

Of the nearly 2 billion pounds of pumpkin grown in the United States in 2014, some 1.3 billion pounds were thrown into solid waste trash instead of being eaten or composted, according to the US Department of Energy.

Mainstream Green's got resourceful ideas about what you can do with your unpainted pumpkins after Halloween: Cook 'em, Compost 'em, or throw into woody areas for wildlife to consume.



## HOW TO TURN JACK O'LANTERNS INTO MASHED PUMPKIN MEAT FOR PUREES & COOKING

If you have burned a candle inside your pumpkin, please compost rather than cook it.

If you have decorated the outside of your pumpkin with paint or glue, and none is inside at all, after you slice off the painted or glued places, you may cook the pumpkin meat or seeds, .

**Jack O'Lantern** pumpkins are cultivated and raised primarily to be big, bright orange and beautiful, rather than flavorful, so it is not their fault that they need you to spice them up so they taste like the familiar mashed pumpkin meat you might buy at the store.

Here's how you cook the meat.

### Step 1. Wash the outside of the pumpkin.

No soap, just cool or warm water. Using a sharp, serrated knife, cut off the stem. Cut the raw pumpkin into two halves, top and bottom, so each forms a bowl. Use paring

knife and spoon to cut and scoop out all the gooey stuff inside the bowls so walls are clear, setting aside the pumpkin seeds to use for snacks or planting. (See "Pits" recipe.) When the walls are clear, cut the bowls into halves or quarters..

### Step 2. Cook: Bake, Microwave or Steam.

**Option 1: Baking.** Place the quarters cut side down in an ovenproof container with a lid. If they don't all fit, divide and cook in two shifts. Cover and bake in a 350 F (165 C) oven. Starting at 45 minutes, stick the non skin side with a fork to see if it is soft. Keep retesting every 10 minutes. It could take as long as 90 minutes.

### Option 2: Microwave.

Place the pumpkin quarters into a microwaveable bowl. If they don't all fit, divide and cook in two shifts. Put a couple of inches of water in the bowl, cover it, then microwave on high until it is soft. Check for

softness at 15 minutes and then at 5 minute intervals until it is soft.

**Option 3: Steam** the pumpkin quarters as you would any other vegetable, until the meat part is soft.

**Step 3.** Whichever method you use, cook the pumpkin until it is soft, then separate it from the skin and scoop the meat out. Let it stand for at least 30 minutes and then drain excess water. Some people like to refrigerate over night, and then drain off excess water. After draining, mash the pumpkin meat. It is ready to use in recipes. Or, for a simple puree, add some brown sugar, butter, cinnamon, cream/milk, vanilla, ground cloves, and blend with electric mixer. This is a taste-and-add recipe. Taste and add more (or less) of any of the spices, to suit your preference.

SEE RECIPES ON P. 2

## SNACK ON 'EM PUMPKIN PITS



Place the gooey stuff you scooped out of your pumpkin into jars with lids, that are half filled with water. Shake vigorously, then empty into collander. Rinse with water, rubbing the seeds between your hands to

separate them from the pumpkin strands. Discard the strands, and when the seeds are clean, lightly pat them with cloth towels to dry.

Toss them in a bowl with a little bit of olive oil, and such spices as you may invent or else select, from the list at right.

Spread them across a baking sheet that has been lightly oiled with olive oil. Roast in preheated 300 degree, oven, for for between 15 - 40 minutes, stirring and turning them every

10 minutes until they are dry, and crisp. Try any of the following spice variations.

### Cinnamon Spiced Roast

1 cup raw pumpkin seeds  
1 tsp salt  
1 tsp olive oil  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
1/2 tsp ground ginger  
1/4 tsp ground allspice  
1 tbsp sugar

### HotCha Spiced Roast

3 cups pumpkin seeds  
2 tbsp vegetable oil

1 1/2 tsp ancho chili powder  
1 tsp kosher salt  
1 tsp chile de arbol powder

### Tangy Spiced Roast

3 cups pumpkin seeds  
1 1/2 tbsp butter /margarine, melted  
2 tsp Worcestershire sauce  
1/4 tsp garlic powder  
1/2 tsp kosher salt

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## PUMPKIN RECIPES



### PUMPKIN COBLER

- 3 eggs beaten
- 15 oz. cooked, mashed pumpkin meat
- 12-oz. can evaporated milk
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. ground ginger
- 1 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- One 8 1/2 oz pkg. yellow cake mix

- 1 1/4 cup butter / margarine melted
- 1 cup chopped pecans

Mix the first 8 ingredients together; pour into an ungreased 13" x 9" baking pan. Sprinkle cake mix over the top; drizzle with butter. Bake at 340 degrees for 25 minutes. Top with nuts. Bake for an additional 15 minutes. Makes 15-18 servings.

### PLANET FRIENDLY PUMPKIN PIE

- 6 eggs
- 5 1/2 cups cooked, mashed pumpkin meat
- 1 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. cinnamon
- \* 1/2 tsp. ground ginger
- 1/2 tsp. nutmeg
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 3 cups evaporated milk
- 2 9" pie crusts (already made by you or purchased)

Using an electric mixer, blend eggs in a large mixing bowl on high speed for 30 seconds. Add next 9 ingredients, blending on medium speed until combined. Divide and pour equally into pie crusts. Bake at 450 degrees for 10 minutes. Reduce heat to 340 degrees and bake for 45 to 50 minutes or until a knife inserted into the centers removes cleanly. Serve warm or cold. Garnish with whipped cream or topping before serving. Makes 16 servings. 15 minutes.

### SAVORY, NOT SWEET, PUMPKIN PANCAKES

- 6 cups peeled, coarsely shredded, raw pumpkin (about 3 lbs., drained.)
- 1 medium-size onion, grated on the large holes of a grater, about 2/3 cup
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 tbsp. flour
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. garlic powder.
- Butter or light vegetable oil for frying, abt. 2 tbsp

Cut raw pumpkin into wedges about one and a half inches wide. Use sharp paring knife to peel off outer all outer skin & cut shreddy, gooey stuff away from pumpkin's inner walls. Scoop out all the gooey inside stuff so walls are clear, setting aside to use pumpkin seeds for roasting or planting. Grate the raw pumpkin meat. Blot well

with paper towels. Then mix everything except the butter/oil.

Heat a very thin film of the butter or oil over high-medium heat in a heavy skillet.

Test one shred, and when it sizzles, make your first, "experimental" pancake, about 2" across, 1/2 inch thick. Fry about 2 minutes a side, or until the crust is crisp and the filling cooked through. Taste. If necessary, make adjustments: add egg if mixture falls apart, or flour if it is watery and won't get crisp. Feel free to add other spices. Makes up to 6 4" pancakes. Serve with apple sauce, or another fruit puree.