



## Homemade Pumpkin Puree

By Diane Whitten

### Cornell Cooperative Extension Saratoga County

Not all pumpkins are alike. There's the large Jack-O-Lantern pumpkins that are popular fall decorations, then there are pumpkins that are grown for eating. These smaller pumpkins, referred to as 'sugar' or 'pie' pumpkins, are sweeter with a finer flesh. Why buy canned pumpkin when you can easily make your own pumpkin puree for a pie.

Like all winter squash, pumpkin is an excellent source of vitamin A. One slice of pumpkin pie provides 180% of the daily value for vitamin A.

#### Make Your Own Pumpkin Puree

Cut the pumpkin in half and scrape out the seeds. Baked pumpkin seeds make a great snack, so save them. If you don't mind cutting the skin off the pumpkin, chunks of pumpkin will steam or boil in about 15 minutes. Otherwise, place the pumpkin halves flesh side down on a baking tray, add about ½ cup water, cover with foil and bake at 350 degrees for about an hour or until the flesh is tender. Allow pumpkin to cool then scrape flesh from skin. Puree pumpkin in a food processor or put through a ricer or food mill. Place in a sieve lined with cheese cloth and allow excess liquid to drain off.

Extra pumpkin puree can be frozen.

#### Pumpkin Pie

9 inch pie crust  
2 cups pumpkin puree  
2 large eggs  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
½ teaspoon ground ginger  
¼ teaspoon ground cloves  
1/8 teaspoon nutmeg  
(or substitute 2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice for cinnamon, ginger, cloves and nutmeg)  
¼ teaspoon salt  
¾ cup brown sugar  
1 cup half-and-half

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Place pumpkin in a large bowl. Add eggs and whisk together. In a small bowl combine the spices and salt with brown sugar. Add to pumpkin and egg mixture and stir until evenly distributed. Stir in half-and-half. Pour into pie shell. Bake at 425 degrees for 15 minutes, reduce heat to 350 degrees and continue baking for 40-50 minutes or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Makes 8 servings.

#### Grow Your Own Pie Pumpkins

Common varieties of pie pumpkins include 'Small Sugar,' 'Cinderella,' 'Triple Treat,' 'Spookie,' 'Winter Luxury,' 'Cheese,' 'Kentucky Field,' and 'Cushaw.'