

Cucurbita pepo

[Synonyms : *Cucurbita courgero*, *Cucurbita elongata*, *Cucurbita esculenta*, *Cucurbita melopepo*, *Cucurbita ovifera*]

CUSTARD MARROW is an annual vine. Native to Mexico it has yellow flowers.

It is also known as *Abóbora* (Portuguese), *Abóbora de coroa* (Portuguese), *Abóbora porqueira* (Portuguese), *Abóboreira* (Brazilian, Portuguese), Autumn pumpkin, *Barrete-de-padre* (Portuguese), *Brionne* (West Indian), *Calabaza* (Mexican, Spanish), *Calabaza común* (Spanish), *Calabaza de San Juan* (Spanish), *Chappan kaddu* (Hindi), *Chayote* (French), *Chouchoute* (Polynesian), *Christophine* (West Indian), *Citrouille* (French), *Cocuzza* (Italian), Cold seeds, *Courge* (French), *Courge commune* (French), *Courge pépo* (French), Crown of thorns, *Delaat hasade* (Hebrew), *Dubba* (Ethiopian), *Dýně* (Czech), *Dynia zwyczajna* (Polish), Edible summer squash, Elector's cap, *Fak neo* (Thai), *Fan gua* (Chinese), Field pumpkin, *Gartenkürbis* (German), *Gemüsekürbis* (German), *Gewöhnlicher Kürbis* (German), Hand of death, Hand of friendship, *Harilik kõrvits* (Estonian), Holy gourd, *Huicoy* (Guatemalan, Spanish), *Karr kosa* (Arabic, Egyptian), *Kalebas* (Dutch), *Kesäkurpitsa* (Finnish), *Kishu* (Hebrew), *Kolokythi* (Greek), *Kosah* (Arabic), *Közönséges tök* (Hungarian), *Kuerbis* (German), *Kumra* (Hindi), *Kürbis* (German), *Kurkaru* (Sanskrit), *Kurpitsa* (Finnish), *Labu air* (Malay), *Labu kuning* (Malay), *Labu manis* (Malay), *Mandelgraskar* (Norwegian), *Mandelgræskar* (Danish), *Markkürbis* (German), Marrow, *Matpumpa* (Swedish), *Mei zhou nan gua* (Chinese), *Moteyala* (Zuni North American Indian), New Guinea bean, Ornamental gourd, *Pareng-kai* (Tamil), Patty pan squash, *Pepogræskar* (Danish), *Pepo kabotcha* (Japanese), *Pépon* (French), *Pepono* (Esperanto), *Pharsi* (Nepalese), *Pompoen* (Dutch), *Ponkin* (Japanese), *Prydnadspumpa* (Swedish), *Pumpa* (Swedish), Pumpkin, *Qar'baladî* (Arabic), *Qar'kosah* (Arabic), *Ri tök* (Hungarian), *Safed kaddu* (Hindi), Scallop squash, Scollop squash, *Shada kumra* (Bengali), *Sierpompoen* (Dutch), *Sommarsquash* (Swedish), *Spárga tök* (Hungarian), Squash (English, Swedish), Summer pumpkin, Summer squash, *Suraikayi* (Tamil), *Takármany útök* (Hungarian), *Tekvica* (Slovak), *Tykev obecná* (Czech), *Tykva obyknovennaia* (Russian), Vegetable marrow, *Xi hu gua* (Chinese), *Xi hu lu* (Chinese), Yellow pumpkin, *Zapallo de Angola* (Argentinian, Spanish), *Zucca* (Italian), *Zucca da mangiare* (Italian), *Zucchetta* (Italian), *Zucchini* (Swedish), and *Zucchino* (Italian).

Pepo means 'sun-ripened'.

The North American Hopi Indians added deep-fried custard marrow to meat dishes. It was also familiar to the Menominee Okanagan-Colville and some of the Apache tribes. The Cherokee, Navajo, Kamia, Zuni and Cocopa Indians ate custard marrow as a vegetable too. The latter, as well as the Iroquois, Zuni, Navajo, some of the Tohono O'Odham, Meskwaki and some of the Chippewa Indians, dried the flesh for future use. The seeds were viewed as a snack by the Rappahannock Indians, whereas some of the Tohono O'Odham tribe relied on custard marrow as a staple part of their diet. The Iroquois used it to make sauces and puddings and they also added it to bread. Cocopa Indians ate the dried seeds, and some of the Apache formed the flowers into little cakes. Zuni Indians

also used the flowers as an ingredient in ceremonial dishes, while the Iroquois used the custard marrow flesh for this.

The large pear-shaped, green or white gourds served diverse uses among the Zuni Indians.

Apart from cups, ladles and storage containers, they were used to make ceremonial rattles and were also worn by participants in phallic dancing as a symbol of fruitfulness. Custard marrow was also an ingredient in a ceremonial Cherokee medicine.

Flagellants among the Zuni Indians who used cactus as a whip are said to have found some relief from the pain of the cactus needles by external application of a poultice of the custard marrow's seeds and flowers. Members of the Cocopa tribe rubbed their hands with seed oil to find some protection from the cold.

Custard marrow seems to have been used by several North American Indian tribes, including the Menominee, Iroquois and Cherokee Indians to treat fluid retention. The seeds were taken by the latter to cure worms, the leaves provided a Navajo remedy for some stomach upsets, and a stem decoction was used by the Meskwaki tribe for various female disorders. Both the Zuni and some of the Tohono O'Odham Indians used custard marrow externally for treating rheumatism (and the latter valued it as a skin softener as well).

In Asia the plant has been used as fodder as well as a vegetable.

Medicinally, the seeds were used to treat intestinal worms.