

Mealtime Solutions

HELPFUL IDEAS FOR TAKING ON THE MEALTIME CHALLENGE.

Comfort Foods

Did You Know?

Keep it Safe

Always reheat leftover casseroles to 165° F before serving. Remember, a casserole is a mixture of several foods. Leftovers need to be re-used within 3 to 4 days. Always make sure they are cooled properly and kept in the refrigerator at 40 or 41 degrees, between uses.

Question Answer:

The can opener is considered to be the worst food contaminant. This is mainly because most people “never” clean the blade.

Nutrition Nugget

Need a fast supper idea? Purchase a rotisserie chicken and a bottle of marinara sauce at the grocery store. Cook up some whole wheat pasta. While it is cooking, heat up the marinara sauce. Chop up all the breast meat from the chicken and save the dark meat for tomorrow’s meal. Add to marinara and stir in some fresh spinach. Cook until spinach is wilted. Drain the pasta and add to the marinara.

Family Play Time

Did you know that Americans eat more on Super Bowl Sunday than any other day of the year except Thanksgiving? About 3,000 calories. How about turning the day into a “Healthy Family Affair”? Before settling down in your comfortable chairs, have the whole family participate in an active game; a family football game in the yard, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, a family walk around the neighborhood, etc. Instead of high calorie, fat filled foods, fill the crock pot with chili or taco soup and have available a tray of crunchy vegetables to munch on. Now...sit down and enjoy the game as a family.



Cooking School

Food on the Move

Try making these for a great winter breakfast on the go. Cook and drain one pound of breakfast sausage. In a large skillet, melt 2 Tbs. butter. Beat a dozen eggs and add to skillet. Cook stirring frequently, until scrambled and set. Add cooked sausage and ½ cup chunky salsa to egg mixture and mix gently. Warm 24 tortillas as directed on package. Place about ½ cup egg and sausage mixture onto each tortilla and sprinkle with some grated cheddar cheese. Roll up each tortilla to make burritos, folding in the ends and rolling up. Place on parchment paper lined cookie sheet and freeze until solid. Then wrap individually in wax paper and package in zip-lock freezer bags. When ready to eat, heat in microwave on high power for 1 – 3 minutes until hot and cheese is melted. Off to school and work you go!



RECIPE FOR: Banana Nut Bread

- 3/4 cup butter, softened
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 1/2 cups mashed ripe bananas (4 medium)
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 cups chopped nuts (pecans or walnuts)

- 1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese, softened
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt



Preheat oven to 350° F. Grease two loaf pans. Cream butter, cream cheese, and sugar in large mixing bowl until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time beating after each addition. Add bananas and vanilla. Combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt; add to creamed mixture. Fold in nuts. Pour into pans and bake for 1 hour or until toothpick inserted into center comes out clean.

RECIPE FOR: Shepherd's Pie with Squashed Potatoes

Meat and Vegetables:

- 1 1/2 lbs. ground beef
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 cup canned or frozen mixed peas & carrots (drain if using canned)
- 1 cup canned or frozen corn (drain if using canned)
- 1/3 cup beef broth
- 2 Tablespoons chili sauce
- 1 1/2 Tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 Tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- Salt & pepper to taste

Topping:

- 2 lbs. Yukon Gold potatoes
- 2 cups peeled & chopped butternut squash
- 1/2 cup plus 2 Tablespoons Parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup light sour cream
- salt to taste & dash of nutmeg



Preheat oven to 350° F. Cook beef, onion and garlic in a large skillet over medium-high heat until meat is no longer pink. Stir in paprika and thyme. Add vegetables and mix well. Mix the rest of the ingredients and add to meat mixture. Simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes. **Topping:** Place potatoes in a large pot and cover with water by 2 inches. Bring to boil. Add squash and cook until both are tender. Drain and return to pot, sprinkle with 1/2 cup cheese and let set for 1 minute. Add sour cream, salt and nutmeg. Mash well using a potato masher. Spread meat mixture evenly over the bottom of a 2 qt. casserole dish. Top with potato-squash mixture. Sprinkle with remaining 2 Tbs. cheese. Bake for 25 minutes, until completely heated through. Let stand 5 minutes before serving.

ASK AN AGENT

This E-Newsletter is brought to you by the MSU Extension Service in Custer, Fergus, Richland Roosevelt and Sheridan Counties.

To ask a question or for more information contact:
 Ardis Oelkers, Roosevelt County Agent
 406-787-5312
 aoelkers@montana.edu

What Can I Do Today?

Turn off the television. Researchers at Kansas State University found that people who had just watched television for a mere 15 minutes had diminished brain-wave activity. In fact, your brain is more active while you're sleeping than it is while you're watching TV! Try having a family conversation during the dinner hour, instead of watching your favorite TV program.