OKLAHOMA
AG IN THE CLASSROOM

PUMPKIN

MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL







Many farms in Oklahoma grow pumpkins or have a pumpkin patch as part of an agritourism venue. Farms with an agritourism focus allow people on their farm to experience agriculture firsthand. Pumpkin patches are one of the most popular events in the fall to bring people from urban and suburban areas to the farm. Often you can select your own pumpkin to pick fresh from the vine.

Most pumpkins are some shade of orange or yellow. However, pumpkins may be gray, pale green, white, or variegated which means they have multiple colors, streaks, or patches of color. Pumpkins range in size from less than a pound to over 1,000 pounds. Different varieties are grown for different purposes. The best pumpkins for pie are varieties with dense, sweet flesh that is not watery or stringy. The best pumpkins for carving tend to be large, barrel-shaped with a flat bottom which allows them to stand upright.

Pumpkins are cucurbits. They are related to cucumbers, squash, melons, and gourds. The pumpkin is a vegetable, but most pumpkins grown today are sold for decorating and carving. Eighty percent of the pumpkins in the United States are sold in the month of October.

Have you eaten a pumpkin? They are good for you! Pumpkins are 90 percent water, high in fiber and contain potassium. Pumpkins are full of beta carotene which gives the pumpkin its bright orange color. The beta carotene turns into Vitamin A after consumption. Pumpkin seeds are also a great source of protein, vitamins, and antioxidants. Many people roast the seeds after carving a jack-o'-lantern. Pepita is a pumpkin seed from a specific variety of pumpkin. A pepita is harvested from specific hulless pumpkin varieties, known as Styrian or Oil Seed pumpkins. Additionally, pumpkins produce large, yellow flowers which are edible.

Pumpkins are native to North America. Now, pumpkins are grown on every continent except Antarctica.





PUMPKIN PIE WITH FRESH PUMPKIN

INGREDIENTS & TOOLS:
- Quart-size zip bags
- 1/8 cup milk
- 2 tablespoons of canned pumpkin
- Dash of cinnamon
- Dash of ginger
- 1 tablespoon of pudding mix
- Tart-size premade graham cracker crusts

DIRECTIONS:
1. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to a 1/8-in.-thick circle; transfer to a 9-in. pie plate. Trim crust to 1/2 in. beyond rim of plate; flute edge. Refrigerate while preparing filling.
2. Cut pumpkin in half lengthwise; discard seeds. Place cut side down in a microwave-safe dish; add 1 in. of water. Cover and microwave on high until very tender, 15-18 minutes.
3. Preheat oven to 425°. Drain pumpkin. When cool enough to handle, scoop out pulp and mash. Set aside 1-3/4 cups (save remaining pumpkin for another use). In large bowl, combine mashed pumpkin, eggs, brown sugar, cinnamon, salt, ginger and cloves; beat until smooth. Gradually beat in milk. Pour into crust.
4. Bake for 15 minutes. Reduce oven setting to 350°; bake until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean, 40-50 minutes longer. Cover edge loosely with foil during the last 30 minutes if needed to prevent overbrowning. Remove foil. Cool on a wire rack. If desired, pipe whipped cream around edge of pie using a star tip. Refrigerate leftovers.

ROASTED PUMPKIN SEEDS



INGREDIENTS & TOOLS:
- Seeds from one pumpkin
- Salt
- Spray vegetable oil
- Knife
- Steamer
- Towel
- Cookie Sheet

DIRECTIONS:
1. Preheat oven to 300°F.
2. Cut pumpkin in half.
3. Remove seeds by scraping pulp from the pumpkin with a large spoon.
4. Rinse seeds in a colander, and pick seeds from the pulp.
5. Place seeds in the top of a vegetable steamer with water in the bottom.
6. Cover and cook for 30 minutes.
7. Dry the seeds with a towel.
8. Spread seeds on a cookie sheet, spray with vegetable oil and sprinkle with salt.
9. Bake the seeds for 30 minutes, or until golden brown.

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PUMPKIN LIFE CYCLE

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FUN FACTS

Punkin' Chunkin' competitions exist throughout the United States. Each November, the World Championship Punkin' Chunkin' is held in Delaware.

