



Food Stamp Challenge Recipes

Looking for some budget-conscious recipes for your family during the Food Stamp Challenge? Here are 40 that were developed by Harvesters' nutrition educators. Harvesters receives all types of donated food and our recipes attempt to reflect this variety. The recipes can always be prepared on a stovetop and are likely to include several food groups. Feel free to substitute ingredients for what you have on hand and to use our ideas as a starting point for creating your own favorite recipes. Good luck!

African Peanut Chicken Soup

This Americanized version of a traditional African soup has some ingredients you wouldn't normally think of putting together, but the outcome is surprisingly good! A sprinkle of chopped peanuts on top would taste great too.

Nonstick cooking spray
1 1/2 cups peeled cubed sweet potato
1/2 cup chopped onion
1/2 cup diced red bell pepper
1 jalapeno pepper (seeds and ribs removed), minced
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
2 cups (about 8 ounces) chopped cooked chicken breast
1 cup bottled salsa
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
2 (16-ounce) cans fat-free, less sodium chicken broth
2 (15-ounce) cans less sodium chicken and rice soup
1 (15-ounce) can black beans, drained and rinsed
1/3 cup creamy peanut butter

Place a large soup pot over medium-high heat until hot. Coat with cooking spray. Add sweet potato, onion, bell pepper, jalapeno and garlic powder; sauté 5 minutes. Stir in chicken and next 5 ingredients (chicken through beans); bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer 10 minutes. Add peanut butter, stirring with a whisk; cook 2 minutes.

Serves 8.

Calories 260; Fat 8g; Protein 21g; Carbohydrate 27g; Fiber 5g.

Barbecued Chicken Burritos

For the best taste, look for a fiery barbecue sauce without added corn syrup.

3 cups (about 12 ounces) cooked chicken, shredded
1/2 cup prepared barbecue sauce
1 cup canned black beans, rinsed and drained
1/2 cup frozen corn, thawed or canned corn, drained
1/4 cup reduced-fat sour cream
4 leaves romaine lettuce
4 (10-inch) whole-wheat tortillas

Place a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add chicken, barbecue sauce, beans, corn and sour cream; stir to combine. Cook until hot, 4 to 5 minutes.

Assemble the wraps by placing a lettuce leaf in the center of each tortilla and topping with one-fourth of the chicken mixture; roll as you would a burrito. Slice in half diagonally and serve warm.

Serves 4 (serving size: 2 burrito halves).

Calories 366; Fat 7g; Protein 37g; Carbohydrate 41; Fiber 9g.

Black-Eyed Pea Tacos

Black-eyed peas are a good source of protein, and are naturally low in fat and sodium. They are also rich in potassium, iron and fiber. When mincing the fresh jalapeño pepper for these tacos, it is a good idea to use gloves, and avoid touching your face or skin.

Nonstick cooking spray
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 jalapeño, minced
2 cans black-eyed peas, drained and rinsed
1 (10-ounce) package frozen corn
2 cups water
1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro
12 (6-inch) corn tortillas, heated
1/2 cup reduced-fat shredded cheddar cheese
For garnish:
Shredded lettuce
Chunky salsa

Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Spray with nonstick cooking spray. Add onion, garlic powder and jalapeño. Cook, stirring often, until softened, about 5-7 minutes.

Add black-eyed peas, corn and 2 cups water. Simmer over medium-high heat until corn is tender and most liquid has evaporated. Drain water if necessary and return to skillet. Stir in cilantro; season with salt and pepper. Remove from heat.

Fill heated tortillas with black-eyed pea mixture, cheddar cheese and garnishes as desired.

Serves 4 (serving size: 3 tacos).

Calories 433; Fat 4g; Protein 16g; Carbohydrate 89g; Fiber 15g.

Breakfast Burrito

Microwave diced potatoes for a few minutes before adding them to skillet to speed sauté time. Serve with a fresh fruit salad for a complete meal.

1 tablespoon canola oil
1 medium bell pepper, chopped
1 medium onion, chopped
2 cups potatoes, diced
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 teaspoon salt
8 eggs, beaten
8 (8-inch) fat-free whole wheat tortillas
1 cup (4 ounces) shredded reduced-fat cheddar cheese
1 cup salsa

In a large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add bell pepper, onion and potatoes. Stir in garlic powder, pepper and salt. Cook until potatoes are tender, about 10 minutes.

Reduce heat to medium, spread potato mixture out to the sides of the skillet, and leave a space in the middle for eggs. Add the eggs and scramble them until cooked. Do not mix potatoes in until eggs are firm. Stir all ingredients together.

Heat tortillas according to package directions. Spoon 1/8 of the egg and potato mixture down the center of each tortilla. Top with cheese and salsa and roll up.

Serves 8 (serving size: 1 burrito, 2 tablespoons cheese, and 2 tablespoons salsa).

Calories 268; Fat 10g; Protein 14g; Carbohydrate 31g; Fiber 4g.

Cheddar Chicken Chowder

Nonstick cooking spray
1 tablespoon canola oil
1 cup chopped onion
1 cup diced bell pepper, optional
4 cups fat-free, less-sodium chicken broth
1 3/4 cups diced red potatoes
2 cups frozen whole-kernel corn
3 cups (about 12 ounces) cooked chicken, shredded
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
2 cups 2% low-fat milk
1 cup (4 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper

Heat oil in a large pot coated with cooking spray over medium-high heat. Add onion and bell pepper to oil in pan; sauté 5 minutes. Add broth and potatoes; bring to boil. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 20 minutes or until potatoes are tender. Add corn and chicken; stir well.

Place flour in a bowl. Gradually add milk, stirring with a whisk until blended; add to soup. Cook over medium heat for 15 minutes or until thick, stirring frequently. Stir in cheese, garlic powder, salt and pepper.

Serves 8.

Calories 304; Fat 12g; Protein 22g; Carbohydrate 28g; Fiber 2g.

Chicken Noodle Soup

Parsnips are root vegetables that are similar in shape and texture to carrots. Their ivory skin has an appealingly sweet flavor. Unlike carrots, parsnips are never eaten raw.

1 tablespoon stick margarine or butter
1 cup chopped carrot
1 cup chopped parsnip
1/2 cup thinly sliced celery
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
3 1/2 cups low-salt chicken broth (about 2 cans)
1 cup water
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
2 cups uncooked wide egg noodles (about 4 ounces)
1 pound skinned, boned chicken breast halves, cut into 1-inch pieces
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley or 2 teaspoons dried parsley

Melt margarine in a large soup pot over medium-high heat. Add carrot, parsnip and celery; sauté 3 minutes. Stir in flour. Gradually add broth, water, salt and pepper, stirring with a whisk; bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 5 minutes. Add noodles and chicken, and bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 10 minutes. Stir in parsley.

Serves 8 (serving size: 1 cup).

Calories 169; Fat 4g; Protein 17g; Carbohydrate 17g; Fiber 2g.

Curried Pumpkin and Black Bean Soup

Pumpkin puree is usually found on the baking aisle in grocery stores or at the back of many people's pantries after the holiday season! While often used in sweet dishes, it makes a great savory soup as well.

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 medium onion, finely chopped
2-3 (14.5-ounce) cans vegetable broth, divided
2 (14.5-ounce) cans black beans, drained and rinsed
2 (15-ounce) cans pumpkin puree
1 tablespoon curry powder
1 1/2 teaspoons ground cumin
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 green onion, finely sliced, optional

Heat a large soup pot over medium heat; add olive oil. Add onion and sauté 5 minutes. Add 2 cans of broth, tomatoes, black beans and pumpkin puree. Stir to combine ingredients and bring soup to a boil. Reduce heat to medium low and stir in curry, cumin and cayenne. Simmer 5 minutes. If soup is too thick, slowly add the last can of broth until soup reaches a desired consistency. Garnish with chopped green onions.

Serves 6.

Calories 207; Fat 3g; Protein 11g; Carbohydrate 36g; Fiber 10g.

Eggplant Parm in a Pot

This is an easy way to get a classic Italian dish without all the fat. Since the eggplant is cut up into tiny pieces and camouflaged in the pasta, it's a big hit with kids and adults alike. Sliced mushrooms would also be a great addition; just sauté them with the sliced eggplant.

2 cups (8 ounces) dried radiatore or other squiggly-shaped pasta
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 medium eggplant, cut into ¼-inch cubes (about 1 pound)
1 teaspoon dried basil
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon onion powder
2 cups pasta sauce
1 cup part-skim mozzarella, shredded
1/3 cup Parmesan cheese
2 ounces sliced turkey pepperoni, chopped, optional

Cook the pasta according to package directions omitting salt. Drain, return to the pan, and set aside.

While the pasta is cooking, heat the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add the eggplant, basil, garlic powder and onion powder, and cook, stirring frequently, until the eggplant becomes very tender, 8-10 minutes. Reduce heat if the eggplant starts to stick to the skillet.

Add the cooked eggplant, pasta sauce, mozzarella cheese, Parmesan cheese and turkey pepperoni (if desired) to the pasta and stir to combine. Place over medium heat and stir until pasta is heated through and cheese melts, about 3 minutes.

Serves 6.

Calories 360; Fat 13g; Protein 16g; Carbohydrate 45g; Fiber 5g.

Feta Marinara Pasta

Feta cheese is a white, salty and sharp tasting cheese that can be made from sheep, goat or cow's milk. Try substituting different shapes of pasta or thawed and drained frozen spinach for the fresh.

1 pound whole-wheat penne pasta
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 pound turkey sausage
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
2 (14.5-ounce) cans diced tomatoes with basil, garlic, and oregano, undrained
4 ounce feta cheese, crumbled
2 cups fresh spinach, chopped

Cook pasta according to package directions omitting salt.

Meanwhile, heat oil in a non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. Add turkey sausage, breaking it apart as it cooks. Sprinkle with garlic powder. Cook until browned. Stir in undrained tomatoes and feta. Bring liquid to a boil and then reduce to a simmer until thickened. Stir in spinach until wilted and combine with pasta.

Serves 8.

Calories 413; Fat 17g; Protein 19g; Carbohydrate 50g; Fiber 6g.

Fried Rice with Broccoli and Eggs

Stir-frying rice is a great way to turn leftover rice into a quick and easy meal. It's important that the rice is cold so it won't become sticky while cooking; the oil coats the chilled grains and prevents clumping.

3 cups small broccoli florets
1/2 cup shredded carrot
4 large eggs
2 tablespoons water
1 tablespoon canola oil, divided
4 cups cooked long-grain rice, chilled
1/4 cup fat-free, less-sodium chicken broth
3 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 cup thinly sliced green onions

Combine eggs and 2 tablespoons water. Heat 1 teaspoon canola oil in a large nonstick skillet or wok over medium-high heat. Add egg mixture; stir-fry 30 seconds or until soft-scrambled, stirring constantly. Remove egg mixture from pan.

Add 2 teaspoons canola oil to pan. Add broccoli and carrots to pan; stir-fry 2 minutes. Add rice; stir-fry 3 minutes. Add broth; cook 1 minute. Add cooked eggs, soy sauce, ginger, garlic powder and salt; stir-fry 1 minute or until thoroughly heated. Sprinkle with green onions.

Serves 6 (serving size: 1 1/3 cups).

Calories 254; Fat 8g; Protein 10g; Carbohydrate 36g; Fiber 3g.

Hamburger Stroganoff

If you prefer a thicker sauce, you can add an extra ¼ cup of sour cream.

1 pound lean ground beef (90% lean or greater)
1 cup chopped onion
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
2 (14.5-ounce) cans fat-free, less-sodium beef broth
2 (4-ounce) cans mushroom stems and pieces, drained and rinsed
3 cups uncooked egg noodles
1/2 cup sour cream
1/2 teaspoon paprika
1/2 cup sliced green onions

Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add ground beef and onions and brown until beef is cooked through, about 5 to 10 minutes. Add beef broth and mushrooms; bring to a boil. Stir in noodles; cover, reduce heat, and simmer 10 minutes or until noodles are tender. Remove from heat. Combine sour cream with paprika and add sour cream to meat mixture. Top with green onions.

Serves 6.

Calories 401; Fat 18g; Protein 28g; Carbohydrate 32g; Fiber 3g.

Italian Chicken with Chickpeas

Chickpeas, or garbanzo beans, are round, tan-colored members of the pea family that are often referred to as [dried beans](#). They have a firm texture, a mildly nutlike flavor, and are available canned or dried. If you have time, let this dish simmer up to 30 minutes while you get the rest of the meal together for a richer flavor.

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 1/3 cup sliced onion
1 cup green bell pepper strips
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
3 cups (about 12 ounces) cooked chicken, chopped
1 (15.5 ounce) can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes with basil, garlic and oregano
Parsley leaves, optional

Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion and bell pepper; sauté 4 minutes. Reduce heat to medium. Add salt, pepper, garlic, chicken, chickpeas and tomatoes; cover and cook 8 minutes or until thoroughly heated, stirring occasionally. Garnish with parsley leaves if desired.

Serves 4 (serving size: 1 1/2 cups).

Calories 348; Fat 9g; Protein 36g; Carbohydrate 31g; Fiber 8g.

Manhattan Fish Chowder

Any thawed frozen white fish fillets can be substituted for the tilapia in this dish.

Nonstick cooking spray

4 slices turkey bacon, cut crosswise into 1/2 inch pieces

1 large onion, finely chopped

2 medium carrots (about 1 cup), halved lengthwise and thinly sliced crosswise

1 (28-ounce) can tomatoes in juice

1 (14.5-ounce) can fat-free, less sodium chicken broth

2 medium baking potatoes (about 1 1/2 pounds), peeled and cut into 2-inch chunks

1 teaspoon dried thyme

1 pound skinless tilapia fillets, cut into 2-inch chunks

Coarse salt and ground pepper

In a large soup pot sprayed with cooking spray, cook bacon over medium-low heat until browned and crisp, 8 to 10 minutes. Add onion and carrots; cook, stirring occasionally, until softened, about 10 minutes. Add tomatoes and their juice (breaking tomatoes up with a spoon), chicken stock and 1 1/2 cups water; bring to a boil.

Add potatoes and thyme; reduce heat to simmer. Cook until potatoes are tender, but not falling apart, 15 to 20 minutes.

Add tilapia; cover, and cook until opaque and flaky, about 3 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. With a ladle, spoon into six soup bowls; serve immediately.

Yield: 6 servings

Calories 303; Fat 9g; Protein 31g; Carbohydrate 25g; Fiber 4g.

Mediterranean Couscous with Salmon

Look for whole-wheat couscous in the health food aisle or the bulk bins of your grocery store. Although it is used more like rice in this recipe, it is actually a type of pasta made of tiny pellets of semolina, the ground endosperm of durum wheat. Dried sage gives this side dish an earthy taste and aroma.

1 3/4 cups fat-free, less-sodium chicken broth
1 (6-ounce) can salmon, rinsed, drained and shredded
3/4 cup whole-wheat couscous
1 cup grape or cherry tomatoes, halved
1/2 cup chopped seeded peeled cucumber
1/2 cup chopped red bell pepper
1/4 cup sliced green onions
1 teaspoon dried sage
1/4 teaspoon grated lemon rind
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
4 teaspoons olive oil
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon black pepper

Bring broth to a boil in a medium saucepan; gradually stir in couscous. Remove from heat; cover and let stand 5 minutes. Fluff with a fork. Combine couscous, tomatoes and remaining ingredients (tomatoes through pepper) in a large bowl.

Serves 4.

Calories 180; Fat 7g; Protein 9g; Carbohydrates 22g; Fiber 4g.

Minestrone Over Polenta

A staple of northern Italy, polenta is a mush made from cornmeal and water or broth. It can be eaten hot or cooled until firm, cut into slices, and baked or sautéed. Minestra or minestrone is the name for a variety of thick [Italian soups](#) made with a variety of vegetables.

Nonstick cooking spray
3 teaspoons olive oil, divided
1 cup diced eggplant, unpeeled
1/2 cup chopped onion
1 medium bell pepper, chopped
1/3 cup chopped carrot
1 (14.5-ounce) can Italian-style stewed tomatoes, undrained and chopped
1 teaspoon dried Italian seasoning
1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper
1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
2 teaspoons dried basil
1 cup chopped fresh spinach
1 16-ounce tube polenta, cut into 12 slices (about 1/3 inch thick)

Heat 2 teaspoons olive oil in a large nonstick skillet coated with nonstick cooking spray over medium-high heat. Add the eggplant, onion, bell pepper and carrots and sauté for 5 minutes. Stir in tomatoes, crushed red pepper, garlic powder and basil; cook for 3 minutes. Stir in spinach, cook for about 1 minute or until spinach is wilted. Set aside and keep warm.

Heat 1 teaspoon olive oil in skillet over medium-high heat. Place polenta slices in skillet and cook about 2 minutes or until lightly browned on bottom, turn over and repeat. Place on a paper towel to absorb any extra oil.

Serve minestrone over the polenta.

Serves 4 (serving size: 1 cup minestrone and 3 polenta slices).

Calories 395; Fat 5g; Protein 10g; Carbohydrate 81g; Fiber 10g.

Mixed-Up Tofu

Tofu is a soft, custard-like curd made from the milky liquid extracted from fresh soybeans. Tofu takes on the flavor of whatever you pair it with. Extra-firm works great in place of meats, while extra smooth or silken tofu makes a great smoothie.

2 cups cooked brown rice
One (14- or 16-ounce) package extra-firm tofu, drained
1/4 cup light soy sauce
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1 tablespoon peanut or canola oil
1 (16-ounce bag) frozen broccoli florets, thawed
1 (16-ounce bag) frozen mixed vegetables, thawed
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1/3 cup roasted cashews or peanuts, optional

Arrange several layers of paper towel on a cutting board. Place tofu on towels and cut into ½-inch cubes. Blot well with additional paper towels to absorb extra liquid.

Heat the oil in a large nonstick skillet over high heat. Add the tofu, broccoli, mixed vegetables, garlic and ginger and stir-fry for 1-2 minutes

Whisk together the soy sauce and cornstarch in a bowl until well blended. Add the soy sauce mixture to the wok, stir gently, and cook until liquid thickens, about 2 minutes.

Serve in individual bowls over rice and top with nuts as desired.

Serves 6.

Calories 360; Fat 11g; Protein 19g; Carbohydrate 52g; Fiber: 9g.

Penne with Spicy Tomato Sauce

This is great basic recipe for homemade tomato sauce. If it's too spicy, omit the crushed red pepper. Jazz it up by adding your favorite veggies; broccoli, peppers or chopped spinach would work well. The whole-wheat pasta and tomatoes provide almost half of our daily fiber needs!

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon crushed red pepper
1 (28-ounce) can whole tomatoes, undrained
1 pound whole wheat penne

Heat the olive oil in a medium saucepan. Add the garlic powder and crushed red pepper and cook for 30 seconds. Add the tomatoes, crushing them one at a time, and the liquid from the tomato can. Cook over moderately high heat, stirring occasionally, until thickened, about 6 minutes.

Meanwhile, bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add the penne to the boiling water, stirring occasionally until al dente. Drain the pasta and add it to the sauce in the skillet. Toss well and spoon into bowls or a serving dish.

Serves 4.

Calories 470; Fat 7g; Protein 18g; Carbohydrate 80g; Fiber 16g.

Pizza Pasta Salad

Look for a bottled salad dressing that does not include sugar or high fructose corn syrup as one of the first few ingredients.

1 pound spiral shaped or other pasta
2 plum tomatoes, chopped
1 (4-ounce) can sliced mushrooms, drained and rinsed
1/2 small red onion, diced
1 small bell pepper, diced
1/2 small package (about 3 ounces) sliced turkey pepperoni
2 cups (about 8 ounces) part-skim mozzarella cheese, cubed
1 cup light Italian dressing
1 rounded tablespoon tomato paste
1 teaspoon dried Italian seasoning
1 teaspoon garlic powder
Black pepper, to taste
1/2 cup Parmesan cheese

Cook pasta according to package directions, omitting salt. Drain and cool slightly.

Combine pasta, tomatoes, mushrooms, onion, bell pepper, pepperoni and mozzarella in a large bowl. In a small bowl, combine remaining 5 ingredients (Italian dressing through black pepper), whisking with a fork to combine. Toss dressing with pasta to coat evenly. Sprinkle with parmesan cheese.

Serves 8.

Calories 482; Fat 20g; Protein 23g; Carbohydrate 51g; Fiber 3g.

Quick Vegetable Fajitas

1 tablespoon canola oil
2 cups thinly sliced red onion
2 cups bell pepper strips
2 cups zucchini, cut into long strips
2 cups yellow squash, cut into long strips
3 tablespoons taco or fajita seasoning mix
8 (10-inch) flour tortillas
1 (14.5-ounce) can fat-free refried beans
2 cups shredded leaf lettuce
1 cup (4 ounces) reduced-fat shredded cheddar cheese
1 cup chopped tomato
1/2 cup salsa

Heat canola oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion and bell pepper; sauté 2-3 minutes. Add zucchini, squash and seasoning and stir in a bit of water, about ¼- ½ cup. Sauté until vegetables are tender and all liquid is absorbed.

Meanwhile, heat tortillas and beans according to package directions.

Spread 3 tablespoons beans over each tortilla, and top with 1/2 cup vegetable mixture and 1/4 cup lettuce. Sprinkle each serving with 2 tablespoons cheese, 2 tablespoons tomato and 1 tablespoon salsa. Roll up.

Serves 8 (serving size: 1 fajita).

Calories 335; Fat 10g; Protein 14g; Carbohydrate 50g; Fiber 8g.

Salmon Salad Sandwiches

1 (6 ounce) can salmon, drained
2/3 cup light cream cheese, softened
2 teaspoons lemon juice
1 teaspoon dried dill
1 tablespoon minced red onion
8 (1-ounce) slices rye bread
8 (1/8-inch thick) slices tomato
16 (1/8-inch thick) slices cucumber

Combine first five ingredients (salmon through red onion) in a medium bowl; stir well.

Divide salmon mixture evenly between 4 bread slices; top each with 2 tomato slices, 8 cucumber slices and 1 bread slice.

Serves 4.

Calories 300; Fat 12g; Protein 18g; Carbohydrate 30g; Fiber 15g.

Sausage, Peppers and Onions

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 pound sweet Italian turkey sausage links
2 small bell peppers, sliced
2 small yellow onions, sliced
1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
2 tablespoons tomato paste
1 (15-ounce) can diced tomatoes
1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes, optional
4 to 6 fresh Italian sandwich rolls, optional

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the sausages and cook until lightly browned on both sides, about 4 to 8 minutes. (Sausages do not need to be cooked through at this point) Remove from the pan and drain.

Keeping the pan over medium heat, add the peppers, onions and black pepper and cook until golden brown, about 5 minutes. Add the Italian seasoning, garlic powder and tomato paste and cook 2 more minutes. Add the diced tomatoes and red pepper flakes, if using. Stir to combine, scraping the bottom of the pan with a wooden spoon to release all the browned bits. Bring to a simmer.

Cut the sausages into 4 to 6 pieces each, about 1-inch cubes. Add the sausage back to the pan and stir to combine. Cook until the sauce has thickened, about 10 minutes. Serve in bowls or on a sandwich roll.

If serving as a sandwich, split the rolls in half lengthwise. Hollow out the bread from the bottom side of each roll, being careful not to puncture the crust. Fill the bottom half of the roll with sausage mixture. Top and serve sandwiches immediately.

Serves 6.

Calories 364; Fat 15g; Protein 29g; Carbohydrate 28g; Fiber 3g.

Sloppy Garden Joes

Look for buns with "whole" as the first word on the ingredient list to ensure you're buying whole-wheat buns. Check the calories too, as some whole wheat buns are extra large!

1 medium onion, chopped
1 carrot, chopped
1/2 medium bell pepper, chopped
1 pound ground turkey breast
1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
1 (15-ounce can whole tomatoes, crushed
1 (4-ounce) can mushrooms, drained
1/4 cup barbecue sauce
Salt to taste, optional
Pepper to taste
8 whole-wheat buns

Sauté onion, carrot, green pepper and ground meat in a pan over medium-high heat for 5 minutes. Add tomato sauce, crushed tomatoes, mushrooms, barbecue sauce and seasonings and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Uncover and cook for an additional 3 minutes or until thick. Serve on plain or toasted buns.

Serves 8.

Calories 286; Fat 10g; Protein 21g; Carbohydrate 31g; Fiber 6g.

Spanish Rice

This version of Spanish rice has ground turkey added so it can work well as a main dish.

1 tablespoon canola oil
1 pound ground turkey breast
2 cups chopped onion
2 cups uncooked instant brown rice
2 (14.5-ounce) can diced tomatoes, undrained
1 cup low-sodium chicken broth
1 cup frozen peas
1 teaspoon tomato bouillon (such as Knorr's)
2 teaspoons chili powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper
1/3 cup chopped fresh cilantro, optional
1 medium peeled avocado cut into 10 wedges, optional

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add ground turkey and onion and cook until meat is browned. Stir in uncooked brown rice; sauté 3 minutes. Add diced tomatoes, broth, peas, bouillon, chili powder, salt and pepper; bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat and simmer about 5 minutes. Remove cover and let sit about 5 more minutes or until all liquid is absorbed.

Serves 10.

Calories 257; Fat 12g; Protein 15g; Carbohydrate 23g; Fiber 4g.

Spinach Barley Risotto

Dried cranberries add a tart punch of color to this dish. Look for them in the produce section to purchase in bulk or in the dried fruit section of your grocer.

2 teaspoons olive oil
1 cup thinly sliced mushrooms or 1 small (4-ounce) can, drained and rinsed
1 medium onion, chopped (1/2 cup)
1 1/2 cups fat-free, less-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1/2 cup uncooked quick-cooking barley
1/2 cup instant brown rice
1/4 cup dried cranberries
2 cups (4 ounces) packed spinach leaves, shredded

Heat oil in large nonstick skillet over high heat. Saute mushrooms and onion in oil, about 5-7 minutes. Stir in broth, garlic, pepper and mustard. Cover and bring to boil. Stir in barley, brown rice, and dried cranberries; reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer 10 minutes, stirring once.

Stir in spinach; cover and simmer about 5 minutes or until water is absorbed and barley and brown rice are tender.

Serves 4.

Calories 243; Fat 4g; Protein 6g; Carbohydrates 48g; Fiber 6g.

Stovetop Ziti

Since the pasta gets boiled in the sauce for this dish, you will want to make sure you have a really large saucepan.

1 pound lean ground beef (90% or higher)
2 large carrots, shredded (about 2 cups)
2 (10 3/4-ounce) cans 30% less-sodium tomato soup
2 1/2 cups (8 ounces) dried ziti
1 teaspoon dried basil
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon onion powder
1 cup (4 ounces) part-skim mozzarella cheese, shredded
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

Place a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the beef and carrots and cook, breaking up the large pieces, until the meat is no longer pink, about 5 minutes. Drain excess fat.

Add the tomato soup, 2 cans of water, ziti, basil, garlic powder and onion powder; stir until well blended.

Bring the liquid to a boil, reduce the heat, and cook covered at a low boil, until the ziti is tender, about 25 minutes. Stir occasionally.

Stir in mozzarella cheese. Serve in individual bowls and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

Serves 6.

Calories 370; Fat 9g; Protein 27g; Carbohydrate 46g; Fiber 3g.

Summer Rice Salad with Tuna

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
2 medium bell peppers, chopped
1 medium eggplant, unpeeled and chopped
1 cup frozen peas, thawed
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 teaspoon hot pepper sauce (such as Tabasco)
1 (6-ounce) can oil-packed white albacore tuna, rinsed well and drained
3 cups hot cooked brown rice

Heat olive oil over medium-high heat in a large nonstick skillet. Add bell peppers; cook for one minute. Add eggplant; cook another 3-4 minutes. Add peas, red wine vinegar, salt, pepper and hot pepper sauce; cook another 2 minutes. Lastly, add the tuna, stirring to flake, and the cooked rice.

Serves 4 (serving size: about 1 1/2 cup salad).

Calories 390; Fat 13g; Protein 20g; Carbohydrate 51g; Fiber 11g.

Sweet and Sour Chicken

This recipe is a tasty at home favorite of a Chinese favorite. Serve over cooked brown rice or noodles.

1 tablespoon canola oil
1 tablespoon bottled minced garlic
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper
1 cup chopped onion
1 cup chopped celery
1/2 cup chopped red bell pepper
1 (15.25-ounce) can pineapple chunks in juice, undrained
1 pound (16 ounces) cooked chicken breast, cut into 1/2 inch pieces
1/3 cup reduced-sodium soy sauce
1 1/2 tablespoons cornstarch
2 teaspoons brown sugar
1/4 cup dry-roasted chopped cashews

Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add garlic, ginger, red pepper, onion, celery and bell pepper to pan, and sauté 4 minutes or until crisp-tender. Drain pineapple, reserving 2/3 cup juice. Add 1 cup pineapple chunks and cooked chicken to pan; cook 30 seconds. Reserve remaining pineapple for another use.

Combine the reserved 2/3 cup juice, soy sauce, cornstarch and sugar in a bowl, stirring with a whisk until smooth. Stir in juice mixture; bring to a boil. Cook 1 minute. Sprinkle with cashews.

Serves 4.

Calories 369; Fat 12g; Protein 38g; Carbohydrate 29g; Fiber 3g.

Sweet Potato Burritos

Avocados are an excellent source of healthy fat. They're ready to use when their dark skins are slightly soft to the touch. Ripen a hard avocado on your counter for a few days.

4 large (10-inch) diameter whole-wheat tortillas
1 cup vegetarian refried beans
1 medium avocado, sliced
1 (14.5-ounce) can cut sweet potato, drained and rinsed
2 cups bagged salad greens
2 green onions, chopped
2 tablespoons fresh cilantro, chopped

Spread tortillas with refried beans and avocado slices, leaving a one-inch border around the edge. Layer remaining ingredients. Fold in sides and roll each tortilla to form a tight package. Slice in half diagonally.

Serves 4 (serving size: 2 burrito halves).

Calories 338; Fat 11g; Protein 10g; Carbohydrate 55g; Fiber 12g.

Sweet Potato, Sausage and Lentil Soup

Lentils are small disk shaped legumes that have a nice earthy flavor when cooked. They're full of fiber, protein, vitamins and minerals but have little fat. Look for them in the dry bean section of your grocer. Kale is a leafy green vegetable that belongs to the cabbage family and is a great source of vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin K and fiber.

1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1 pound sweet turkey sausage
1 medium onion, chopped
1 (4-ounce) can mushrooms, drained and rinsed
1 cup carrots, finely chopped
1 cup lentils
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon pepper
2 teaspoon cumin
1 teaspoon paprika
1/2 teaspoon chili powder
1/2 teaspoon dried rosemary
1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes
1 (14.5-ounce) can cut sweet potatoes, drained and rinsed
6 cups low sodium chicken broth
3 1/2 cups kale or chard, veins removed and chopped

Heat extra-virgin olive oil in a large soup pot over medium-high heat. Brown sausage until no longer pink. Add onions, mushrooms, and carrots; cook until slightly softened, about 4-5 minutes. Stir in lentils, garlic powder, pepper, cumin, paprika, chili powder, and rosemary.

Add tomatoes, potatoes and broth, cover pot, and raise heat to high to bring to a boil. Uncover pot and place heat back a bit but keep soup at a good rolling boil. Cook 15 minutes or until lentils are tender. Wilt greens in small bunches and turn off heat. Let stand 5 minutes.

Serve in shallow bowls with bread to mop up soup. When reheating leftovers thin the soup with broth or water.

Serves 8.

Calories 276; Fat 14g; Protein 14g; Carbohydrate 26g; Fiber 7g.

Taco Soup

All of favorite taco ingredients come together to make a tasty soup!

- 1 pound ground turkey breast or lean hamburger
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 medium zucchini, diced
- 1 medium carrot, shredded
- 2 stalks celery, diced
- 1 package taco seasoning mix
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 (32-ounce) bottle or can low-sodium vegetable juice
- 1 (14.5-ounce) can corn, drained
- 1 (14.5-ounce) can diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 (14.5-ounce) can beans, drained and rinsed

Spray a large skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Brown ground meat and onion until onion is tender and meat is cooked thoroughly. Add zucchini, carrot, celery, garlic and onion powder; sauté until vegetables are tender, about 5-10 minutes. Stir in taco seasoning, vegetable juice, corn, diced tomatoes, and beans. Simmer about 5 minutes.

Serves 8.

Calories 276; Fat 9g; Protein 23g; Carbohydrate 30g; Fiber 13g.

Tex-Mex Pasta Skillet

Green chiles can be found in the ethnic food aisle of the grocery store. Cilantro is a leafy green herb popular in Latin American and Chinese cuisine; it can be found in the produce section of most grocery stores.

1/2 pound wagon wheel or other pasta
1/2 pound turkey sausage
1 large green bell pepper, diced
1 large onion, diced
1 small zucchini, diced
2 (14.5-ounce) cans stewed tomatoes, undrained
1 (16-ounce) bag frozen corn
1 (4-ounce) can diced mild green chiles
1 1/2 teaspoons chile powder
1/2 teaspoon cumin
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 cup shredded reduced-fat Mexican blend cheeses
1/2 cup cilantro, chopped

Cook pasta according to package directions omitting salt.

Sauté sausage, green pepper and onion in a large nonstick skillet over medium high heat, about 5 minutes or until sausage is cooked through. Discard any fat in skillet. Stir in the next 7 ingredients (zucchini through garlic powder) and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer 10 minutes. Stir in pasta and sprinkle with cheese and cilantro.

Serves 6.

Calories 348; Fat 7g; Protein 22g; Carbohydrate 50g; Fiber 5g.

Thai Peanut Noodles

Peanut sauce is typically made from a mix of peanut oil, garlic, onions, chiles, soy sauce and peanuts. This quick version is just as tasty as the traditional south Asian sauce. Additional vegetables, such as snow peas or spouts, could be added as well.

3 cups (8 ounces) dried bow tie pasta
2 large carrots, cut in half lengthwise and sliced into 1/2-inch thick half moons (2 cups)
1 medium red bell pepper, sliced into thin, 1-inch long strips (about 1 cup)
1/3 cup creamy peanut butter
1/4 to 1/2 cup boiling water
1/4 cup light soy sauce
1 tablespoon toasted sesame or canola oil
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
3/4 teaspoon dried ginger
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/4 cup roasted peanuts, coarsely chopped

Bring a large saucepan of water to boil. Add the pasta and carrots and cook pasta according to package directions omitting salt. Add the bell pepper 3 minutes before pasta is done. Drain and return to pan.

While the pasta is cooking, whisk together the peanut butter, boiling water, soy sauce, oil, vinegar, ginger and garlic powder in a medium bowl until well blended.

Add the peanut butter mixture to the pasta and stir to combine. Reheat if necessary.

Place in individual bowls and sprinkle with peanuts.

Serves 4.

Calories 460; Fat 20g; Protein 16g; Carbohydrate 55g; Fiber 6g.

Tuna Artichoke Melt

This recipe is a creative take on an old-fashioned tuna melt. It is also a great way to sneak in a less common veggie, the artichoke. Artichokes are actually large flower buds made up of tough pointed leaves. Only the base (or the heart) of the artichoke are edible; look for them ready-to-go in the canned or frozen vegetable aisle of your grocer.

1/2 cup canned artichoke hearts, drained and finely chopped
1/4 cup sliced green onions
1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon olive oil
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
1/8 teaspoon black pepper
1/8 teaspoon ground red pepper
1 (6-ounce) can albacore tuna in water, lightly drained and flaked
2 English muffins, split
2 thin slices (2 ounces) provolone cheese
Nonstick cooking spray

Combine first 8 ingredients (artichokes through tuna) in a medium bowl. Divide evenly among muffin halves; top with cheese. Place in a skillet coated with cooking spray over medium-low heat and cover until cheese is melted and English muffin is lightly toasted.

Serves 2.

Calories 374; Fat 11g; Protein 28g; Carbohydrate 42g; Fiber 0.5g.

Tuna Tacos

This is a no-cook recipe that's low in calories and fat and a good source of fiber and omega-3 fatty acids. Serve with a side of corn and bell peppers. Substitute canned salmon if you prefer it.

1 large (12-ounce) can of tuna, drained and flaked
1/2 cup salsa
1 tablespoon chile powder
1 tablespoon cumin
1 teaspoon garlic powder
12 (6-inch) corn tortillas
1 (14.5-ounce) can kidney, black or pinto beans, drained, rinsed and heated
1 1/2 cups grated cheese
1 1/2 cup shredded lettuce
3 small tomatoes, diced

Toss flaked tuna with salsa and spices. Wrap tortillas in foil and place in 350 degree oven until warm or alternately wrap in paper towels and warm in microwave.

Portion beans, cheese and tuna evenly among tortillas. Warm slightly if desired. Top with lettuce and tomatoes and serve with extra salsa for dipping.

Serves 6.

Calories 292; Fat 6g; Protein 26g; Carbohydrate 36g; Fiber 6g.

Turkey Chili

Ground turkey breast makes a great, healthy substitute for ground beef. Make sure you purchase ground turkey breast, which only includes lean white turkey meat. If you purchase regular ground turkey, it will include both dark and light meat and have a fat content similar to that of ground beef.

1 large onion, diced (about 2 cups)
1 pound ground turkey breast
4 teaspoons chili powder
1 teaspoon garlic powder
2 teaspoons ground cumin
2 (14.5-ounce) cans diced tomatoes, undrained
2 (8-ounce) cans tomato sauce
2 (14.5-ounce) cans of beans, such as pinto, kidney or black beans, drained and rinsed

Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add onions and sauté 5 minutes. Add ground turkey, chili powder, garlic and cumin and cook until meat is browned. Add the remaining ingredients and simmer for 5 to 10 minutes or until all ingredients are heated through.

Serves 8.

Calories 271; Fat 8g; Protein 23g; Carbohydrate 29g; Fiber 6g.

Turkey Jambalaya

Jambalaya is a rice mixture combined with seasonings. Sausage is typically included, but other meats like chicken, ground beef or shrimp, could be substituted for all or part of the sausage. Turkey sausage makes a tasty and lean substitute for traditional pork sausage.

1 tablespoon canola oil
2 pounds smoked turkey sausage, chopped
1 large onion, chopped
1 large red bell pepper, chopped
1 cup celery, diced
1 tablespoon paprika
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1/4 teaspoon ground red pepper
1 (14.5-ounce) can diced tomatoes, undrained
3 cups cooked brown rice
1/2 cup chopped green onions

Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet. Add turkey sausage, onion, bell pepper and celery. Cook over medium high heat until sausage is browned and vegetables are tender, about 4-6 minutes. Add next 6 ingredients (paprika through cooked rice) and stir together until heated through. Top with chopped green onions.

Serves 8.

Calories 383; Fat 15g; Protein 38g; Carbohydrate 23g; Fiber 3g.

Turkey Salad Sandwiches

If you don't have leftover turkey to use in this salad, go to the deli counter of your grocer and ask for 1/2 pound of thick turkey slices.

1/4 cup (about 1 ounce) slivered almonds
1/4 cup plain fat-free yogurt
3 tablespoons low-fat mayonnaise
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper
3/4 cup thinly sliced celery
1/4 cup chopped red onion
1/4 cup dried cherries
1/4 cup golden raisins
8 ounces turkey breast, chopped
4 (6-inch) whole-wheat pitas, cut in half

Heat a nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add almonds; cook 2 minutes or until toasted, stirring constantly. Remove from heat, set aside.

Combine yogurt, mayonnaise, ginger and pepper in a medium bowl. Add almonds, celery, and next 4 ingredients (through turkey), stirring well to combine. Spoon 1/3 cup turkey mixture into each pita half.

Serves 4 (serving size: 2 stuffed pita halves).

Calories 398; Fat 9g; Protein 26g; Carbohydrate 56g; Fiber 7g.

Turkey Tetrazzini

The turkey in this tetrazzini recipe could be replaced with tuna or chicken as well.

Nonstick cooking spray

1 1/2 cups (about 1/2 pound) lower-salt deli turkey breast, diced

1/2 cup chopped onion

1/4 cup water

1 (10 3/4-ounce) can condensed reduced-fat, reduced-sodium cream of mushroom soup, undiluted

3/4 cup (3 ounces) shredded reduced-fat sharp cheddar cheese

2 cups hot cooked spaghetti (about 1/4 pound uncooked)

1/8 teaspoon black pepper

1 (2-ounce) jar diced pimiento, optional

2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley, optional

Heat a large nonstick skillet or saucepan coated with cooking spray over medium-high heat. Add turkey and onion; sauté 3 minutes or until onion is tender. Stir in water, soup and cheese; reduce heat to low and cook 4 minutes or until cheese melts, stirring until mixture is smooth. Stir in pasta and next 3 ingredients; cook until thoroughly heated.

Serves 3.

Calories 333; Fat 6g; Protein 17g; Carbohydrate 52g; Fiber 3g.

Tuscan Skillet Supper

This dish would be great served over hot cooked pasta as well.

2 teaspoons olive oil
1 cup chopped zucchini
1/2 cup sliced onion
1/2 cup sliced celery
1/2 cup diced red bell pepper
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
1 cup diced tomato
1 (15-ounce) can cannellini beans or other white beans, rinsed and drained
1/2 teaspoon of dried rosemary leaves
1 cup chopped spinach
1/2 cup (2 ounces) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon black pepper

Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add zucchini and next 5 ingredients (zucchini through garlic); sauté 2 minutes. Stir in tomato, beans and rosemary; cook 2 minutes. Stir in spinach and remaining ingredients; cook 1 minute or until spinach wilts and cheese begins to melt.

Serves 4 (serving size: 1 1/4 cups).

Calories 205; Fat 7g; Protein 11g; Carbohydrate 27g; Fiber 5g.

White Chicken Chili

Canned chicken would work well in this recipe.

Nonstick cooking spray
2 cups finely chopped onion
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1 tablespoon ground cumin
1 tablespoon chile powder
1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
2 (4-ounce) cans chopped green chiles, undrained
2 pounds (32 ounces) cooked chicken breast, cut into bite-sized pieces
1 cup water
2 (15.5-ounce) cans cannellini beans, rinsed and drained
1 (14-ounce) can fat-free, less-sodium chicken broth
1/2 teaspoon hot pepper sauce
1 cup (4 ounces) shredded Monterey Jack cheese
1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro, optional
1/2 cup chopped green onions, optional

Heat a large pot over medium-high heat. Coat pan with cooking spray. Add onion to pan; sauté 6 minutes or until tender, stirring frequently. Stir in garlic powder, cumin, chile powder and dried oregano; sauté 1 minute. Stir in chiles; reduce heat to low, and cook 10 minutes, partially covered. Add the chicken, water, cannellini beans and broth; bring to a simmer. Cover and simmer 10 minutes. Stir in hot sauce. Ladle 1 cup of chili into each of 8 bowls; sprinkle each serving with 2 tablespoons cheese, 1 tablespoon cilantro and 1 tablespoon green onions.

Serves 8.

Calories 233; Fat 6g; Protein 33g; Carbohydrate 12g; Fiber 3g.