzle butter mixture evenly over squash. Sprinkle with chives and serve.

MISO-BUTTER PASTA WITH BUTTERNUT SQUASH

Yasmin Fahr, NY Times Cooking [Miso-Butter Pasta With Butternut Squash Recipe - NYT Cooking \(nytimes.com\)](https://www.nytimes.com/recipes/1015888-miso-butter-pasta-with-butternut-squash)

- **YIELD:** 4 servings
- **TIME:** 35 minutes

A true love match, miso and butter create a simple yet deeply flavorful pasta that hits all the right notes: sweet, salty and savory. Smashed garlic cloves roast with the squash to gently flavor it, then become silky-soft treasures you'll discover while eating. Finishing the dish with lime cuts through the richness of the butter, but you can use lemon, too. Try using other vegetables like eggplant, pumpkin or carrots to make this dish your own.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 2 teaspoons white miso
- 3 to 5 large garlic cloves, smashed
- 2 ½ pounds butternut squash, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes (see Tip)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil, plus more as needed
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1 pound mezze rigatoni or other short pasta
- ½ cup grated Parmesan, plus more for serving
- 1 lime, zested and juiced (2 teaspoons zest, 2 tablespoons juice)
- ¼ teaspoon red-pepper flakes (optional)

PREPARATION

1. Heat the oven to 450 degrees. On a sheet pan, mash together the butter and miso. Add the garlic and squash, drizzle with 1 tablespoon olive oil, and toss to coat with the miso-butter mixture. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon salt and season with pepper. Cook until easily pierced with a fork and the raw taste is gone, 25 to 30 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta, adjusting the heat to maintain a gentle boil, and cook until just shy of al dente. Reserve 1 cup pasta water, then drain the noodles. If done before the squash, drizzle with olive oil to prevent the noodles from sticking together. Leave in the sink to drain.
3. When the squash is done, return the pasta to the pot over low heat. Scrape in squash, garlic and any liquid that accumulated, then add the Parmesan and 1/2 cup pasta water, stirring well until the noodles have a light sheen to them. If it appears dry, add more pasta water a tablespoon at a time until you reach your desired consistency. Stir in the lime zest and juice, season to taste with salt, and top with pepper and red-pepper flakes, if using. Serve with extra cheese.

Tip

- *Peeling and cutting the squash is the hardest and most time-consuming part of this recipe, so you can make it easier by using pre-cut squash or by softening the skin before cooking. To do so, trim the ends, prick the skin all over with a fork and microwave for 3 to 3 ½ minutes. This softens the skin and flesh — without cooking it too much — to make it easier to cut. Hold the squash with a kitchen towel, then use a vegetable peeler to remove the skin, and continue to cut from there.*

YIELD: 4-5 SERVINGS

Butternut Squash, Sausage, and Kale Gnocchi Skillet

Ingredients

- 2 links Italian turkey sausage, casings removed
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 cup diced yellow onion
- 3 cups peeled and cubed butternut squash (1/2 inch cubes)
- 1 clove garlic, grated or minced
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh rosemary
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)
- 16 ounces gnocchi
- 4 cups chopped kale
- 1 1/4 cups low sodium chicken broth
- 1/2 cup shredded part skim mozzarella cheese

Source: Recipe Runner

[Butternut Squash, Sausage, and Kale Gnocchi Skillet - Recipe Runner](#)

Instructions

1. Over medium-high heat, spray a skillet with cooking oil or drizzle in about a teaspoon. Squeeze the sausage out of the casing and into the skillet. Use a potato masher or wooden spoon to crumble the sausage. Once the sausage is cooked through remove it from the skillet and onto a plate lined with paper towels to soak up any excess grease.
2. Add a tablespoon olive oil to the skillet along with the diced onion and cubed butternut squash. Season with salt and pepper. Cook the vegetables over medium heat stirring frequently.
3. When the squash is tender, approximately 8-10 minutes, add garlic, rosemary, nutmeg, and red pepper flakes. Cook another minute and then pour in the chicken broth. Scrape up any of the brown bits from the bottom of the skillet then stir in the gnocchi and kale.
4. Cover the skillet with a lid and simmer over medium-low heat until the gnocchi is tender, about 5 minutes. Remove the lid and stir in the sausage. Taste for seasoning. Sprinkle the mozzarella over the top of everything and cover with the lid again. Cook for a couple more minutes or until the cheese is melted. Serve immediately.

Butternut Squash Soup

Prep Time: 10 mins

Cook Time: 35 mins

Total Time: 45 mins

Serves 6

This vegan butternut squash soup is the ultimate fall comfort food! Store it in the fridge for up to 4 days, or freeze it for up to a few months.

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 large yellow onion, chopped
- ½ teaspoon sea salt
- 1 (3-pound) butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and cubed
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh sage
- ½ tablespoon minced fresh rosemary
- 1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
- 3 to 4 cups vegetable broth
- Freshly ground black pepper

For serving

- Chopped parsley
- Toasted pepitas
- Crusty bread

Instructions

1. Heat the oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onion, salt, and several grinds of fresh pepper and sauté until soft, 5 to 8 minutes. Add the squash and cook until it begins to soften, stirring occasionally, for 8 to 10 minutes.
2. Add the garlic, sage, rosemary, and ginger. Stir and cook 30 seconds to 1 minute, until fragrant, then add 3 cups of the broth. Bring to a boil, cover, and reduce heat to a simmer. Cook until the squash is tender, 20 to 30 minutes.

Source: Love & Lemons

[Butternut Squash Soup Recipe - Love and Lemons](#)

3. Let cool slightly and pour the soup into a blender, working in batches if necessary, and blend until smooth. If your soup is too thick, add up to 1 cup more broth and blend. Season to taste and serve with parsley, pepitas, and crusty bread.

*Another recipe from one of our PlumFresh members who wanted
to add a few more
meat-inclusive recipes to our repertoire!*

Sausage and Kale Pasta

Ingredients

- 6 cloves garlic, finely sliced
- 1/2 large spanish onion, finely sliced
- 1 cayenne pepper (1/2 habanero), finely minced, or 2-3 good pinches dried red pepper flakes
- 1/2 head kale roughly chopped, stems on (just remove the last, woody inch of stems)
- 1lb sweet Italian pork sausage (with fennel, sage, or as we did tonight, cheese, rosemary and tomato)
- 3-4 ripe, medium tomatoes, cubed with seeds
- 1/4 cup dry white wine
- 4tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2lb orecchiette (ear-shaped) pasta
- 4tbsp grated parmesan or romano cheese
- salt and black pepper to taste

Recipe

- Heat sauté pan to medium high and add a splash of olive oil just before adding sausage. Brown sausage on both sides, approx. 4 mins per side, and remove to a plate. **Be sure to leave fat in pan!**
- Reduce heat to medium and add onions to pan and allow to soften in the fat. Just as they begin to brown add garlic and hot pepper. When garlic takes on a bit of color hit pan with the wine.
- Add pasta to boiling, well-salted water. Bring back to a boil, cover and set timer for 8 minutes.
- Turn heat back up to medium-high and add kale. Toss mixture together and after two minutes, reduce heat to medium again before adding tomatoes.
- When tomatoes look like they're collapsing into the sauce, add the sausage, and turn to medium low.
- Check pasta is a little less cooked than *al dente*. Kill heat under pasta and turn heat to high under saucepan. Using a spider or a slotted spoon, add pasta to saucepan **DO NOT POUR PASTA WATER AWAY.**
- Mix pasta and sauce together and add enough pasta water to lubricate the bottom of the pan. Cook for another minute or so on high, or until pasta is *al dente* and sauce looks silky.
- Kill fire and add cheese. Spoon pasta into bowls and finish with a glug of really good olive oil and an extra sprinkle of cheese.

KALE PESTO

- ½ cup pepitas
- 1 small garlic clove
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese, or 1 tablespoon nutritional yeast
- Heaping ¼ teaspoon sea salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 packed cups chopped curly kale
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil

In a food processor, pulse the pepitas and garlic until the pepitas are ground up. Add the cheese or nutritional yeast, salt, and several grinds of pepper and pulse again. Add the kale and lemon juice. With the food processor running, drizzle in the olive oil, and process until combined. Season to taste.

If the kale pesto is too bitter, add ¼ teaspoon maple syrup or honey.

Pesto will keep in the fridge for 3 days or can be frozen for 2 months.

www.loveandlemons.com