

## Did you Know...

Pumpkins are actually fruits and not vegetables? Why, because the pumpkin comes from the flower of the plant.

Each pumpkin has about 500 seeds.

Morton, Illinois is considered the “Pumpkin Capital of the World.”

Morton is home to Libby’s, the producer of 85% of the world’s canned pumpkin!



Photo Courtesy of Pixabay.com

## EAT WELL, AGE WELL. December- Pumpkin

Oh, I can still taste and smell the delicious pumpkin pie from Thanksgiving. I also love pumpkin soup, bread, cheesecake, and a nice pumpkin latte. ***What are some of your favorite pumpkin treats?*** I am sharing two recipes on the next page that I hope you try.

As we strive to increase our awareness of various cultures around the world, I did some research and found that many cultures use pumpkins in their cooking. For example, In Armenia, the inside of the pumpkin is stuffed with boiled rice, dried fruit, nuts, and honey. South African pampoenkoekies are tiny pumpkin fritters made with cinnamon and nutmeg. Both sound delicious! The top 3 countries that eat the most pumpkin are China, India, and Russia. Pumpkin was thought to have been introduced in China during the Ming Dynasty around 1368 CE and was originally used as an offering by the Imperial family.

**Pumpkin is a nutrition powerhouse.** It is a good source of potassium (1 cup has the same amount as a banana), fiber, and vitamins A, B6, C, E, and K. They are packed with antioxidants. For example, Beta-carotene, which gives pumpkins their orange color, is a free-radical fighting antioxidant. Our bodies convert ingested beta-carotene into vitamin A, which is essential for healthy skin and eyes, while also **strengthening the immune system**. Another reason to enjoy pumpkin throughout the winter.

# Pumpkin Smoothie in a Cup & Pumpkin Fruit Dip

*These quick recipes are refreshing and healthy and your grandkids and great-grandkids will love them too!*

## Pumpkin Smoothie in a Cup

### Ingredients

- ¾ cup low-fat vanilla yogurt or 1 container (6 ounces)
- ¼ cup canned pumpkin
- 2 teaspoons brown sugar
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- ⅛ teaspoon nutmeg (optional)

### Directions

1. Combine all ingredients in a bowl or blender.
2. Mix until smooth and serve.
3. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.
4. You can also freeze it and enjoy it like a shake.



## Pumpkin Fruit Dip



### Ingredients

- 1 can (15 ounces) **pumpkin** (about 1 ¾ cups cooked pumpkin)
- 1 cup low-fat **ricotta cheese** or **plain yogurt** or low-fat **cream cheese**
- ¾ cup **sugar**
- 1 ½ teaspoons **cinnamon**
- ½ teaspoon **nutmeg**

### Directions

1. In a large bowl, combine pumpkin, ricotta cheese, or yogurt or cream cheese, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Add sugar a little at a time to reach desired sweetness. Stir until smooth.
2. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

(Recipes and photos used with permission from Foodhero.org)

**Check out more Milk Recipes, facts, fun activities, and more at:**

<https://foodhero.org/pumpkin>