

# Farm to Health Series

## MAXIMIZE YOUR NUTRIENTS FROM:

## CARROTS WINTER SQUASH SWEET POTATOES



Winter squash (pumpkin, butternut, acorn squash, etc.), carrots and sweet potatoes contain beta-carotene, a phytonutrient that gives these vegetables their bright orange colors. They contain vitamins A, C, and K plus fiber. In ½ cup:

- All provide over 100% daily value (DV) of vitamin A. Sweet potatoes provide over 300% DV!
- Sweet potatoes also provide 30% DV of vitamin C.
- Carrots provide 10% DV of vitamin K.

### HOW THEY IMPROVE HEALTH

- Beta-carotene is converted to vitamin A in the body, and is essential for eye health, including reduced risk of macular degeneration and cataracts.
- Beta-carotene also acts as an antioxidant in the body, helping to reduce inflammation, which may lead to a reduced risk for some cancers and cardiovascular disease.

### NUTRIENT AND PHYTONUTRIENT CHANGES

- Winter squash and pumpkin are best stored whole and slightly below room temperature to preserve vitamin A and beta-carotene.
- When cooking, steaming is the best option to maintain nutrients and phytonutrients. Baking is also satisfactory, but results in some loss of vitamin C.
- Both canning and freezing require cooking before preservation. This can cause losses in vitamin C. To maximize nutrient and phytonutrient intakes, the cooking liquid should be consumed or saved for another recipe.

*This information is not meant to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. This project is made possible by funding through OSU CARES - an initiative of OSU Extension and the OSU to expand faculty, staff and student partnerships with communities throughout Ohio.*

# Recipe: Caramelized Carrots and Orange Squash

(Reprinted with permission from the American Institute for Cancer Research, [www.aicr.org](http://www.aicr.org))

## Ingredients:

- ½ cup raisins
- ⅓ cup apple juice
- 2 lbs. carrots, peeled and sliced diagonally, ¼-inch pieces
- 1 small butternut squash, peeled, and cubed, ½-inch cubes
- 1 small acorn squash (about 1 lb), seeds removed, peeled, cubed, ½-inch cubes
- 3 Tbsp. light olive oil
- 2½ Tbsp. date syrup/honey (or dark honey)
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- Sea salt and coarsely ground black pepper, to taste
- ½ cup apricot halves cut into small pieces

## Directions

- Preheat oven to 400°F. Line large baking sheet with parchment paper.
- Soak raisins in apple juice.
- In large bowl, mix vegetables, oil, syrup, cinnamon and add salt and pepper to taste. Spread mixture on baking pan.
- Bake until carrots (the longest to bake) are just soft then add raisins and apricots. Bake about 10 minutes longer, until carrots are soft enough for fork to prick through. Serve immediately or, if refrigerating for several hours or more, pour ⅓ cup apple juice over vegetables to keep moist before reheating.



For more information or how to maximize nutrients in other fruits and vegetables, see <http://localfoods.osu.edu/maximizenuutrients>.



**Makes 10 servings.**

**Per serving:** 188 calories, 4g total fat (<1g saturated fat), 39g carbohydrate, 3g protein, 6g dietary fiber, 70mg sodium, 8360 IU vitamin A (167% DV), 11mg vitamin C (18% DV), 408mg potassium (12% DV)

## OTHER FOOD SOURCES:

**Carotenoids & Vitamin A**

Red bell peppers

Green Leafy Vegetables