

# Cent\$ible Nutrition News

Helping Families Eat Better for Less

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## Container Gardening: Growing Food in Small Spaces

Growing your own food can be one way to add more fresh produce to your meals and keep grocery bills lower. Container gardens are a great option for many reasons. They can be moved inside and outside as the temperature and weather changes; they may decrease issues with weeds and pests; and they can be more manageable. Sound interesting? The steps below will help you get started.

- 1. Think about location.** Vegetables need sunlight, consistent water, and wind protection. A sunny porch, windowsill, or driveway may be a good location.
- 2. Pick your plants.** Think about what vegetables you and your family like and the size of the containers you have. Container size limits what can be grown.
- 3. Pick your container.** Containers should be made of safe materials. Milk jugs, buckets, pots, and wood or metal boxes may all work, depending on what you want to grow. Containers also need drainage holes in the bottom.
- 4. Match container size to vegetable.** Certain vegetables need certain amounts of space to grow well. Also, think about moving the containers. The bigger the container, the heavier it will be.
  - ½-2 gallon sizes: Lettuce, spinach, cilantro, chives, and parsley
  - 2-3 gallon sizes: Chard, beans, radishes, beans, rosemary, basil, and oregano
  - 4-7 gallon sizes: peppers, beans, tomatoes, eggplant, squash, cucumbers, carrots, potatoes, and beets
- 5. Plant seeds.** Follow directions on the seed packets. Seeds can be planted directly into a container or started in smaller pots that can be transferred to larger pots once they are several inches tall. Seeds can be planted outside or started earlier indoors. If starting seeds inside, make sure they get enough light. Try placing them in a sunny windowsill.
- 6. Move plants outside.** Gradually transition plants from indoors to outdoors. Place plants outside for several hours during the day and then slowly increase the amount by several hours each day until plants can be left outside all day. Bring plants inside at night if temperatures are still freezing.
- 7. Water and tending.** Try to water plants daily, usually in the morning, so they have enough water to get through the heat of the day.
- 8. Harvest.** Different plants will be ready for harvest at different times. Check the seed packets to see how long until they will be ready. Harvest in the early morning. Cool and wash your harvest right away to keep it fresh.



## Black Bean & Butternut Squash Stew

### Ingredients

- 1 small butternut squash (1¼ pounds)
- 1 teaspoon canola oil
- 1 medium onion 1 green pepper
- 1 garlic clove (½ teaspoon minced or ¼ teaspoon powder)
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- 2 Tablespoons tomato paste
- 4 cups cooked black beans or 2 15-ounce cans, drained
- 2 cups low-sodium vegetable or chicken broth
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Toppings: chopped cilantro, chopped jalapeño, shredded cheese

### Directions

1. Wash hands with warm, soapy water for 20 seconds.
2. Dice the onion. Seed and dice the green pepper. Chop the clove of garlic, if using a whole clove.
3. Slice squash in half. Remove seeds and peel. Cut into 1 ½-inch cubes.
4. In a large pot, heat oil. Cook onion and pepper in oil for 4 minutes. Add in garlic, cumin, and paprika. Stir in tomato paste.
5. Add squash, black beans, and broth.
6. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer until squash is tender, about 30 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Add water if stew gets too thick.
7. Serve hot with toppings.

**Makes 10 servings**

## Join the Cent\$ible Nutrition Program!

Free cookbook, kitchen tools, & cooking classes!

Learn how to save money and time at the grocery store, cook quick and healthy meals, and stretch your food dollar. The Cent\$ible Nutrition Program is free to those who income qualify and participants receive a free cookbook and kitchen tools. Visit <https://uwvocnp.org/join-us/> to find out if you qualify.

Due to Coronavirus, we are now offering our classes online! Find out more at: <https://uwvocnp.org/cnp-online-classes/>.

### Questions? Comments? Contact us!

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