Summer squashes are a popular option for gardeners to grow due to the wonderful flavor and the ease of growing the vegetable. Summer squash includes zucchini, yellow squash, scalloped, straight neck and other varieties. Summer squashes are tender and do best when grown in warm weather.

To plant:
Begin summer squash indoors 3 to 4 weeks before your last frost date. If you are sowing the seeds directly outdoors, wait until the soil temperature has warmed to 70 degrees Fahrenheit. If the soil is still a little cool, you can protect the seeds or transplants by adding row covers to help warm the soil. Sow the seeds 1/2 to 1 inch deep and space them apart 12 to 18 inches, as the squash plants can become quite large. Seeds should germinate within 7 to 10 days if the weather is warm enough. If you are transplanting seedlings to the garden, wait until it has been 2 to 3 weeks after the last frost.

To grow:
Once the seedlings have sprouted, thin them to 36 inches apart in all directions. Keep the soil moist. Summer squash prefers soil with a pH of 5.5 to 6.8. The summer squash plants also prefer full sun. Some of the common pests summer squash experiences include aphids, cucumber beetles, flea beetles, slugs, snails and others, so take preventative measures against those. Be sure to not plant summer squash in an area where cucumbers or melons have recently grown. Do not opt to plant summer squash in containers, as they are likely to spread out.

To harvest:
Summer squash are best to harvest when they are still small and tender, as this is when they will taste the best. Harvest while the squash is still young. Mature squash reaches 6 to 8 inches in length. Large squash will have little taste. Be sure to cut the squash from the vine instead of pulling it so you don’t risk pulling out the whole plant. Use a sharp knife and leave about an inch of stem on the squash. Be sure to harvest all squash before the first frost.

What summer squash craves:
Some fertilizer will help your summer squash grow to its fullest extent. Prior to planting, add compost to the beds where you plan to plant the summer squash. Once the seedlings are old enough, fertilize the beds with fish emulsion or a soluble complete fertilizer at half strength.
Where to buy summer squash seeds:
Urban Farmer offers many varieties of summer squash seeds, including zucchini, scalloped squash and yellow squash.

You can find summer squash seeds on our website at ufseeds.com!