



# Taylor County Horticulture

## February 2024 Newsletter

### Caring for Houseplants in Winter

By: Ailene Foster, Master Gardener

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Sincerely,

Kara Back  
Extension Agent  
For Horticulture

Houseplants can be a beautiful addition to any home. They can liven up your indoor space in any season. But during the winter months houseplants need a little extra care.

Plants that like light may need to be rotated every few days to prevent them from bending toward the light and becoming crooked.

Temperature changes can affect your plants. Make sure they are not in cold drafts or receiving too much heat; either extreme can negatively affect the health of your plants. Heat will cause your plants to dry out more quickly. Remember during winter months plants tend to grow less vigorously so they require less water and could probably do without feeding. Always check the moisture content of the soil before watering. Use room temperature water to avoid shocking your plant with cold water.

When cleaning and dusting your furniture, don't forget your plants. Their leaves collect dust and dirt too. Use a clean soft cloth and clean the leaves every two to three months. They will love you for it. Also remove yellow, damaged, and dying leaves from your plant. This keeps the plant beautiful and healthy. Your plant may lose a few leaves during the winter, but this is normal and should not be of great concern.

Check your plants on a regular basis year round to ensure that they are not being infested with insects or other pests. Care for your plants and they will give you much pleasure as they beautify your home.



# FEBRUARY 2024

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	*Green River Beekeepers At Taylor County Extension Office on February 15.			1 Soils & Fertility Class 10:30 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.	2	3
4	5 4-H Bug Club Ants 3:30 p.m.	6	7	8 Care of Woody Plants 10:30 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.	9	10
11	12 Busy Bloomer Garden Club Topic: Bleeding Heart 1:00 p.m.	13 4-H Horticulture Club Composting 3:30 p.m.	14	15 House Plant Propagation & Indoor Plants 10:30 a.m. & 5:30 p.m. *Green River Beekeepers at 7:00 p.m.	16	17
18	19	20 KY Turf & Landscape Management Short Course at Hardin Co. Extension Office	21 KY Turf & Landscape Management Short Course at Hardin Co. Extension Office	22 KY Turf & Landscape Management Short Course at Hardin Co. Extension Office	23	24
25	26	27 Master Logger Web TV Course Fee \$50	28	29 Vegetable Transplants 10:30 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.		

To RSVP for the classes, call the Extension office at 270-465-4511

# Tips on Landscaping Design

By: Karen Redford, Master Gardener

Doing some landscaping in your yard not only can add value to your property, but you can turn your yard into your own oasis. With some brainstorming, and a little planning you can have yourself a great area that you will be excited to come home too.

Start by looking at your space. If you are wanting to go all out, and have the means and equipment, you can start with a blank canvas. If not, look at what you have and start from there. Is your area rocky? Maybe you can think of ways that would enhance that rocky area; maybe by adding bigger rocks that could be your focal point. Look for plants that would be grown in that kind of area. Don't let things like that be a stumbling block to you. Use what you have and work around it. Turn it into a featured area that can end up being amazing! Just explore your area and do an inventory of what you have already on hand that can be used in that area.

Look for the shady and sunny places in the area you are wanting to design. Look around to make sure it is a safe place to work in; no utility lines underground or even overhead. Do a thorough assessment of the area before you even start, so it won't alter your plans later.

Look at books, magazines, online, YouTube, and Pinterest to start. Look around your neighborhood to see what types of plants grow easily in your area. Look at different nurseries and plant catalogs. You know what you like, and what you don't. Make this what you want.

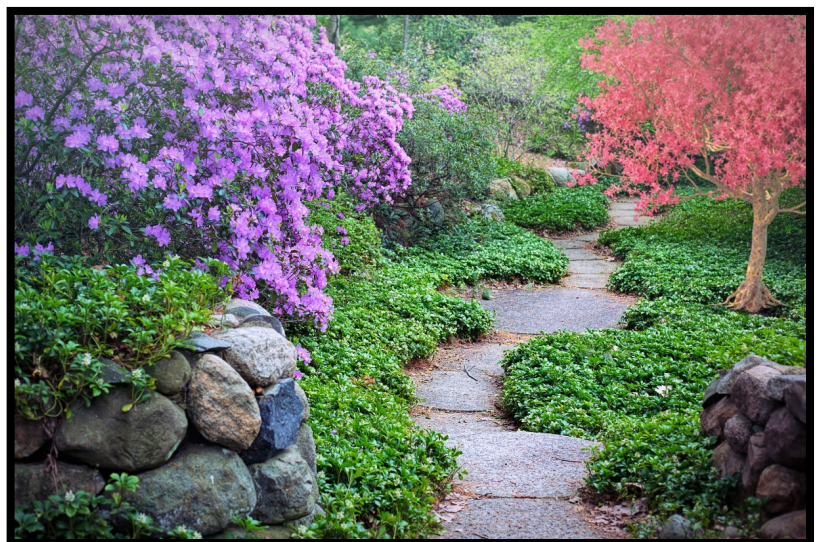
One thing, before you even start, you will need to consider doing is to map it all out on paper. Brainstorm!! Draw it out on paper; it doesn't have to look perfect on paper, just figure out the placement of everything first. Measure things out and look at your space. Figure out what you want to use the area for. Are you interested in privacy, entertaining guests, or having a family play area? Knowing what you want to use the area for will be a big part of your planning it out, so that you will have success fixing it. Do you want pathways to walk through, or a sitting area? Test all your plants out on paper. See how much room you have and what will be used in that space.

Put color in your map! Use colored pencils to add the color in the spot where you want certain plants. You can determine if one section will be all greens, so you can add colored plants in different parts. It will also help to shade in on your map which sections has shade or sun. This could help you when you go get your plants.

Take into consideration your water source; how far away or close are you to providing water to your plants? Put the plants that require more water, closer to the water source.

Spending time and drawing everything out on paper can help you figure out how much maintenance you are willing to put into it. Do you need to consider using certain material verses something else. Exactly what are you wanting to create? Do you want it to be an extension from your living space, or away from the house? It's up to you, how you want your creation to be! If the good Lord lets you dream it, He will help you do it!! The sky is the limit on how creative you want to be.

HAPPY GARDENING, and BE BLESSED!



# String of Bananas

By: Laityn Gray

The String of Bananas, scientifically known as *Senecio radicans*, is a unique and fascinating succulent plant that has gained popularity among plant enthusiasts. This trailing succulent is native to South Africa and is a member of the Asteraceae family. Its distinctive appearance, with cascading vines resembling strings of bananas, makes it a sought-after addition to indoor gardens and hanging baskets.

One key characteristic of the String of Bananas is its unusual foliage. The small, banana-shaped leaves grow along trailing stems, creating an attractive and distinctive appearance. The leaves are typically green, but they can develop a slight tint of bluish-gray under certain conditions. This succulent's ability to thrive in a variety of environments, coupled with its low maintenance requirements, makes it an ideal choice for both beginner and experienced plant enthusiasts.

In terms of care, the String of Bananas prefers bright, indirect light, making it suitable for placement near windows or in well-lit rooms. It is essential to allow the soil to dry out between watering to prevent overwatering, as succulents are prone to root rot in consistently moist conditions. Additionally, the String of Bananas can be propagated easily by taking cuttings from the trailing stems, allowing for the expansion of your succulent collection or sharing with fellow plant enthusiasts.

Beyond its aesthetic appeal and ease of care, the String of Bananas holds cultural significance in some regions. In South Africa, where it is native, the plant is sometimes used for medicinal purposes. However, it's crucial to note that its consumption can be toxic to pets, so pet owners should exercise caution and keep this succulent out of reach.

In conclusion, the String of Bananas is a captivating succulent that adds a touch of whimsy and charm to indoor spaces. Its unique appearance, coupled with its adaptability and low maintenance requirements, has made it a favorite among plant lovers. As interest in houseplants continues to grow, the String of Bananas stands out as a delightful and distinctive choice for those seeking a visually appealing and easy-to-care-for plant.



# SOILS & FERTILITY

February 1  
10:30 a.m. or 5:30 p.m.

Taylor County Extension Office  
1143 South Columbia Avenue  
Campbellsville, KY



Please call the Extension office at  
(270) 465-4511 to RSVP.

# HOUSE PLANT PROPAGATION & INDOOR PLANTS



February 15  
10:30 a.m. or 5:30 p.m.

Taylor County Extension Office  
1143 South Columbia Avenue  
Campbellsville, KY

Call the Extension Office at  
270-465-4511 to RSVP.



# Vegetable Transplants



February 29  
10:30 a.m. or 5:30 p.m.

Taylor County Extension Office  
1143 South Columbia Avenue  
Campbellsville, KY

Call the Extension Office at  
270-465-4511 to RSVP.



# CARE OF WOODY PLANTS

FEBRUARY 8  
10:30 A.M. OR 5:30 P.M.

Taylor County Extension Office  
1143 South Columbia Avenue  
Campbellsville, KY

Please call the  
Extension office at  
270-465-4511 to  
RSVP.



# Logger WebTV

FEBRUARY 27, 2024

KY COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICES  
9 a.m. - 4 p.m. EST

Hosted at the following Extension Offices:  
Boone, Breathitt, Breckinridge, Casey, Crittenden,  
Cumberland, Elliott, Fleming, Graves, Grayson,  
Hancock, Harlan, Henderson, Jefferson, Letcher,  
Logan, Madison, Martin, Morgan, Nelson, Ohio, Owen,  
Perry, Russell, Taylor and Whitley counties

\$50 course fee and, if required, \$25 renewal fee

INFO: Beth Williams, 859-257-6230



# Ordering Seeds for Vegetable Gardens

By: Kim Leonberger, Plant Pathology Extension Associate, and  
Nicole Gauthier, Plant Pathology Extension Specialist

Selection of a disease tolerant or resistant cultivar is one way to prevent or limit the impact of plant diseases in the vegetable garden. A number of cultivars are labeled as tolerant, which means that while plants may become diseased, the plants still yield sufficient amounts of produce. Resistant cultivars do not become diseased, and therefore produce higher yields than those that are susceptible to disease.

While no single cultivar is resistant or tolerant to all plant diseases, use of resistant cultivars can often reduce the need for additional plant disease management practices, such as fungicide sprays. Gardeners should choose cultivars that are tolerant/resistant to the diseases of greatest concern in their garden. It is advisable to keep a garden journal of cultivars that have been grown in the past, as well as a record of previous disease issues. Proper diagnosis of plant diseases is important for future disease management. If issues arise in the vegetable garden, contact a local county Extension agent for assistance.

Select a tolerant or resistant cultivar by reviewing information on websites, seed packets, or seed catalogs. Note that disease names may be abbreviated, or a coding system may be used to indicate resistance or tolerance to specific diseases. Varieties with resistance/tolerance to common vegetable disease issues are detailed below.

## Tomato

- Early blight is the most common disease of tomatoes in Kentucky, and often co-occurs with Septoria leaf spot. Tomatoes with some resistance to early blight are 'Jasper', 'Matt's Wild Cherry', 'Mountain Magic', and 'Sun Gold' (small cherry tomatoes); 'Indigo Rose', 'Plum Regal', and 'Verona' (Roma size); and 'Defiant', 'Iron Lady', 'Mountain Fresh Plus', 'Mountain Merit', and 'Stellar' (slicing size).

## Pepper

- The bacterial spot pathogen causes the most common disease of peppers. There are at least ten races of the pathogen, and pepper resistance is race-specific. Commonly occurring races can vary by location, so it is recommended to choose cultivars with resistance to as many races as possible. Some suggested cultivars include: 'Boca', 'Ninja', 'Outsider', 'Playmaker', 'Samurai', and 'Tracer'.

## Cucurbits (Cucumber, Squashes, Muskmelon, Watermelon, Pumpkin & Zucchini)

- Many powdery mildew resistant cultivars of picklers, slicers, pumpkins, and squash are available. Cultivars that are less susceptible to bacterial wilt include the pickle cukes 'Cross Country' and 'County Fair', 'Howden' pumpkins, and 'Waltham Butternut' squash. Manage cucumber beetles for best management of bacterial wilt. All watermelons have natural resistance to bacterial wilt.

## Leafy Greens

- Many lettuces have been bred for resistance to downy mildew. Consider head lettuces 'Kweik', and 'Pirat'; green leafed lettuces 'Black Seeded Simpson', and 'Nevada'; and red leafed lettuces 'Galactic', 'Red Zin', and 'Rustica' for their additional resistance to bacterial disease and/or white mold (drop).
- Powdery mildew-resistant lettuces include 'Jericho' and 'Super Jericho', (romaines), 'Sandy' (oakleaf); 'Loma', 'Red Salad Bowl', 'Skyphos' and 'Red Cross', (red butterheads).
- 'Regal' and 'Samish' spinaches are resistant to downy mildew and white rust. Kale, collards, turnip greens, and mustards are naturally resistant/tolerant to many diseases.



### Legume Vegetables (Beans & Peas)

- Many French and green beans have been bred for resistance to anthracnose, but resistance in other types of beans is unavailable.
- ‘Caprice’, ‘Espada’, ‘Kentucky Blue’, ‘Romano II’, ‘Volunteer’, and ‘Goldkist’ are fungal leaf spot and/or rust resistant bean varieties, with additional resistance to various viral diseases (viruses are not common in KY).
- ‘Green Arrow’, ‘Cascadia’, ‘Sugar Daddy’, and ‘Oregon Sugar Pod II’ are pea cultivars suggested for their resistance to powdery mildew, Fusarium wilt, and Verticillium wilt.

### Cole Crops (Cabbage, Broccoli, Cauliflower, Kohlrabi & Brussels Sprouts)

- Black rot is the most common disease of cole crops in KY. Cabbage cultivars ‘Bilko’, ‘Blues’, ‘China Pride’, ‘Blue Vantage’, and ‘Bronco’ carry resistance to a broad range of diseases, such as downy mildew, Fusarium yellows, and/or black rot.
- Broccoli cultivars ‘Emperor’, ‘Pinnacle’, and ‘Green Magic’, as well as cauliflower cultivar ‘Majestic’ are resistant to downy mildew and/or black rot.
- ‘Grand Duke’ kohlrabi is resistant to black rot.

## HOT TIPS FOR THE NEW YEAR!

Check out the new University of Kentucky’s Horticulture Departments website  
<https://horticulture.ca.uky.edu/>.

Think about soil testing your vegetable garden every 3-5 years. The earlier you get your samples submitted the less time you will have to wait! Call the Extension Office at 270-465-4511 for more information .

Homeowner fruit tree Spray Guides are available at the Extension Office and online at <https://www2.ca.uky.edu/agcomm/pubs/id/id21/id21.pdf>.

Register  
Now!

Scan  
the code  
with  
your  
phone



2024

### 47th Annual Kentucky Turf & Landscape Management Short Course

February 20-22, 2024

Hardin County Extension Center  
111 Opportunity Way  
Elizabethtown, KY

- 2 full days of all aspects of turfgrass management for lawns, golf courses, sports fields, and other applications.
- CEUs will be available each day.
- Great for anyone interested in turf, including professionals, Extension agents, and homeowners.
- Presentations by UK’s turfgrass program, other university faculty, and industry reps.

Pre-register by February 16 to avoid higher on-site registration fees.



<https://2024KYTurfShortCourse.eventbrite.com>

# Proper Pruning of Trees and Shrubs

By: Kara Back, Extension Agent for Horticulture

With January almost over it is time that we start to prepare for spring. Pruning is a vital gardening task that is commonly pushed aside due to lack of time. When pruning trees and shrubs take into consideration the time of year it blooms. If it blooms before June 1<sup>st</sup>, then prune after it has finished blooming. See table 1 for examples of these early bloomers. If it blooms after June 1<sup>st</sup>, then prune late winter or early spring. If you prune early flowering shrubs before they bloom you will cut off all their blooms and miss their beauty of the season.

Never top a tree. Topping a tree to reduce its height makes a huge flush of growth to occur. These new green branches are very weak and can lead to being a worse problem than the tree was before at its previous height. Instead head back branches to another branch/bud or thin the canopy. It is best to start this when the tree is young. See figure 6 for visual guidance. Cut out water sprouts and suckers on both shrubs and trees to thin the plant and provide better air flow. Never remove 1/3 of the plant's size during a pruning.

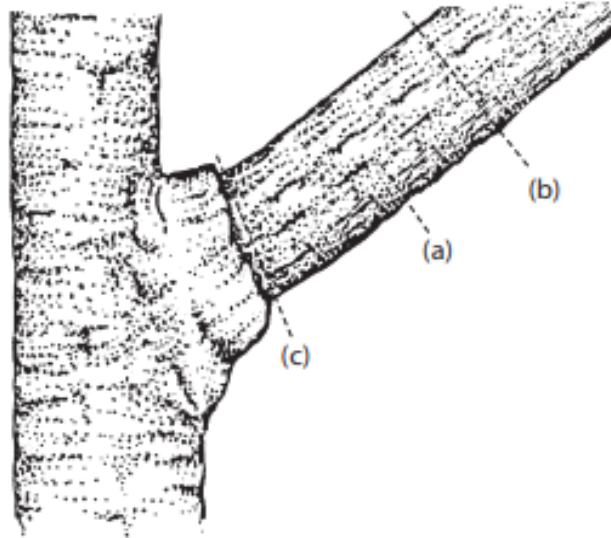
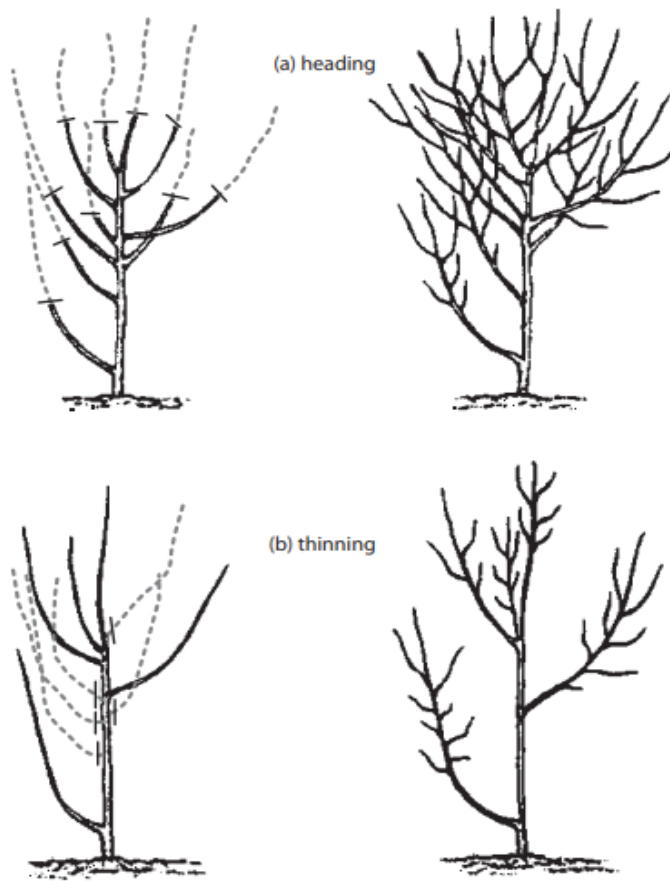
When cutting a branch, never cut flush with the trunk of the tree. Leave the branch collar intact to encourage healing in that area. Do not leave a stub when you prune a branch, because that wood will eventually rot away. See figure 9 for a visual step by step of the process. For more information come to our Care of Woody Plants class on Thursday, February 8<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 a.m. or 5:30 p.m.

Source: [https://www.rs.uky.edu/consumer/extension\\_pdfs/ho101.pdf](https://www.rs.uky.edu/consumer/extension_pdfs/ho101.pdf)

**Table 1.** Shrubs that bloom on last season's growth.

Botanical name	Common name
<i>Cercis chinensis</i>	Chinese redbud
<i>Chaenomeles japonica</i>	Japanese quince
<i>Chionanthus virginicus</i>	Fringe tree
<i>Daphne</i> spp.	Daphne
<i>Deutzia</i> spp.	Spring-flowering deutzia
<i>Exochorda racemosa</i>	Pearlbush
<i>Forsythia</i> spp.	Forsythia
<i>Kerria japonica</i>	Kerria
<i>Lonicera</i> spp.	Honeysuckle
<i>Magnolia stellata</i>	Star magnolia
<i>Philadelphus</i> spp.	Mockorange
<i>Pieris</i> spp.	Andromeda
<i>Rhododendron</i> spp.	Azalea and rhododendron
<i>Rosa</i> spp.	Rambling rose
<i>Spiraea</i> spp.	Early white spirea
<i>Syringa</i> spp.	Lilac
<i>Viburnum</i> spp.	Viburnum
<i>Weigela florida</i>	Old-fashioned weigela

**Figure 6.** Heading cuts (a) increase the number of new shoots formed and stiffen the branches, holding them in position. Thinning cuts (b) reduce the number of new shoots and direct growth.



**Figure 9.** Pruning a large branch: (a) Undercut one-third of the way through the branch. (b) Cut through from the top until the branch falls away. (c) Cut back to the collar.



# Philodendron Atom

By: Jennifer Tungate, Taylor County Master Gardener

Philodendron Atom is a great subtropical plant for those looking to begin a plant collection. It is a pretty easy and low maintenance plant for a beginner. The Philodendron Atom originates from South America and are found in Brazil and Paraguay. The Philodendron Atom is a little shrub like plant. Their growth will usually end up around 20 to 30 centimeters. As the plant ages it will begin to turn waxier in feel, which will contribute to its tropical vibe. The plant has dark green leaves that have a shiny and waxy look that will make you think of a tropical rainforest.

The Philodendron Atom is a low light plant. If the plant is kept in a very low light environment, the leaves will turn much darker. It is best to place this plant in a corner away from direct sunlight. Exposure to direct sunlight will damage its leaves even though they look sturdy. This makes it ideal for apartments, hallways, atrioms, or areas with frosted glass.

This subtropical plant prefers a soil that is rich with nutrients. Keep the soil moist but well drained, Lean towards an alkaline pH and ensure you add a draining material such as perlite or peat moss. Fertilize this plant in the summer months, typically watering once a week, but make sure the top inch of soil is drying between waterings. The sign of yellow leaves means your Philodendron Atom is receiving too much water; while brown leaves means that it is getting too little water. Root rot is probably the most difficult problem to manage in house plants. Over watering or remaining prolonged exposure to high water can put a plant at high risk to root rot. Root rot can become fatal quickly as the roots are exposed to a fungal infection and cannot absorb any nutrients from the soil. The damage is tricky to spot because the damage is below the surface.

The Philodendron Atom prefers a range of temperatures 60 to 85 degrees Fahrenheit. This plant loves a bit of warmth and does not like cold. Temperatures above 80 will cause damage to this plant. This plant also loves a humid atmosphere of at least 55%. One can encourage humidity by misting the leaves or keep the plant in high water areas such as kitchens and bathrooms. It will do fine in an average home, but will really shine in humidity levels of over 60%.

The Philodendron Atom can be propagated by taking a cutting with at least two nodules using a clean sterile knife. Make sure your stem comes with leaves because the leaves are needed for energy to produce regrowth. A couple days before you take the cutting make sure you give the plant a good drink of water. This will help to absorb nutrients and prepare for the transplant. You can use soil or water to root your cutting, and replant to a pot when new growth in two weeks.

This adorable plant will appear to slow in growth in the winter. This is the traditional dormancy period and is very normal. If your Philodendron Atom is vulnerable due to insufficient light or nutrients, it can be prone to insect attack. Aphids and mealy bugs can be a nuisance, but they can also introduce infections. These pests can be eliminated with an insecticidal soap. Be sure to move any plants with pests to a separate area to avoid spreading them to other plants.





## Butternut and Acorn Squash Soup

<b>1</b> butternut squash, halved and seeded	$\frac{1}{3}$ <b>cup</b> chopped sweet onion	$\frac{1}{2}$ <b>teaspoon</b> ground black pepper
<b>1</b> acorn squash, halved and seeded	<b>4 cups</b> chicken broth	$\frac{3}{4}$ <b>teaspoon</b> ground cinnamon
<b>1 tablespoon</b> olive oil	<b>3 tablespoons</b> peanut butter	$\frac{1}{4}$ <b>teaspoon</b> nutmeg
	$\frac{1}{3}$ <b>cup</b> packed brown sugar	Fresh parsley for garnish

Using a vegetable peeler, **remove** the skin from the butternut and acorn squashes and **cut** into 1-inch cubes. In a large soup pot, **heat** the oil on medium high. **Add** the onion, and **cook** 1 to 2 minutes until it starts to become translucent. **Add** cubed squash, and cook 4 to 5 minutes. **Add** chicken broth, and bring to a boil. **Lower** heat, and **simmer** 30 to 35 minutes, until the squash is fork tender. Allow to **cool** slightly, then **blend** until smooth in a food processor or

blender. **Return** mixture to the pot, and **heat** to medium low. **Add** peanut butter, brown sugar, pepper, cinnamon, and nutmeg. **Stir** until well blended. **Garnish** with fresh parsley. **Serve** warm.

**Yield:** 7, 1-cup servings

### **Nutritional Analysis:**

200 calories, 6 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 5 mg cholesterol, 600 mg sodium, 36 g carbohydrate, 4 g fiber, 14 g sugar, 10 g added sugar, 4 g protein.



Plate it up!

