



Food Pantry Recipe Round-Up

Welcome to the March-April edition of Penn State Cooperative Extension's Nutrition Education Program newsletter. We will offer menus and tasty recipes using food pantry foods. Tips on saving money, time, and providing healthier meals will be included. Look for us at your site to find out more!

March 2002

FP= food pantry food

Meal 1

Taco Salad (recipe)

FP-beans (kidney or northern), cheese
FP-applesauce

Meal 2

Tuna Potato Casserole (recipe)

FP-tuna, peas, cheese
FP-canned peaches

Meal 3

One Pot Macaroni & Cheese (recipe)

FP-macaroni, cheese
FP-canned green beans

Meal 4

Vegetable Soup (recipe)

FP-pasta, tomatoes, carrots
Cornbread
FP-Non-fat dry milk

*All food pantry foods mentioned in this issue may not be available everywhere-check with your local food pantry with any questions on food availability.

- Meals are more likely to be nutritious and healthier. You can see if meals are balanced and if a variety of nutritious foods are served.
- Trips to the grocery store are reduced. With menus in full view, you can quickly determine which ingredients you need to buy.
- Money can be saved because you are not buying items you don't need or will not use immediately. You also have fewer trips to the grocery store thereby reducing transportation costs.
- Dovetailing tasks may be easier. For instance, if rice appears on your menu two times during a week, you can cook enough for both meals at once. If the meal is one of your family's favorite, you can make 2 meals at once and freeze one for later use.
- Posted menus make it easier for other family members to help prepare the meals. Spouses and older teens can peel potatoes and perform other simple tasks. If the menu is posted, you are reminded to delegate those chores.

You just read five *simple* things you can do to lighten your load in the kitchen. The choice is yours. What will you do? A few minutes spent planning weekly menus may be the biggest gift you give yourself and your family.

By: Cathy Bowen

Five Reasons You Should Plan Menus

How would you like to gain two (2) or more hours each week to spend on a hobby? By spending about 30 minutes to plan your meals for a week you could save yourself hours. You can also reduce frustration when family members ask, "What's for dinner?" In fact, by writing and posting a weekly menu, you could eliminate that question! Saving time is a major advantage of planning menus, but there are other reasons, such as:



Taco Salad

- 1 cup Italian dressing
- 1 head lettuce, torn into bite size pieces
- 1 16oz can Mexican kidney or pinto beans
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2 tomatoes, diced
- 2 cups corn chips

1 cup shredded cheese (cheddar or longhorn)

Place lettuce in a large bowl, add onion, then tomatoes. Add beans (drained), cheese and crushed corn chips. Toss all ingredients with Italian dressing. Makes 12 servings

Optional" ½ pound browned ground meat may be added.

Per Serving: 229 calories; 6gm protein, 15gm fat; 20gm carbohydrate; 370 mg sodium



Tuna-Potato Casserole

2 cups thinly sliced raw potatoes
1 can (6 1/2 oz) chunk light tuna, drained
1 cup sweet peas
2 tablespoons chopped parsley (optional)
2 tablespoons margarine
¼ cup flour
2 cups milk
1 ¼ cups American
1/3 cup diced onion
¼ teaspoon dried mustard
1 ½ teaspoons season salt

Cook potatoes until tender-crisp. Save potato water to reconstitute non-fat dry milk. Layer potatoes, tuna, peas, onions and parsley in a shallow, greased 2 quart casserole dish. Melt margarine in a heavy saucepan. Blend in flour. Add milk. Heat until thickened, stirring constantly. Add cheese, mustard and salt, stirring until smooth. Pour over tuna-potato mixture. Cover and bake in 350°F oven for 30 minutes. Makes 8, 1 cup servings

Per Serving: 233 calories; 15gm protein, 11gm fat, 18gm carbohydrate; 66mg sodium

One-Pot Mac'n' Cheese

9 ounces uncooked macaroni
2 cups milk
1 ½ tablespoons cornstarch
¾ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon pepper
½ teaspoon dry mustard
¼ teaspoon paprika
1 ¼ pound (20 ounces) sharp Cheddar cheese, shredded

Cook macaroni according to directions. While macaroni is cooking, combine milk and dry ingredients in a jar and shake well. When macaroni is tender, drain and return to pan. Add milk mixture and stir gently over medium heat until sauce thickens. Add cheese and stir until melted. Serve. Makes 13 (2/3 cup) servings.

Per Serving: 263 calories; 16gm fat; 15gm protein, 497mg sodium

Vegetable Soup

1 teaspoon vegetable oil
½ cup chopped onion
1 clove garlic, chopped
29 ounces reduced-salt chicken broth
32 ounces tomatoes
1/3 cup alphabet pasta
½ cup parsley
2 cups chopped broccoli
2 cups carrots
2 cups sliced celery
Salt and pepper to taste
2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese (optional)
Heat oil in a saucepan over medium heat. Add onion and garlic and cook until the onion is soft, about 2 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add chicken broth, tomatoes, pasta, and parsley to the saucepan. Bring the liquid to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Add broccoli, carrots and celery to soup; cook 10 minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste. Ladle soup into serving bowl and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Makes 15 (2/3 cup) servings.

Per Serving: 50 calories; 1gm fat; 3gm protein; 194 mg sodium
This recipe is a good source of Vitamins A and C

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