

# Indigenous Food Hubs

## 2025 Harvest of the Month



### SEPTEMBER: PUMPKIN

#### CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

Many tribes use the “Three Sisters” planting technique, with corn, beans, and squash (pumpkin) grown together. Each provides something the other needs for a harmonious and thriving environment. Some tribes roast long pumpkin strips over a fire for food or weave mats from dried pieces of the outer shell.

#### AT-HOME ACTIVITY

Try pumpkin for breakfast! You can make a pumpkin pie yogurt parfait with pumpkin, pumpkin pie spice, cinnamon and low-fat yogurt. You can also try a pumpkin smoothie with pumpkin, banana, yogurt, milk, pumpkin pie spice and a little honey. Add pumpkin to your oatmeal along with walnuts, raisins and cinnamon.

#### PICKING A PUMPKIN

- Choose a pumpkin with firm, tough skin, a stem attached, and no wrinkles, blemishes, mold or sunken spots.
- It should be heavy for its size.
- Store in a cool, dry place for up to 6 months.

#### NUTRITION AND FUN FACTS

- Pumpkin is a great source of fiber, potassium, and beta-carotene with no fat, sodium or cholesterol.
- One cup of pumpkin has 50% of the daily recommended vitamin C and 450% of vitamin A and is only 50 calories.
- The heaviest pumpkin in the U.S. was grown in New Hampshire in 2018 and weighed 2,528 pounds!
- There are over 45 different varieties of pumpkin.
- Every part of a pumpkin is edible.
- Pumpkins are 92% water.
- Pumpkins originated in North America approximately 9,000 years ago, with the oldest seeds found in Mexico, making it one of the oldest crops in the Western Hemisphere, along with corn.
- Technically a fruit (a berry), pumpkins are part of the winter squash family.



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### PUMPKIN LENTIL SOUP



#### COOK TIME

60-70 Minutes



#### SERVINGS

10

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium onion, minced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1-inch piece ginger root, minced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 teaspoons ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 13-oz can coconut milk
- 1 carton (32 oz) vegetable broth
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup crimson lentils, washed and drained
- 1 sweet potato, peeled and cut into chunks
- 1 15-oz can pumpkin puree

#### NOTES

Winter squash, like pumpkin, can be used to make this delicious, creamy soup. This soup is protein-rich from the lentils, which are hearty legumes similar to beans. Lentils make the soil they grow in healthier by adding nitrogen, which other plants use for food.

#### DIRECTIONS

1. Finely chop the ginger and garlic together.
2. Heat olive oil over medium heat in a large saucepan. Add the onion and sauté until transparent.
3. Lower the heat and add the garlic ginger paste. Sauté another 2 minutes, stirring constantly to avoid burning the paste.
4. Add the spices and sauté for a minute more.
5. Stir in the milk, stock, lentils, sweet potato, and pumpkin puree.
6. Simmer over medium-low heat for 40-50 minutes or until the sweet potato is soft. Stir occasionally.



#### DIFFICULTY:

☐ EASY ☒ MEDIUM ☐ HARD



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