Butternut Squash

*Cucurbita moschata*

Butternut squash is a winter squash that originated in Mexico. Today it is used all around the world from Africa to Australia (where they call it Butternut Pumpkin.) The flavor is nutty and sweet similar to pumpkin, and can work as both a savory or sweet dish. This soup is a traditional fall treat in my family. If you want to make it extra smooth, add 1 cup of heavy cream to the soup after pureeing. The squash can be found in our part of North Carolina from September through the end of October.

**Butternut Squash Bisque**

12 servings

**Ingredients:**

- 1 oz butter, unsalted
- 1/2 cup celery, diced
- 1/2 cup onion, diced
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme
- 2 tsp garlic, chopped
- 2 lbs butternut squash, cleaned and diced
- 3 oz rice
- 1 qt chicken stock
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp nutmeg
- 1 bay leaf
- Salt to taste
- Chives for garnish
- Nonfat plain yogurt for garnish

**Method of Preparation:**

Wash hands.
Gather ingredients and equipment.

**In Soup Pot,** melt butter.

Sauté shallots, celery, onion, garlic, and thyme.

Add squash, rice, stock, cinnamon, nutmeg, and bay leaf.
Cook until rice is tender.

Puree with blender.
Strain.

Garnish with dollop of yogurt and diced chives.