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Maple Pumpkin Butter

Take two easily found local ingredients, add a bit of spice, bake, and within an hour you'll have a delicious topping for muffins, breads, and hot cereals.

3 cups fresh pumpkin puree* (may substitute banana or butternut squash)
1 cup pure Indiana maple syrup
3 tablespoons pumpkin pie spice blend
1 tablespoon ground cinnamon

Line a large strainer with a coffee filter and place it over a bowl.

Pour the pumpkin puree into the lined strainer and put in the refrigerator overnight. This will remove any excess liquid from the fresh puree.

Preheat oven to 325 F.

Place drained puree into a medium size mixing bowl. Stir in maple syrup and spices until well blended.

Pour the pumpkin mixture into an 8x8 inch oven safe pan or casserole dish.

Place in oven, uncovered, for one hour. Stir mixture every 15 minutes.

Pour into a sterilized, two cup glass canning jar, cover with a plastic lid or metal band and lid, and place in the refrigerator. Will last for 10 days.

Makes about 1 ½ cups.

* To make fresh pumpkin or squash puree, heat the oven to 400 degrees. Line a rimmed baking sheet with non-stick foil and spray it with cooking spray. Cut a sugar/culinary pumpkin or squash in half and remove the seeds and stringy interior (ornamental pumpkins will not work for the recipe—be sure to buy a sugar pumpkin, sometimes referred to as a pie pumpkin, for culinary use).

Lay the pumpkin/squash halves cut side down on the foil and spray the skin side of the pumpkins/squash with cooking spray. Bake for 45 minutes or until the pumpkins/squash can be easily pierced with a fork. Remove from the oven and let the pumpkins/squash cool completely. Scoop out the pulp and puree in a food processor. You should get a cup of puree for every pound of pumpkin/squash.

Victoria Wesseler