



## Condiments—are they good for you?

Author—Guest Blogger—Sarah Allen, Nutrition Program Student Assistant

One of the joys of summer is grilling. One thing that we may not think about is the nutrition of the condiments that we use for grilled foods. I looked at five condiments from my local grocery store and compared them. Take a look at what I found:



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	Tomato Ketchup	Yellow Mustard	Ranch Dressing	Hot Sauce	Barbecue Sauce
Serving	1 Tbsp.	1 tsp.	2 Tbsp.	1 tsp.	2 Tbsp.
Calories	20	0	140	0	35
Total Fat, g	0g	0g	14g	0g	0g
Sodium, mg	160mg	60mg	260mg	200mg	210mg
Carbohydrates (sugar), g	5g (4g)	0g (0g)	2g (1g)	0g (0g)	8g (7g)
Protein, g	0g	0g	0g	0g	0g
Vitamin A % DV**	2%	0%	0%	2%	4%
Vitamin C % DV**	2%	0%	2%	4%	0%
Calcium % DV**	0%	0%	0%	N/A*	0%
Iron % DV**	0%	0%	0%	N/A*	0%

\*N/A not mentioned on the nutrition label

\*\*DV: Daily Value – calculated based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your needs may vary.

Most of these condiments are tasty, but it is important to keep in mind that they are:

- High in sodium—this can cause high blood pressure
- Have little to no protein
- Have little to no vitamins and minerals
- Have empty calories—this means calories that do not provide much nutrition

The serving size in the chart is what is listed on the label. If more than that is used, that would mean the sodium would be even higher. In general, we should eat less than 2,300 mg of sodium per day. If you or your kids are like me when I was a kid, you may dunk everything in ketchup, ranch dressing, or barbecue sauce.

Consider using a small amount of these condiments and adding vegetables to your favorite foods to add more flavor (and color)! For example, add leafy lettuce, tomato and onion to your hamburger or chicken sandwich. Be sure to check back to the Spend Smart. Eat Smart. blog for more on the cost of these condiments and some healthier ways to use them!

## Shopping Like a Food Safety Expert

Author—Marlene Geiger, Program Specialist I



For whatever reason, people tend to call about food safety issues more in the summer. While the questions run the gamut, many are regarding getting food home safely from the grocery store. That's a great summertime concern, but safe grocery shopping is a year-round challenge. Protecting our family from food poisoning begins at the grocery store and to that end, we need to shop like a food safety expert. So here's some quick tips to insure grocery shopping safety year round.

### Make Cleanliness a Priority.

- Clean your cart. If your store doesn't provide wipes, bring your own. The Journal of Food Protection Trends found E. coli on 50 percent of shopping cart handles tested.
- Clean your hands before sampling foods. Since stores rarely provide wipes in the sampling areas, you might want to carry a small bottle of hand sanitizer with you.
- Wash your reusable grocery bags often. The Department of Agriculture's Office of Public Affairs and Consumer Education recommends laundering bags with hot, soapy water at least once a month and storing them in a clean area of your car. If the bags are soiled, wash them immediately.
- Wash coolers and ice packs after each use.



### Inspect Your Food Choices.

- Check your eggs. Open the carton and make sure that none of the eggs are cracked. Should an egg crack on the way home, remove it from the carton and place in a separate container; use within 24 hours.
- Check food temperatures. Frozen foods should be solid with no signs of thawing. Refrigerated foods should feel cold.
- Check packaging. Avoid open boxes, tears or holes in bags. Avoid dented, bulging, or rusted cans. Cans with these symptoms may be a warning of internal issues or may have put undue stress on the seam of the can allowing bacteria to enter. Avoid containers or jars with a loose lid. If the lid is loose, the vacuum has been lost and the contents may be contaminated.
- Pay attention to package dates on perishable foods. If the "sell by" date has passed, don't buy the product; also, make sure that you will be able to use the product by the "use by" date.



### Organize Your Cart.

- Keep meat and produce separate. Put raw meat, poultry, and seafood into plastic bags before placing them in your cart. Bagging keeps meat juices from dripping and contaminating other foods. Further, when checking out, place meat, poultry, and seafood in bags separate from other foods—you may have to instruct the person packing your groceries to do this!
- Keep frozen and cold foods together in your cart. This helps to keep them cool longer.



### Plan Your Trip.

- Last stop. Make the grocery store your last stop if you have a number of errands to run.
- Shop for perishable foods, frozen foods, meat, poultry, and seafood last.
- Pack a cooler. If the trip home will be longer than 30 minutes, place perishable foods into a cooler with an ice pack. Perishable foods must be refrigerated within two hours if it is over 90F outside.

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## “Dollar” Stores

Author—Brenda Schmitt, Field Specialist III—Families



In the past, I have referenced concern for the elderly not having access to quality food in the small rural communities we live in. It is understandable that a business would not choose to locate in a small community because foot traffic, which they depend on for success, would be limited. For this reason, I was quite surprised to see a “dollar” store being built in one of the small towns in my county. It happens to be in the town my son lives in. He is quite excited about its arrival and now sees no reason to ever have to go beyond the perimeter of the big city located 15 miles down the road.

I had not been in a “dollar” store for quite a while because my past experience told me they were full of trinkets and stuff I didn't need or want, so I was surprised by my son's reaction. His favorite store (located on the near edge of the big city) carries auto, mechanical and construction tools and supplies; why would he be interested in a “dollar” store? It turns out he sees it as a way to get everything else!

It appears that “dollar” stores have reinvented themselves. When I visited their web site, I found they now carry a lot of basic groceries...coffee, cereal, toilet paper, flour, cold and allergy medicine, shampoo, diapers...you get the drift. Though everything in the store is not available for a dollar, their prices are cheaper than those in the big-city stores...partly because they are not name-brand products. And, not only that, they also offer digital coupons and online shopping.

The arrival of this “dollar” store to this small rural community is a step in the right direction toward serving the needs of the elderly who find transportation a barrier to basic grocery needs. It does give access to canned fruits and vegetables, but, as far as I can see, it still does not bring quality, unprocessed meat any closer to their homes. I will be curious to see if people in the other 4 or 5 small communities surrounding the “dollar” store find ways to shop there. The drive would be closer and less intimidating than driving to the big city.

## Family Vacations—Memories in the Making!

Author—Mackenzie Johnson, Field Specialist I



A few weeks ago we got to hear our friend, Barb Dunn-Swanson, featured on Iowa Public Radio talking about family vacations. We learned a lot about “family leisure”, and we heard that some of the value of family vacation comes from quality family time – whether home or away! As I think back on my family vacations growing up, I have positive memories of visiting new places, relaxing in the sun, and laughing while playing family games. But if I really think about it, I can also remember the stress my mom experienced trying to spend money wisely, to navigate in a new city, or to get my siblings and I to stop fighting after so much time together. Now as a parent myself, I am in the process of planning a family vacation, and I'm finding the stress holds true for me too.

Luckily, when it comes to family vacation, our kids are likely going to remember the good stuff. Similar to the stories we heard from callers on the radio show, nearly all of them were sharing fond memories of family vacations. So let's stop here for a moment, take a breath. **Remember that the time, energy, and money you are allocating toward a family vacation (or stay-cation!) is likely going to result in positive family memories down the road!**

For me, I think of one vacation in particular where my family went on an out-of-state trip. I look back on that time together and I remember binge-watching (before that was even cool!) a TV show we all liked. I remember playing tennis for one of the first times – a sport which I grew to love and eventually qualified for the state tournament in high school. I remember going on rides at an amusement park. I remember that my sister and I shared a bed on one family vacation and my sister kept me awake by TALKING in her sleep, something I still like to bring up from time to time.

So as you examine tourism brochures, scour the internet for the best travel deals, or are exploring information about local parks, remember the outcome you are working toward. Remember that while you may be stressing to plan a “perfect vacation”, you are creating a prime opportunity for family memories that will be talked about for years to come. **In short, cut yourself some slack (whether in emotional energy or in dollars), and look forward to the fun that lies ahead!**

## Move for Thought

Author—ISU Food and Nutrition Department

Summertime is here—time for children to go outside and play! Whether being active inside on rainy days or outside on sunny days, children need 60 minutes or more of moderate physical activity each day. Families that are active together improve their physical as well as their emotional health.



Most days, include physical activities such as: walking, playing outside, helping with chores, taking the stairs, picking up toys, or walking the dog.

For strength and flexibility, encourage tumbling, swinging, martial arts, rope climbing, pushups, or yoga 2–3 times a week. For aerobic exercise, activities could include cycling, running, relay races, basketball, swimming, kickball, or soccer 3–5 times a week.

## Minestrone Soup

Serving Size: 1 cup      Serves: 8      Cost: \$0.68

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### Ingredients:

- 2 teaspoons oil (canola or vegetable)
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 or 3 large garlic cloves, minced (or 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder)
- 2 cans (14.5 ounces) low sodium chicken broth
- 1 can (16 ounces) stewed or diced tomatoes
- 1 can (16 ounces) kidney beans (drained and rinsed)
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen vegetables
- 1 teaspoon dried basil, oregano, or Italian seasoning
- 1/2 cup uncooked pasta (such as rotini, macaroni, or small shells)



### Instructions:

1. Heat oil in a large saucepan, Sauté onion and garlic. If using garlic powder, add with seasonings.
2. Add broth, tomatoes, beans, vegetables, and seasonings. Stir to mix.
3. Bring to a boil over medium heat.
4. Stir in pasta. Reduce heat to medium low. Simmer about 20 minutes until the pasta is tender.

### Tips:

- Use 3 1/2 cups homemade chicken broth in place of caned chicken broth.
- Recipe can be doubled for a crowd.

Nutrition Facts	
8 Servings Per Container	
Serving Size: 1 cup	
Amount Per Serving	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>150</b>
% Daily Value*	
<b>Total Fat</b> 2.5g	4%
Saturated Fat 0.5g	3%
Trans Fat 0g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	0%
<b>Sodium</b> 260mg	11%
<b>Total Carbohydrates</b> 26g	9%
Dietary Fiber 5g	20%
Total Sugars 5g	
Added Sugars	NA*
<b>Protein</b> 8g	
Vitamin D 0mcg	0%
Calcium 69mg	5%
Iron 2.2mg	12%
Potassium 439mg	9%
* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	
NA* - We are currently in the process of integrating the new FDA Nutrition Standards. Added Sugar information is not currently available for the recipe. We will be updating the information shortly.	