

SPEED SQUASH



Who doesn't love butternut squash? But who loves to peel, seed, chop, and cook it? That's why so many people just don't bother.

Even though they're missing out on the squash's sweet, moist richness, five grams of fiber in every half cup, and payload of vitamins A and C, it's just too much trouble.

Make that *was* too much trouble. At **Trader Joe's** and a growing number of food stores, you can now buy **Diced Butternut Squash** that comes already peeled, cut, and ready to go...into the oven, into a stir-fry, into a soup or risotto, into some cannelloni or manicotti.

To keep it simple, just slice open the bag, dump it into a pot of boiling water or a microwave-safe dish, and cook until tender. Then drain, mash, and season with maple syrup, cinnamon, and a touch of fat-free half and half if you want it creamy. What used to take an hour has turned into ten minutes, tops.

You pay more for diced than you would for whole, and the bags do take up room in your fridge (where they can stay for up to a week). But it's well worth the shelf space.

The same goes for bags of Trader Joe's **Diced Harvest Medley** (turnips, yams, and butternut squash) or other chains' cut-and-ready-to-cook vegetables. Most come with cooking instructions. It doesn't get much simpler.

Trader Joe's: (800) 746-7857.

Photos: Nick Waring.

About CSPI, publisher of *Nutrition Action Healthletter*



The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), founded in 1971, is an independent nonprofit consumer health group. CSPI advocates honest food labeling and advertising, safer and more nutritious foods, and pro-health alcohol policies. CSPI's work is supported by *Nutrition Action Healthletter* subscribers and foundation grants. CSPI accepts no government or industry funding. *Nutrition Action Healthletter*, which has been published since 1974, accepts no advertising.

OOPS!

"Swoops are the essence of your favorite chocolate candy," explains the package. "The unique shape envelops your mouth in chocolate bliss."

It's comforting to know that someone in corporate America has done what it takes to bring us chocolate bliss. True, the **Swoops'** Pringle-like shape meant that Hershey had to overpackage them, in groups of six, inside three plastic containers tucked inside a cardboard box. But when a nation needs chocolate shaped like potato chips, someone's got to step up to the plate.

Of course, many Americans have had more than their share of gastronomic bliss, chocolate or otherwise, making us one of the fattest countries on Earth. Apparently that's not enough to stop Hershey from cramming 180 to 200 calories, seven or eight grams of saturated fat (a third of a day's worth), and 18 grams of sugar (more than four teaspoons) into each six-Swoop pack.

And the creative minds at Hershey Foods gave Swoops instant name recognition by dubbing them **Almond Joy**, **Hershey's Milk Chocolate**, **Reese's** (Peanut Butter Cups), and **York** (Peppermint Patties).

Too bad many customers won't notice that two of the Swoops—York and Reese's—have two to three times more sat fat than their namesakes.

Swoops? Oops is more like it.

Hershey: (800) 468-1714.



TIP OF THE MONTH

For an irresistible snack, thinly slice shiitake mushroom caps, spread them on a lightly oiled baking tray, sprinkle with garlic powder and a touch of cayenne pepper, and bake at 400° until they start to brown, about 15 minutes.

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