

Strong

**SQUASH (60%), AZUKI or ADUKI BEANS (30%) AND KOMBU (10%) DISH**

1. Wash and soak one-half cup of azuki beans with a one-inch piece of kombu for several hours or overnight.
2. Put the kombu in the bottom of a heavy pot and add chopped hard winter or autumn squash (acorn, butternut, buttercup or Hokkaido squash).
3. Add azuki beans on top of squash.
4. Add enough water to just cover the layer of squash.
5. Do not place a lid on the pot at the beginning. Bring to a boil slowly. Cover after ten to 15 minutes.
6. Cook on a low flame until the beans are 70-80% done, about an hour or more. The water will evaporate as the beans expand, so gently add water along the sides of the pot to keep the water level constant and to make the beans soft.
7. When the beans are 70-80% done, add a few pinches of salt.
8. Cover and cook for another 15 to 30 minutes or until most of the liquid has evaporated.
9. Turn off the flame and let the pot sit for several minutes.
10. Transfer to a serving bowl and serve.

Notes:

- It is better not to stir while cooking.
- If winter squash is not available, you may substitute onions, carrots or parsnips.
- Lentils or chickpeas may also be used occasionally as substitutes for azuki beans.