



Eventually the petals shrivel and fall off as the new squash grows. Hand pollinating several female flowers is recommended for seed saving.

Zucchini must be allowed to mature on the plant well beyond eating stage in order to save seeds. They will grow very large and change color with the skin becoming too hard to dent with your fingernail. When this occurs and the stem is dry, the seeds are ready to be harvested.

Rinse the seeds very well and dry on a coffee filter, screen or paper plate.

Seeds from winter squash and pumpkin are ready to be harvested when the fruit is ready to eat. Simply cut the squash open, scrape the seeds into a bowl, separate them from the squash, and clean and rinse well. Dry on a coffee filter, screen or paper plate.

Many squash seeds remain viable for up to 6 years when stored in a dry, cool location.

Find more information at  
[rplmn.org/seed](http://rplmn.org/seed)

## CREDITS

<https://www.seedsavers.org/black-beauty-zucchini-organic-squash>

<https://www.seedsavers.org/winter-luxury-squash>

<https://www.seedsavers.org/waltham-butternut-organic-squash>

<https://www.seedsavers.org/boston-marrow-squash>

<https://www.seedsavers.org/learn#growing-guides>

<https://www.redwoodseeds.net/blogs/the-story-of-seed/14784841-saving-squash-seed>

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Plan a seed.



# SQUASH

## Zucchini

*(Cucurbita pepo)*

## Winter Squash

*(Cucurbita maxima)*

## Pumpkin

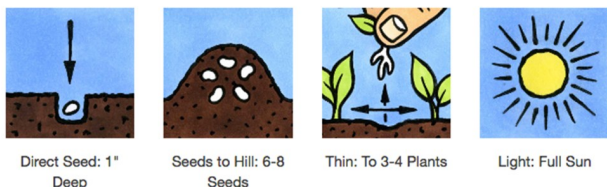
*(Cucurbita pepo)*



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## HOW TO GROW



Plant seeds in the garden or in a pot after the last frost and the soil is warm. Thin plants when they emerge from the soil.

Squash vines can grow 10 feet or more – direct them by picking up the end of the vine and aiming them in the direction you want them to grow.

## HOW TO HARVEST

**Zucchini** is a summer squash and will produce squash every week, 45 days after planting. Cut fruits from the plant when 8 inches long or shorter. Large fruits become very seedy.

**Winter squash and pumpkins** are harvested in the fall, 80-100 days after planting. Wait for the fruit to achieve its final color and for the stems to dry before harvesting. Cut fruit from the vine with a knife leaving some of the stem attached.

**Winter** squash generally store well and can last months in a cool location.

**Pumpkins** should be cooked within a month as they do not keep as well as other fall harvested squashes.

## HOW TO EAT

**Zucchini** and other summer squash can be eaten fresh in salads, sautéed or used in stir-fry. Slice thin, season and dry as a vegetable chip, or grate and make zucchini bread.

**Winter squash** can be steamed, baked or roasted, and put in smoothies. It is naturally sweet.

## HOW TO SAVE SEED

### RATING: EASY WITH PRECAUTIONS

All squash (summer, winter, and pumpkins) have large yellow flowers that attract special bees called “squash bees.” These are native bees and are active in the early morning hours, moving from squash flower to squash flower. By noon they can often be found asleep inside a blossom.



If you grow more than one variety of squash from the same species, it is likely that your squash will cross-pollinate and seeds won't produce true-to-type the next

year. Plant only one variety from these squash species and they won't cross-pollinate each other: *Cucurbita pepo*, *Cucurbita moschata*, and *Cucurbita maxima*. The other way to prevent cross-pollination by bees is to use a hand pollinating technique.

Hand pollination is best done early in the growing season so the squash has time to fully mature before the first frost. It is also best to hand pollinate using multiple male and female flowers in case some of the fruits don't develop. Hand pollinating is simple. First, identify male and female flowers. Male flowers are on a long, thin stem, and female flowers have a swollen stem behind the flower.

When your squash plant has both male and female flowers that have turned yellow, but have not yet opened, hand pollination can be done over a two-day period. In the afternoon or evening of the first day, choose a male and female flower that haven't opened and secure them shut using a clothes pin or tape, or by gently placing and isolation bag over the entire flower. (Organza party favor bags work well for this.) The next day, pick the male flower and remove the petals to expose the pollen. Open the female flower and brush the pollen from the male flower onto the stigma in the center of the female flower. Reclose the petals of the female flower so no insects get into the blossom. Label the stem to identify the hand pollinated fruit.