

Extension

September 2012
Newsletter

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Beans....."Let's Get Cookin'"

Ann Zander, Family & Consumer Science Agent, Boulder County

Beans are a great source of lean protein and fiber. Fiber helps the stomach to feel full faster and longer and the protein is important for building muscle mass. This makes beans an excellent choice for people who want to watch their weight or lose weight.

Beans contain complex carbohydrates, which are digested slowly by the body. This helps to control blood sugar levels, which is especially important for individuals with diabetes.

Individuals with food allergies and intolerances such as those with celiac disease have a hard time eating important nutrients needed each day. Beans provide a great source of fiber, protein, vitamins and minerals in the diet, which might otherwise be missing. Beans are an easy to chew source of protein for children and adults.

Beans and peas include kidney beans, pinto beans, black beans, lima beans, black-eyed peas, and garbanzo beans (chickpeas). They are available in dry, canned, and frozen forms. They are a healthy and cost effective protein alternative to meat.

How to Prepare -

Soaking dry-packaged beans

Before cooking, soak dry-packaged beans to help soften and return moisture to the beans, while reducing cooking time. Most beans triple in size as they rehydrate, so be sure to start with a large enough pot.

Hot soak or quick soak: For each pound of beans, add 10 cups hot water, heat to boiling, and let boil 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from heat and cover for at least 1 hour but not more than 4 hours.

Traditional overnight soak: For each pound of dry-packaged beans, add 10 cups of cold water and let soak overnight or at least 8 hours.

Cooking dry-packaged beans -

- Drain soaking water, rinse beans, and cook in fresh water. In general beans take 30 minutes to 2 hours to cook depending on the variety and the altitude.
- Add spice to beans as they cook rather than at the end of the cooking time
- Add salt and acidic ingredients (tomatoes, vinegar or citrus juice) only after beans are tender; they may make the skins tough if added before beans are tender.
- To test for doneness, try a few. They should be tender, but not mushy.
- Cool leftover beans and cooking liquid in a shallow container (2 inches deep) in the refrigerator.

Canned beans

Always drain and rinse before adding canned beans to a recipe; this reduces the amount of sodium. It is not necessary to re-cook canned beans, just heat them if a recipe calls for it.

Gas – Gas – Gas!

Gas is caused by indigestible sugars found in dry beans, so to minimize gas:

- Add beans to the diet slowly over several weeks. Once you are eating beans on a regular basis,





intestinal gas will be less of a problem.

- Use the hot soak method of soaking beans (instead of the cold water overnight method). This method reduces many of the gas-producing substances in beans.
- Always discard soaking water and rinse beans with fresh water after soaking.
- Chew beans well to help digest them.
- Drink plenty of water and other fluids to help your system handle the extra fiber in beans.
- Get plenty of physical activity.

Let's Talk

Have you ever tried these gentle words of persuasion with your child: "Try it, you'll like it!" Then you try offering a reward: "You can have a cookie if you eat your peas." Finally resorting to "You must eat your peas before you can leave the table."

- Research shows that these kinds of tactics do not work and can even make the situation worse!
- Children can begin to dislike being at the table and eating together.
- Sometimes kids will not eat new foods, but that does not mean that they will never eat that food. Kids change their minds often so if you offer that same food again they may decide they like it, gobble it up and ask for seconds
- It is not until they are exposed to and taste, or watch someone else taste and enjoy, a new food as many as 10-15 times that they will begin to try or like the food themselves.



Suggestions:

- Try serving a new food with something they like.
- At the store, see how many kinds of dry beans and peas your child can find. There are more than 10 kinds of dry beans and peas.
- Kids can measure dry beans using a measuring cup. Have them pour the beans into a bowl before you add water for soaking.
- Place some dried beans or peas between some damp paper towels. Watch them sprout!
- Be a good role model. Eat a new food in front of your child and let them see how much you are enjoying it.

Recipe for Health:

Black Bean Brownies

Jami Nolen, Nutrition Program Associate, North Dakota State University Extension

***This brownie recipe is dairy free, nut free and gluten free. Now everyone can enjoy dessert!

Yield

16 servings

Ingredients

- 1 (15.5 ounce) can black beans, rinsed and drained
- 3 eggs
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 pinch salt
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 3/4 cup white sugar
- 1 teaspoon instant coffee (optional)
- 1/2 cup dairy-free semi-sweet chocolate chips



Nutrition Information

(Amount per Serving)

Calories: 126

Total Fat: 5.3 g

Cholesterol: 40 mg

Nutrition Analysis

Serving Size: 1 brownie Total Carb: 25 g

Calories: 129 Dietary Fiber: 1 g

Total Fat: 3.0 g Sodium: 68 mg

Calories from Fat: 21% Protein: 2.3 g

Saturated Fat: 1.0 g Calcium: 11.6 mg

Trans Fat: 0.0 g Iron: 0.3 mg

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Lightly grease an 8x8 square baking dish.
2. Combine the black beans, eggs, oil, cocoa powder, salt, baking powder, vanilla extract, sugar and instant coffee in a food processor or blender; blend until smooth; pour the mixture into the prepared baking dish. Sprinkle the chocolate chips over the top of the mixture.
3. Bake in the preheated oven until the top is dry and the edges start to pull away from the sides of the pan, about 30 minutes.

Helping families increase physical activity and enjoy healthy foods...