

FOOD FOR FITNESS AND FUN

November - 2005

November is a time for giving thanks; appreciating family and friends. Celebrate with some of these healthy side dishes. Enjoy! Jan Temple

GREEN BEAN CASSEROLE

Green Bean Casserole is a staple at many Thanksgiving celebrations. To make it a little healthier, try using this recipe for Casserole Sauce Mix in place of the canned Cream of Mushroom Soup. Other tips to reduce sodium and fat:

- use frozen or fresh beans rather than canned;
- use fresh mushrooms; Alternative - drain and rinse canned mushrooms
- omit the fried onion rings on top

CASSEROLE SAUCE MIX (9 'CANS' OF SOUP)

Modify the herbs to suit your personal preference.

2 cups instant nonfat dry milk crystals

¾ cup cornstarch

¼ cup reduced sodium chicken bouillon

2 tablespoons dried onion flakes

½ teaspoon dried thyme, crushed

½ teaspoon basil, crushed

¼ teaspoon pepper



Combine all ingredients. Store in airtight container.

To use as a substitute for one can condensed soup, mix 1/3-cup dry mix and 1 ¼ cups water in saucepan. Cook and stir until thickened.

APPLE-RICE STUFFING SERVES 16

This recipe contains 38% fewer calories, 75% less fat, 66% less sodium and 66% more fiber than regular stuffing.

1 cup each: diced apples, onions, celery

1 Tablespoon margarine

4 cups stuffing (or 1 box of Stove Top® brand stuffing), made without fat

3 cups cooked brown rice (instant is fine)

1 cup low-sodium broth

Sauté the apples, onions, and celery in the margarine. When they are soft (about 5 minutes), add the prepared stuffing, rice and broth. Combine well and place in covered casserole or baking dish. Bake for 45 minutes at 350 degrees F.

Each 1/2 cup serving: 104 calories, 2.8 g fat, 0.5 g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 175 mg sodium, 17 g carbohydrate, 1.5 g fiber, 2 g protein.

Source: Communicating Food for Health, Nov/Dec 2002

SWEET POTATO STUFFING SERVES 6

This stuffing has more flavor and less fat and sodium than commercial stuffing. It will be the hit of any holiday table.

1 C. chopped onion	Black pepper to taste
1 C. chopped celery	1 C. low-fat chicken broth ¹
½ tsp. cinnamon	4 C. cubed whole wheat bread, dried ²
½ tsp. dried sage	16 oz. can yams, drained, cubed ³
½ tsp. dried thyme	Nonstick vegetable spray

Lightly spray a large, nonstick skillet with vegetable oil cooking spray and heat over medium-high. Sauté the chopped onion and celery until golden. Add the broth and seasonings. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to low and simmer for 5 minutes. Broth should be reduced to half the amount. Add the yams and bread crumbs. Stir well and adjust the consistency with more broth or a little water if you like it moist. Place in an oiled casserole dish; cover and bake at 350°F for 20-30 minutes. Serve hot.

Notes: 1) Chicken broth for this recipe should be low in fat and relatively low in sodium. Look for one with less than 1 gram of fat and 400 mg. sodium per ½ cup serving. 2) Make sure the first ingredient on the bread is whole wheat flour. Look for one with 2 or more grams of fiber per slice. You need about 6 slices to equal 4 cups. 3) You may also use fresh cooked yams for this recipe. Use 1 large or 2 medium. Peel and slice them; boil or microwave the sliced yams until tender, about 45 minutes.

Each 3/4 cup serving: 140 calories, 1.5 g fat, 0.5 g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 310 mg sodium, 26 g carbohydrate, 6 g fiber, 6 g protein.

Source: Communicating Food for Health, Nov/Dec 1998

PUMPKIN HAZELNUT DELIGHT SERVES 12

1 15 oz. can pumpkin

½ cup Splenda® Sweetener or sugar

¾ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice

1 cup fat free Hazelnut Flavor non-dairy creamer
20 ginger snaps

Crush 12 ginger snaps in a food processor or by placing in a plastic bag and crushing with a rolling pin. Put in the bottom of a 9 inch spring form pan. Combine pumpkin puree, sweetener, spice, and nondairy creamer until blended. Pour over crushed cookies. Crush remaining 8 cookies and sprinkle on top of pumpkin mixture. Cover and freeze several hours or overnight. Let stand at room temperature 10 minutes before serving. Each serving: 101 calories, 1.2 g fat, 0.3 g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 74 mg sodium, 20 g carbohydrate, 1.4 g fiber, 1 g protein.

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MAKING FOOD AHEAD OF TIME

During the holidays, we may find ourselves doing some unique meal management. Following is insight on the more common situations.

Preparing Pumpkin Pie Ahead of Time:

- A pumpkin pie is a form of custard and like custard must be kept in the refrigerator at 40°F or cooler. Foods which contain eggs, milk, and have high moisture content, like custard and pumpkin pie, must be kept refrigerated. Bacteria love to grow in these types of foods. Avoid letting a pumpkin pie set at room temperature over TWO hours TOTAL time.
- Some commercial pumpkin pies can be left at room temperature; check the label on commercially baked pie for storage requirements. Some commercial pies that are purchased at room temperature may later need to be refrigerated.
- If you'd like to prepare pumpkin pie ahead, it's easiest and safest to freeze just the crust. Add the filling to the frozen crust just before baking and bake as usual. It takes just a few minutes to mix together the ingredients. Or purchase a frozen prepared crust. Usually the directions for frozen pie crusts recommend placing a baking sheet in your oven and preheating the oven to the baking temperature given in your pie recipe, then placing the pie on the hot baking sheet and baking as usual.

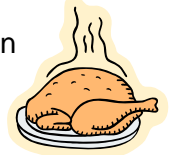


Tips for Handling Meat:

- If you have frozen meat, poultry or seafood, plan time for safe thawing in your refrigerator. Allow approximately 24 hours for each 5 pounds of weight. For turkey, make sure you remove the bag containing the neck and giblets from the body cavities.
- If you prepare meat, poultry or fish the day before your meal, divide it into small portions. Then refrigerate in loosely covered shallow containers within 2 hours of cooking – limit depth of meat, etc. to about 2 inches. Cover tightly when cooled. On the day of your meal, reheat thoroughly to a temperature of 165° F until hot and steaming throughout.

IF YOUR FOOD GETS DONE EARLY OR YOUR GUESTS WILL BE LATE

- If you have hot foods in the oven, you may be able to hold them safely until your guests arrive. Put an oven meat thermometer in the thickest part of your roast or poultry, or center of your casserole. Adjust the oven temperature so that the food stays at an internal temperature of 140 ° F or above. To prevent dryness, cover the dishes or wrap with foil.
- For extended delays, it is safer to refrigerate the food and reheat it when your guests arrive. Food in shallow containers will cool rapidly to a safe temperature in the refrigerator. Do not worry about putting hot foods directly into the refrigerator because the thermostat will keep the unit running to maintain a safe temperature. When your guests arrive, reheat food in a 325° F oven to an internal temperature of 165° F, or until hot and steaming. Cold foods should be kept refrigerated until mealtime.
- If you have prepared a turkey and you have determined it is safely done several hours before serving time:
 - Remove the turkey from the oven and allow it to stand for 20 minutes.
 - If the turkey is stuffed, remove the stuffing, place it in a shallow container, cover and refrigerate.
 - Remove the legs, thighs, and wings. Carve the breast meat, and legs and thighs, if desired.
 - If you want to serve the meat cold, arrange the sliced turkey on platters or shallow containers. For carved turkey meat to be reheated, place the slices in shallow oven-safe baking dishes or pans. Cover and refrigerate the meat.
 - If you will be making gravy, pour off the drippings and refrigerate them. The gravy can be made at your leisure.
 - About thirty minutes before serving turkey to be heated, sprinkle with a little broth. Cover with foil and heat in a 325° F oven. The stuffing can be heated alongside the turkey.



Source "No-Show" Guests Jeopardize Food, USDA, October 2005)

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