



Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program
A joint project of Texas AgriLife Extension,
Texas Department of Human Services,

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

Swisher County
310 West Broadway
Tulia, Texas 79088

December 2015

Winter Fun Food



Cozy up with warm foods

Sweet Potato + Chili = One Pot Meal

Cold weather has arrived and that means that it is time for all things soup. This time of year means one pot dinners are on the stove and in the slow cooker. It is also the time that you can take an old favorite and amp up the nutritional value by adding vegetables that are available during the fall & winter months.

Sweet potatoes are vegetables which grow in the ground as a tuberous root. Despite its name, the sweet potato is not related to the potato. Their skins can be eaten like a regular potato with a good scrubbing. The Center For Science in the Public Interest ranks the nutritional value of the sweet potato as the highest among several foods. Some of the nutrition facts about a sweet potato include them to be fat free, high in Vitamin C and A, a good source of calcium and potassium and an excellent source of fiber. For more information on how sweet potatoes can fit into a healthy diet check out [MyPlate](#).

Before cooking, wash sweet potatoes with cool, running water to remove any dirt from the skin. It is not necessary to peel sweet potatoes before cooking them; leaving the skins on gives you a different texture and more fiber in meals.

Sweet potatoes can be eaten raw, but are usually cooked (baked, boiled, microwaved, mashed or fried). When cooking whole sweet potatoes pierce skin several times with a fork and bake at 400 degrees F for 40-50 minutes, or until fork tender. Sliced sweet potatoes, 1 inch thick, can be grilled or broiled for 10 minutes, or cut sweet potatoes in half lengthwise and grill 20-25 minutes. When microwaving, pierce several times with fork and microwave on high 5-8 minutes, rotating halfway through. They are popular for holiday meals, but are a great addition to stir-fries, soups and casseroles.

Sweet potatoes can add color, sweetness and nutrients to meals, side dishes and snacks. For the first chili of the season try sweet potatoes, carrots and celery to amp up the nutrition profile and increase your vegetable consumption.

Sweet Potato Chili

Serves: 10

Ingredients:

- ¾ lb stew meat, cut into small cubes
- ½ cup diced onion
- 1 cup sliced carrots
- 1 cup sliced celery
- 3 cups water
- 15 ounce can beans, drained and rinsed
- 3 cups peeled, sweet potatoes, diced
- 1 Tablespoon chili powder
- 2 cans (14 ounces) diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp dried oregano leaves
- black pepper, to taste
- 1 jalapeno, chopped (optional)

Instructions :

1. In a dutch oven or large soup pot, brown the stew meat over medium heat until browned.
2. Add the rest of ingredients to the browned stew meat. Mix to combine.
3. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer uncovered 30 to 45 minutes until sweet potatoes are tender, stirring occasionally. Mixture will thicken as a cooks.

Notes :Can use ground beef for stew meat. Use your favorite kind of bean (ie, black bean, kidney beans, red beans, etc)

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The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

More superfoods

Discover the best foods to stock up on for better health this winter.

Help fight off the flu this winter by adding any of these immune-boosting superfoods to your diet.

Carrots: This root vegetable contains high amounts of beta carotene which the body converts into vitamin A. Vitamin A is a key nutrient in immune function, helping to protect against infection and reduce the risk and duration of respiratory illness by keeping our lungs healthy. Carrots most commonly orange in color, are also available in purple and red varieties. Tip: beta carotene is a fat soluble vitamin meaning a small amount of fat is required for it to be absorbed. Do this by adding a drizzle of olive oil to roasted carrots or a dollop of organic butter to carrot mash.

Wheat germ: Wheat germ is the small yet nutritionally dense component of the wheat kernel. It's rich in B vitamins, iron, zinc and vitamin E, an important antioxidant that supports the body's immune response. Fresh wheat germ has a nutty flavor and can be used in baking breads, muffins, casseroles or sprinkled on salads or cereals. Adding 2 tablespoons of wheat germ to your morning porridge provides around 7.5 milligrams of vitamin E or 50 per cent of the recommended daily intake. Wheat germ oil is more concentrated. One tablespoon contains 20.3 milligrams of vitamin E.

Garlic: Garlic has been used for thousands of years in the treatment of illness and disease. The University of Maryland Medical Center in the US recommends eating 2 to 4 whole cloves of raw garlic per day as a natural health supplement. However it's believed consuming between 1 to 2 cloves of garlic daily offers the same benefits to fight off a cold. For those who don't like the taste or smell of raw garlic, an odorless supplement can be taken several times a day.

Natural yogurt: Natural plain yogurt contains [probiotics](#), the friendly bacteria that are essential for good gut health. Probiotics boost immunity by protecting against viruses that enter via the digestive tract. For a healthy dose of probiotics add yogurt to your cereal in the morning or mix warm berries, cinnamon and yogurt together for dessert. Other foods which also contain probiotics include fermented miso, tempeh and kefir, a fermented milk drink.

Fennel: This licorice tasting winter vegetable offers more than just a unique tang. Fennel is low in calories yet high in the phytonutrient anethole, which may help boost the immune response. Fennel, like celery is a member of the parsley plant family however compared to its cousins, it contains much higher levels of vitamin C. Fennel can be eaten raw in salads or cooked in a stir fry or baked with a roast dinner.

Tangelo: A cross between a tangerine and a pomelo, the tangelo is one of winter's best citrus fruits. Similar to oranges, tangelos contain high levels of vitamin C. Research shows several cells of the immune system require vitamin C to perform their task, especially phagocytes and T-cells. Therefore a vitamin C deficiency may result in a reduced resistance against certain pathogens. Just one tangelo per day provides 100 per cent of the recommended dietary intake of vitamin C.

Salmon: Research shows 40 per cent of Australians will be deficient in vitamin D at the [end of winter](#). Also known as the sunshine vitamin, vitamin D has important functions within the body including immune system regulation. Salmon is one of the few dietary sources of vitamin D. The recommended intake of vitamin D is 400IU or 10 micrograms per day. This would be equivalent to short amounts (10 to 15minutes) of daily sun exposure or a single 120 gram serve of salmon.

Beetroot: Beetroot is packed with beneficial phytochemicals and antioxidants which protect the immune system by fighting off destructive free radicals, molecules which harm healthy cells and their DNA. This bright, sweet root vegetable can be eaten baked, steamed, pickled or blitzed through soups. Tip: don't discard the green leafy tops. They offer high nutrient value providing vitamin C, beta carotene, calcium and iron.

Eggs: Once considered off limits due to their cholesterol content, eggs are back on our good list and with good reason. Eggs provide an excellent source of protein, B vitamins, vitamins A, D and zinc. Protein is essential in supporting a healthy immune system. The body used protein as fuel to make antibodies that attack foreign invaders and prevent against infection. The Australian Heart Foundation states you can enjoy up to six eggs each week as part of a healthy balanced diet.

Dark chocolate: Cacao-based dark chocolate is one of the best natural sources of antioxidants, iron, magnesium and zinc. Zinc, an important trace mineral, is important for immune function. Adults need around 8-14 milligrams of zinc per day. Unsweetened cacao provides around 9.6 milligrams of zinc per 100g, compared to 2.3 milligrams per 100g serve of standard milk chocolate. Tip: if you can't find pure cacao make the switch to dark chocolate that's to 70-85 per cent cacao; the higher percentage indicates a higher amount of cacao in the product.

Source: <http://www.bodyandsoul.com.au/nutrition/nutrition+tips/top10+winter+superfoods>

Superfoods That Warm You Up

As the temperature drops, don't be tempted to warm your belly with rich macaroni and cheese and creamy soup. Instead, get that toasty feeling from superfoods: healthy eats that are loaded with nutrients, antioxidants, and immune-boosting powers that your body needs to power itself through cold weather. Read on to find the best hot foods to eat on chilly days and a few healthy tidbits to prepare some for ultimate nutrition.

Oatmeal: When it gets cooler, it's the perfect time to break out the oatmeal. Oats are a whole grain, so you'll get a dose of fiber and plant-based protein to stop hunger with just one bowl. Plus, oatmeal contains a starch called beta-glucan.

Hot chocolate: Curling up with a cup of hot cocoa is one way to feel snug—just nix the sugary powdered mix with marshmallow bits. Try melting two squares of [dark chocolate](#) and stir it into regular or almond milk.

Black bean soup: There's nothing like a [soup](#) with cumin and chili pepper to heat you up when things get cold. The nutrition star of this dish, though, is the beans. Black beans are a good source of iron and copper. So sipping on this soup will help your muscles use more oxygen and boost your immune system.

Brussels sprouts: Eating these mini cabbages may just help you fight a cold this fall. In addition to being packed with fiber and cancer-fighting phytonutrients, Brussels sprouts run high in [vitamin C](#).

Pumpkin soup: If you're lacking vitamin A, the nutrient critical for [promoting vision](#), a dose of pumpkin will do you good.

Chili: The peppers in your stew contain a compound called capsaicin, which gives them their spicy kick. It's also thought to boost metabolism and fight the buildup of fat. No matter the variety, the beans in chili also pack protein to help you build muscle. That's not all. Tomato paste is rich in [lycopene](#), and the onions provide unique antioxidants

Avocado: There's a way to enjoy this creamy fruit when it's chilly. "Oven roasting [avocado](#) makes it even creamier. Chop it up warm and put on top of another vegetable." Bonus: about half of the fat of avocado comes from [monounsaturated fat](#), which helps lower your bad cholesterol levels and provide nutrients for cells to function, according to the American Heart Association.

Walnuts: Walnuts are good any time of year, but they make a lovely roasted snack in the fall. "Walnuts toast awesome on a cookie sheet at 350 degrees for 5 minutes". Lightly misting with oil and adding seasonings like pepper can up the flavor in a healthy way. Even better, walnuts are rick in alpha-linolenic acid, one omega-3 fat thought to boos heart health.

Apples: Baked apples make the perfect sweet treat for fall. The fruit packs [soluble and insoluble fiber](#). One slows digestion and the other helps food pass through your system more smoothly.

Sweet potatoes: Like pumpkin, sweet potatoes are particularly high in vitamin A. One baked, [medium-sized spud](#) contains 438% of your daily value. Plus, you'll get nearly 4 grams of fiber—mostly found in the skin—to fill your tummy. Sweet potatoes are also rich in vitamin C, calcium, potassium, and a bit of iron.

Squash: In addition to having some calcium and vitamin C, most varieties of squash are high in potassium. Squash is also rich in vitamin A and contains hunger-busting fiber.

Ginger tea: If you're thinking of reaching for a cup of tea, opt for a brew with [ginger](#). "Ginger has thermogenic properties that can keep you warm". Because of its heating powers, ginger may also boost metabolism and promote blood flow.

Source: <http://www.health.com>

Winter Fun Food Facts Newsletter is produced by the Swisher County Office of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service.

Sincerely,



Calley Runnels
CEA-FCS Swisher County

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service MONTHLY Educational Programs PROGRAMS

Fresh Start to a Healthier You Class

December 16, 2015

11:00 a.m. [Mid Tule Village Activity Room](#)

Car Seat Class

Wednesday

December 16, 2015

at 2:00 p.m.

Safe Riders Car Seat Distribution Program

at 2:00 p.m. in Annex Meeting Room

Pre-Registration Required

Call 995-3726

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