

October  
2009  
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# DIRT fresh news

## Facts to Know!

- ◆ San Joaquin County grows 75% of pumpkins used in California
- ◆ Pumpkin flesh is low in calories, high in fiber and has Vitamins A & B
- ◆ Pumpkin flesh also contains potassium, protein and iron
- ◆ Pumpkin seeds can be roasted for a tasty snack

- ◆ 90% of all pumpkins sold are used as jack-o-lanterns
- ◆ There are a LOT of pumpkin types, known as "varieties"
- ◆ Pumpkins can be white! Here are a few popular varieties: 'Lumina', 'White Ghost', 'Casper', and 'Snowball'



- ◆ 'Baby Boo' is a small white pumpkin



- ◆ Pumpkins are 90% water
- ◆ Pumpkin flowers are edible
- ◆ Native Americans flattened strips of pumpkins, dried them and made mats
- ◆ Pumpkins can weigh less than 1 pound or up to 1400 pounds!

## Who Grows Them?

Use your Lil' Tiger Stripe pumpkin as a class decoration. It was donated by Van Groningen and Sons.

Henry Van Groningen arrived in the U.S. from the Netherlands in 1910 and started farming in Minnesota. He later moved to California.

The Van Groningen farm is located in Manteca where they grow corn, almonds, walnuts, squash, and watermelon along with pumpkins.

Next time you see pumpkins at

the store, check to see if they have the "pampered" label.



## Pop Quiz

- ◆ How many years has the Van Groningen Family been farming?
- ◆ Can you find Minnesota on a map?

- ◆ Where is the Netherlands? What language do they speak?
- ◆ What is a label? Why do farmers use them?

## Let's Talk Squash

Here are a few types of squash grown by the Van Groningen farm: 'acorn', 'banana', butternut, 'carnival', 'kabocha', 'jarradale', 'spaghetti', and many more! Squash are delicious, nutritious and fun to eat! Check out the family website at [vgandsons.com](http://vgandsons.com) Click on the 2009 fall pumpkin catalog to see more photos and recipes.



## Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup:

Amount Per Serving		% Daily Value*	
Calories 80	Calories from Fat 5		
<b>Total Fat</b> 0g			<b>0%</b>
Saturated Fat 0g			<b>2%</b>
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg			<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 10mg			<b>0%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrates</b> 20g			<b>7%</b>
Dietary Fiber 7g			<b>30%</b>
<b>Protein</b> 3g			<b>6%</b>
Vitamin A 1080%	Vitamin C 15%		
Calcium 6%	Iron 20%		
Zinc 4%	Thiamin 4%		
Riboflavin 8%	Niacin 4%		
Vitamin B-6 8%	Folate 8%		
Vitamin B-12 0%	Phosphorus 10%		
Magnesium 15%	Vitamin D 0%		

\* Percent Daily values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs

## Harvest Pumpkin Soup

### Ingredients:

- \* 2 small sugar pumpkins
- \* ½ tsp ground sage
- \* 3 c chicken stock
- \* 1 ½ tsp salt
- \* ¾ c heavy whipping cream
- \* ¼ tsp ground nutmeg



### Instructions:

Preheat oven to 400° F. Cut pumpkins in half and scoop out seeds. Spray a cookie sheet with non-stick cooking spray. Place pumpkins, flesh side down on cookie sheet and roast until soft, about 45 minutes. Remove from oven and cool. Scrape flesh from pumpkin into a food processor. Add chicken stock and puree. Pour mixture into a large saucepan and simmer over medium heat. Stir in cream, nutmeg, sage, and salt. Mix well and remove from heat. Pour into a pumpkin that has been scraped clean. Yum!



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# Have a Safe and Healthy Halloween

By Theresa Spezzano, Family, Nutrition and Consumer Sciences Advisor, UC Cooperative Extension

Halloween brings out the kid in all of us. It's fun to dress up in a costume, run around the neighborhood, or go to a party. Treats are a part of the fun, however they don't have to be sticky, gooey candy.

**Treat Ideas:** Stickers, Play Dough, Balloons, Crayons, Pretzels, Cheese and cracker packages, Sugar-free gum, 100% Juice box packages, Small packages of nuts or raisins, Peanuts in the shell. Think outside of the box to make the holiday fun!

## Trick or Treating

Have children eat a meal or snack before going

trick-or-treating so they won't be tempted to dig into their bag of goodies before they get home.

When children get home, check the treats and keep only the unopened ones. Inspect fruits and homemade goods for anything suspicious. If you make homemade goodies, include a note with a contact number so parents feel a secure letting their child eat your treats.

It's best to eat trick-or-treat candy over several days or a few pieces after a healthy snack.

## Halloween Party

Have a party for your children and friends to reduce safety concerns. Serve nutritious treats like popcorn, apples, grapes, bananas, unshelled peanuts, and not-too-sweet cookies.

Kids can help make treats like "Pizza Faces." Let kids arrange sliced olives, green peppers, mushrooms, pepperoni, etc. on English muffins brushed with tomato sauce. Top with grated cheese for "hair" and heat in the microwave or oven until the cheese melts.

# Check this out!

Halloween started in Ireland as a Celtic celebration. The first Jack O' Lanterns were carved out of **turnips!** When the Irish arrived in the U.S., they



decided pumpkins were MUCH easier to hollow out.

Halloween was adopted by the U.S. and has only been celebrated since the early 1800's.

# Teacher Corner

## Math

*Easy:* How many creases are there on a pumpkin? *Hard:* Pumpkins sell for about \$3.50 each at a pumpkin patch. You have \$40. How many pumpkins can you buy? How much change do you have left over? *Harder:* What is the circumference /radius/ diameter of the pumpkin?

## Social Studies

What is "El Dia De Los Muertos?" Talk about this holiday with students.



## English/Language

Have kids finish this story "One day I saw a huge pumpkin in a pumpkin patch..." Make sure the pumpkin is the main character in their story. For older students, have them use at least 3 adjectives

to describe the pumpkin. Have them underline the verbs in the story.

## P.E. Pumpkin Relay

Use paper plates and elastic to make masks students have colored. Then have them run races wearing the masks

# Pop Quiz

**Q:** What family do gourds, squash and pumpkins belong to? **A:** Cucurbitaceae



**Q:** What is a gourd?

**A:** A gourd is a dried out, hollow shell used for many purposes. Before people had pots and pans, they used gourds to carry food and water! Today people like to make birdhouses out of gourds.

# Plant Your Own!

## Want to have pumpkins, squash or gourds next year?

Plant seeds in early summer. You'll need at least 6x5 ft<sup>2</sup> of garden space per pumpkin. Make a little basin 2 feet around 1/2" deep. (this is how you will water). Plant 4 pumpkin seeds together 1" deep in the middle of the basin. Keep soil moist until the cotyledon (seed leaves) appear. This takes 7-14 days. More leaves will grow and the plant will get bigger. Watch for orange pumpkin blossoms, they will turn into tiny baby pumpkins that get bigger and bigger. Your pumpkin is ready when the green, tendril-like vine connected to the pumpkin stem turns brown. Ask an adult to harvest your pumpkin. You might want to tell them pumpkin stems are very prickly,



# Try This At Home!

## Pumpkin Bread

### Ingredients:

- Nonstick cooking spray
- 2 c all-purpose flour
- 2 c whole wheat flour
- 1/2 c non-fat dry milk
- 1 1/4 c sugar
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 2 1/2 tsp pumpkin pie spice
- 1 (15 oz.) can pumpkin
- 3/4 c unsweetened apple sauce
- 1/2 c canola oil
- 4 eggs

### Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350°F.
- Spray loaf or muffin pans with nonstick cooking spray. In large bowl, mix flour, non-fat dry milk, sugar, baking soda, salt, baking powder and pumpkin pie spice.
- In second bowl, blend pumpkin, applesauce, oil, eggs and water.
- Add pumpkin mixture to flour mixture until moistened.
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 c of walnuts (optional)
- 1/2 c raisins (optional)
- Bake and Enjoy!
- (EFENP Recipe)



Makes: 2 loaves or 30 muffins.  
Preparation time: 20 minutes.  
Cooking time: 60-75 minutes for loaves, 20 minutes for muffins.

