

FRUIT/VEGETABLE OF THE MONTH!

AUGUST'S FEATURED VEGGIE IS ZUCCHINI

ZUCCHINI FACTS:

Zucchini, also called courgette. Although, cooked as a vegetable and considered as one in the culinary world, it is technically a fruit because it comes from a flower. It is a variety of summer squash. The zucchini is usually picked and eaten while immature, generally less than 8 inches in length. The most flavorful zucchinis are small to medium sized.

While squashes originated in the Americas, the zucchini was first developed in the early 1800s in Italy. The first records of zucchini growing in the US dates to the 1920s. Today, Spain is the largest producer of zucchini in the world.

The longest zucchini, measured on August 28, 2014, was 8 feet 3.3 inches.

HEALTH BENEFITS OF EATING ZUCCHINI:

- May improve heart health by lowering blood pressure, cholesterol, and other risk factors for heart disease
- May contribute to healthy digestion by reducing the risk of constipation and symptoms of various gut disorders
- Helps to manage diabetes by regulating blood sugar
- May lower the risk of age-related eye conditions
- May aid with weight loss
- May limit the likelihood of developing cancer
- May improve overall health

WAYS TO ENJOY ZUCCHINI:

- Baked into bread or cake
- Cooked with tomato sauce, garlic, and onions
- Stewed with a variety of fruits and vegetables to make ratatouille
- Grilled
- Fried or baked and served with a dip made from yogurt, garlic, and dill
- Blend into a smoothie with milk, banana, and blueberries



RECIPE: CHOCOLATE ZUCCHINI BREAD

Prep time: 30 min
Total time: 1 hr 30 mins
Servings: 20 slices

Ingredients

- 2 (1 ounce) squares unsweetened chocolate
- 3 eggs
- 2 cups white sugar
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 2 cups grated zucchini
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup semisweet chocolate chips

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease two 9x5 inch loaf pans. In a microwave-safe bowl, microwave chocolate until melted. Stir occasionally until chocolate is smooth.
2. In a large bowl, combine eggs, sugar, oil, grated zucchini, vanilla and chocolate; beat well. Stir in the flour baking soda, salt and cinnamon. Fold in the chocolate chips. Pour batter into prepared loaf pans.
3. Bake in preheated oven for 60 to 70 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of a loaf comes out clean.

