



**Expanded Food and
Nutrition Education
Program**

The Market Basket



January/February 2009

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BUDGET RECIPES

Questions:

Q. My kids won't touch a green vegetable. What can I do to make veggies more appealing?

A. Make them taste better! For Example I sauté a lot of vegetables with garlic, olive oil and then sprinkled with Sea salt (Sea Salt, by the way, has half the sodium of regular table salt). I also kick up the flavor of steamed broccoli by drizzling extra virgin olive oil and kosher salt on top. Be a good role model by eating the vegetables yourself and remember to offer those veggies over and over again

Dear Friends:

Happy New Year 2009! I hope your Holidays were Blessed & Safe, and that the Holidays treated you well. Although this is the time for reflection, its also a time for looking ahead and setting new goals. If you weren't successful in achieving everything you wanted this past year, cheer up it's a new Beginning! The great thing about life is that it keeps presenting us with one opportunity after another to improve ourselves. This issue has a lot of ideas on healthy substitutions for high fat/sugar recipes and of course I always add a few healthy recipes that even children will like. See yourself as a person who prefers to eat healthy, appropriate amounts of food and smaller amounts of higher fat & sugar treats, all things in moderation right? Enjoy this issue and call or email me if you have any questions. See you in March.

Joyce Tompkins

Questions? Comments?

SEND EMAIL

Happy New Year!

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It's Oatmeal Month!

It turns out Moms and Grandmas have been right all along. Eating a bowl of oatmeal or other oat-containing foods really is good for you. And it actually tastes good, too!



Americans aren't rebelling at the thought of oatmeal. About three-fourths of American households have oatmeal in their cupboards at any given time. We're eating it, too. According to the Quaker Oats Company, Americans devoured 470 million bowls of oatmeal in January 1999. Oats were long viewed as animal feed, not people food, and early writings and drawings prominently feature cereals like wheat but scarcely mention oats. Later, Northern Europeans were teased by the Romans for eating oats, which the Romans considered a weed only good for animal feed or for making medicinal salves to apply to skin.

Many varieties of oatmeal are available ranging from "old fashioned" to "instant." Oats are processed into rolled oats by first removing the outer husk or hull, yielding "groats." The groats are then cleaned, steamed, toasted, steamed again to soften them, and finally, rolled. Rolled oats that are not cut into smaller pieces are termed "old fashioned." They take about five minutes to cook on the stove, and they yield a chewier product after cooking.

What makes oats so healthy? Oats are a whole grain food containing insoluble and soluble fiber. Insoluble fiber keeps us "regular" by moving foods through the digestive system. Most beneficial health-wise are the beta-glucans, a type of soluble fiber shown to reduce blood cholesterol levels, particularly the LDL "bad" cholesterol. High LDL levels are considered a risk factor for heart disease, the leading cause of death in the United States. Scientists have compared oats to tiny sponges that pick up cholesterol and carry it out of the body.

Oats are so healthy that foods containing a specific amount may carry a health claim approved by the Food and Drug Administration in 1997. An example of an approved food label statement is: "Diets low in saturated fat and cholesterol that include soluble fiber from oatmeal may reduce the risk of heart disease." The part about a diet "low in saturated fat and cholesterol" reminds us that a bowl of oats won't make up for a diet of premium ice cream and brownies.

Add some oats to your diet. Try topping your oatmeal with old standbys like brown sugar and milk, or try dried fruit like raisins or cranberries, fruit-flavored yogurt, fruit preserves or fresh fruit. During January, National Oatmeal Month, make oatmeal-containing foods like this tasty granola from the Quaker Oats Company a tasty and nutritious part of your diet -- just like Mom said

Eating Healthy on a Budget:

With rising grocery prices eating healthy has become more of a challenge. As always, use or adapt the information as best meets your needs. Check the list for potential savings to your pocket book with small changes.

Keep a Grocery List; Gas for an extra trip to the store easily can add a dollar or more to your grocery bill. And the less you shop, the less likely you will make an impulse purchase. Keep a grocery list where it's easily accessible, such as on the fridge and remember to take it with you to the grocery store. Stick to your list for added savings, but do stay flexible if you encounter a sale.

Garbage Check; We lose money whenever we toss food because it spoiled before we got around to eating it. If leftovers get the "heave ho" because they're left too long, we're putting money in the garbage can. Make planning to avoid tossing foods a priority.

Consider: If wilted lettuce is a frequent occupant of your garbage can, serve more salads at the beginning of the week. If extra mashed potatoes get tossed because they've lingered too long in the fridge, make less next time. Or recycle them as potato patties, shepherd's pie or potato soup within a day or two of making them. Some other ideas: Use ripe bananas in banana bread; add juice to smoothies or make popsicles; freeze leftovers for another meal. Small scale experimentations: Before trying a new food, buy the smallest size of package. If your family doesn't like the food, you won't be stuck with a big box of it

Costly Convenience foods: How much time do you really save when you buy a convenience food? It takes just a few seconds to mix your own sugar and cinnamon rather than buying it pre-mixed. Microwaving a bowl of regular oatmeal rather than pouring hot water over a pre-measured package adds only a few minutes. You're likely to save by cutting fruits and veggies yourself. Plus, the pre-cut ones won't keep as long.

Staple Food Stock-Up: Invest in staple foods when they're on sale. Buying a boatload of bananas (and other perishable foods) isn't a very good long-term investment. Stocking up on staple items such as reduced-price canned tuna or tomato sauce can be. Remember to check expiration dates

Bulking up when the price is right & you can use it; First, do the math and check if you actually do save by buying a larger package. The cost of two foods of the smaller size may be a better price than the larger one. Plus, will you use the food while the flavor is still tasty? Always check it out and if the larger size meets your criteria, go for it!

Prevent Food Flops; Check preparation methods for unfamiliar foods. Perhaps that tropical fruit looked enticing at the store. However, if you're not sure how to prepare it or where to find more information once you bring it home, think again. Or, that new cut of meat – do you slowly roast it or can it be grilled? Either way, find out or risk having a food flop. Often the produce person or the meat manager at the store can give you some tips. Many produce departments have books with descriptions of all the items, what they taste like, how to prepare them, etc.

Shop the Specials; Plan your menus around sale items, especially more expensive purchases, such as meat. A dollar saved is even better than a dollar earned, as you don't have to pay taxes on it!

Budget Recipes:

Easy Potato Soup:

2 stalks celery - dice fine

1 small onion, chopped

4-5 large potatoes, peeled and
Chopped

1. Put ingredients in a pot and cover with water.

2. Cook till tender

3. Mash, leaving a few lumps.

Add:

1 can 2% evaporated milk

1 T butter

Salt and pepper to taste

• Warm slightly. DO NOT boil.



Carrot Treat:

3 large carrots

1 can crushed pineapple & its juice

1/2 cup raisins

1/4 cup flaked coconut

1/4 cup chopped walnuts

Lightly but thoroughly mix all the ingredients

Stir in 1 cup low-fat vanilla yogurt. Spoon into dishes & serve. You can also garnish with fresh orange slices if you like. Enjoy!



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