



Demonstration Guide

STUFFED ZUCCHINI BOATS

Zucchini

When looking at a list of fruits and vegetables listed from A to Z we find zucchini at the end of the list. Zucchini is part of the summer squash family. Another commonly known part of the summer squash family is yellow squash.

Zucchini is low in calories, containing only twenty calories per one cup raw. It contains fiber, manganese, molybdenum, and vitamins A and C. Plus, it is naturally free of fat, cholesterol and sodium. Do not peel your zucchini as the peeling holds many of the nutrients. The natural antioxidants in fruits and vegetables will help keep your body working at its best, so consuming a diet that meets your daily recommended amount of fruits and vegetables is one of the best ways to give your body a strong defense against diseases. Fruits and vegetables are protective to health; they reduce the risk of coronary heart disease, stroke and some cancers. They're also low in calories, which helps prevent obesity — a significant risk factor for type 2 diabetes, cancer and cardiovascular disease. The fiber and manganese found in zucchini are linked to decreasing the risk of coronary heart disease and healthy bones. The vitamins A and C in zucchini also protect against infections and helps heal cuts and wounds.

Summer squash is available from June through the middle of October, although zucchini can be found at your local grocery store year round. Zucchini can be planted in the garden from a seed or transplanted from a greenhouse once the chance of frost has disappeared. These plants do really well in small home gardens but tend to like the temperature of the ground and air above 60°F. One plant can produce several dozen zucchinis. They tend to have a short growing time so once planted you should begin to see produce within a few short weeks.

Look for firm, slender zucchini with a bright green color, free of wrinkled skin and soft spots. The zucchini should be about six to eight inches in length. As zucchini gets bigger, they become tough and develop more seeds. The larger zucchinis can be used in breads, cakes, cookies or soups.

Once harvested or brought home from the store you need to store the unwashed

zucchini in a perforated plastic bag in the refrigerator; this will allow them to last up to one week. Zucchini can be cooked in a variety of ways including grilled, steamed, sautéed and added to meatloaf, stews and cookies. It can be preserved three different ways: frozen, dried and pickled.

Presentation Plan

Grocery list:

- Medium zucchini
- Chicken breast
- Onion
- Egg
- Marinara sauce
- Bread crumbs
- Garlic powder
- Black pepper
- Shredded cheddar cheese
- Olive Oil (optional)

Equipment needs:

- Cutting boards (two for vegetables, one for meat)
- Chopping knives (3)
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Small bowl for beating an egg
- Bowls (mixing, draining grease) (3)
- Hotplate or stove
- Skillet
- Colander
- Oven
- Cookie sheet
- Mixing spoons (4)
- Meat thermometer
- Knife to cut into bite size pieces for sampling
- Whisk or fork to beat the egg
- Pot holders

Display preparation:

- Use a blue tablecloth, yellow placemats, and, "Plate it up! Kentucky Proud" recipe card holders.
- Position extra ingredients (after being washed) in a decorative manner or basket.
- Display recipe ingredients in clear bowls.
- Have plates and utensils available for sampling.

Demonstration steps:

1. Discuss the focus commodities and talking points.

2. Prepare the recipe, discussing the functions and benefits of the ingredient.
3. Mention other menu ideas that would make this a complete meal.

Talking points:

- Use the thumbnail method to indicate when the zucchini is ready for harvest. Your thumbnail will penetrate the skin of the zucchini. Talk about perforated plastic bags. These are usually marketed as "fresh produce" bags.
- Make sure to have other recipes or ideas using zucchini or other summer squash.
 - o Mention that the following are good seasonings for zucchini: basil, allspice, rosemary and marjoram.
 - o Indicate some other good ways to use zucchini:
 - Use in stews, casseroles and main dishes
 - Use in a stir fry recipe
 - "Hide" in other foods like meatloaf, cakes and cookies
 - Use to add color to a fresh salad or pasta dish
 - Make into sticks (like carrots) for dipping
 - Grilled
 - Steamed
 - Boiled
 - Sautéed
 - Fried
 - o Ten Ways to Enjoy Zucchini by Fruits and Veggies More Matters
- <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/top-10-ways-to-enjoy-zucchini>
- Mention the proper way to freeze, pickle and dry zucchini.
 - o Freeze - Select small squash with small seeds and tender rind. Wash and cut into ½ inch slices. Heat in boiling water for three minutes. Cool promptly in cold water and drain. Pack in freezer containers, leaving ½ inch headspace. Seal and freeze.
 - o Pickle – Use a recipe like bread and butter zucchini.
 - o Dry – Use only young and tender zucchinis. Wash, peel or slice into strips or rounds, ¼ inch thick. Blanch for 2½ to 3 minutes. Drain and pat dry with paper towel. Place in dehydrator for 2½ to 3 hours.

Stuffed Zucchini Boats

4 medium zucchini
1 pound chicken breast
½ cup chopped onion
1 egg, beaten
¾ cup marinara sauce

¼ cup bread crumbs
1 teaspoon garlic powder
½ teaspoon black pepper
1½ cups shredded cheddar cheese
Olive oil, optional

Cut zucchini in half lengthwise. **Cut** a thin slice from the bottom of each with a sharp knife to allow the zucchini to sit flat. **Scoop** out the pulp, leaving ¼-inch shells. (Optional, lightly brush the shells with olive oil.) **Preheat** the oven to 350° F. **Cut** chicken breast into 1 inch cubes. In a large skillet, **cook** chicken and onion over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; **drain**. **Remove** from the heat; **stir** in the egg, marinara sauce, bread crumbs, garlic powder, black pepper and 1 cup cheese. **Spoon** about ¼ cup into each zucchini shell. **Place** each filled shell onto a non-greased cooking sheet and place into the oven and **bake** for 15 minutes. **Remove**

boats from oven and **sprinkle** on the remaining cheese. **Bake** boats for an additional 5 minutes or until the cheese melts.

Yield: 4 servings

Nutritional Analysis: 420 calories, 20 g fat, 9 g saturated fat, 170 mg cholesterol, 700 mg sodium, 19 g carbohydrate, 4 g fiber, 9 g sugar, 40 g protein.

Sources:

- ID 128 - Home Vegetable Gardening in Kentucky, University of Kentucky, College of Agriculture, 2012.
- Kentucky Summer Squash Recipe Card
- www.fruitandveggiesmorematters.org
- www.extension.org

For more delicious recipes and information using “Kentucky Proud” fruits and vegetables, contact your local Cooperative Extension Service or visit: www.kentuckyproud.com.

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Plate It Up! Kentucky Proud Project

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