



DINING ON A DIME

Eating Better for Less

February / March

Make Loved Recipes More ... Loving

This Valentine's Day, show your loved ones how much you care about them by making some of your family's favorite recipes a bit healthier. Check out page 4 for the Loving Zucchini Bread recipe that uses most of the following tips:

Add more vegetables or fruit, and cut half of the fat/oil.

Most of us fall short of eating recommended amounts of vegetables and fruits every day. An easy (and very tasty!) way to include more, and get the benefits of their nutrients, is by adding vegetable or fruit purees to sauces, dips, soups, casseroles and desserts. How can you do this? Buy unsalted canned pumpkin, unsweetened applesauce or baby food, which are already pureed. Or, mash very soft fruits, such as canned fruit or over-ripe bananas. Or, cook (such as steam or roast) any kind of vegetable or fruit, or a mixture of them, until soft. Then put them into a food processor or blender. Reserve some of the pureed mixture for use right away, and freeze the remainder in half-cup portions in containers with tight-fitting lids. Decrease the amount of fat (such as vegetable oil, margarine, shortening or butter) called for in the recipe by half, and replace the other half with pureed vegetables or fruits.



Substitute whole wheat. Replace half of the white flour called for in your recipes with whole wheat flour. This will increase the nutrients.

Cut sugar. When making baked goods, you can typically cut the sugar called for in your recipe by about one-third and not notice a difference. To boost the sweet taste without using sugar, you could add 1/2 teaspoon of cinnamon, cloves, allspice, nutmeg or a flavoring such as almond or vanilla extract.

Cut salt. Except for recipes that require yeast, you can eliminate the salt called for in a recipe completely. Yeast products need enough salt to prevent the dough from rising too quickly and for good texture.

Cut cheese. If a recipe calls for 1 cup shredded cheese, use 1/2 cup instead and consider using one with a stronger flavor. Cheese is high in calories and saturated fat.

Change your basting sauce. If a recipe calls for basting food in oil or drippings, use a small amount of fruit juice, wine vinegar or a low sodium vegetable broth instead.

Genetically Modified Foods

Genetically-modified foods (also called GMOs or genetically-modified organisms) again made media headlines last fall. California's Proposition 37 would have required food companies to label GM ingredients in foods. What is GM? The term refers to using genetic engineering to manipulate the genes of plants and animals by removing or rearranging specific genes, or inserting DNA from other species into the GMO's genes. Effects of this science have been vigorously debated around the world.

A GMO advantage: Transgenic biotechnology allows the GM plants or animals to have a specific new trait, such as greater nutritional value or resistance to drought, cold, pests, herbicides and/or diseases. This can result in larger harvests, faster growth and in food being produced less expensively. This benefits consumers and makes it easier to feed hungry populations around the world.

A GMO disadvantage: No studies tracking the long-term effects of GMOs on animals, humans or the environment have been published. Human health risks may include exposure to allergens, antibiotic resistance, endocrine disruption and reproductive disorders.

Options for identifying foods that don't have GM ingredients: Since there is no legislation requiring companies to label the GM content of foods, it's difficult for interested consumers to know whether GM ingredients are present in a specific food. In the U.S., 85% or more of the soybeans, corn, sugar beets and canola are grown from GM seeds. Thus, foods listing ingredients with one of those four crops likely do have GM content. However, foods with one of the two logos shown below are made without GM ingredients.



1. U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Organic. This symbol means that the food has been certified to contain at least 95% organic ingredients. Organic foods do not have GM content. (Information is online at www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/nop)



2. Non-GMO Project Verified. This symbol means that a third party has verified that "best practices" have been followed to avoid GM ingredients in the food. (Information is online at www.nongmoproject.org)

Grow Vegetables and Savings



Spring has nearly sprung! Are you sprouting ideas of starting a garden this year? You can reduce your grocery expenses by growing your own vegetables. It's also easy to spend a small fortune if you don't plan correctly. If you are new to gardening, consider these tips before getting started. Have fun enjoying your garden's great tastes and the physical activity and savings benefits you reap!

Grow well-suited veggies. In Kansas, good choices when garden space is limited are bush cucumbers, eggplant, green beans, kale, lettuce, onions, peas, peppers, radishes, spinach, summer squash, Swiss chard and tomatoes. On the other hand, cabbage, melons, potatoes, pumpkins, sweet corn and winter squash typically require more growing space. Nearly all vegetables need full sun and well-drained soil.

Grow veggies that are expensive to buy. To save more money, grow more expensive vegetables, such as leafy greens, peppers and tomatoes, or grow large quantities of the vegetables that you purchase most regularly.

Grow veggies that you can store or preserve after the harvest. Onions, sweet and white potatoes, and winter squash can be stored for several months if you can keep them at the appropriate temperature. Other vegetables can be preserved if you dry, can or freeze them, such as corn, cucumbers, green beans and tomatoes.

Start with a written plan. Decide what you want to grow and find out how it should be planted, how to maintain it, and how to harvest and store it. Plan your garden on paper first. Ask your friends, and call your local extension office, for advice on gardening and food preservation. Especially good resources are online at www.ksre.ksu.edu/HumanNutrition/doc10557.ashx, www.he.k-state.edu/fnp/displays/family-gardening.html and www.ksre.ksu.edu/bookstore/pubs/S51.pdf

Reduce gardening inputs. Saving money by growing vegetables means keeping your costs as low as possible while still growing productive plants. For the first year, consider container gardening. Or, rent a plot in a community garden to find out if you like to garden before you need to invest in much equipment. Ask for advice about what to do from people who have gardened there for a few years. You could learn how to collect rainwater for irrigation and how to compost to improve the soil.

Start small. Like many activities worth doing, gardening takes practice. Crops require regular watering, weeding, harvesting and preservation/storage. Limit yourself to a few containers or to a small plot and just a few types of vegetables the first year. Expand as you become more experienced.

Source: (Accessed 1/29/13): Iowa State University Extension's [Can a Vegetable Garden Save you Money?](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/news/2009/mar/060201.htm) at www.extension.iastate.edu/news/2009/mar/060201.htm

For more information about healthy eating, contact your local extension office. This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The Food Assistance Program can help people of all ages with low income buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, call 1-888-369-4777.



Dining on a Dime's Cooks' Corner

Loving Zucchini Bread (Makes 1 loaf)

This yummy recipe has been made-over following the tips for "making loved recipes more loving" that we recommended on page 1.

Ingredients

1 1/2 cups shredded zucchini	2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1/2 cup firmly-packed raisins	2 large raw eggs
3/4 cup whole wheat flour	1/4 cup vegetable oil
3/4 cup all purpose flour	1/4 cup unsalted canned pumpkin
1/2 teaspoon baking soda	1/3 cup granulated white sugar
1/2 teaspoon baking powder	2 teaspoons vanilla flavoring

Directions

1. Measure zucchini and raisins. Set aside. **2.** Spray a 9-by-5-inch loaf pan with non-stick cooking spray. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. **3.** Using a fork, stir together flours, baking soda, baking powder and cinnamon in a bowl. **4.** In another mixing bowl, beat together eggs, oil, pumpkin, sugar and vanilla. Stir in flour mixture, then the zucchini and raisins. **5.** Pour batter into the prepared pan. **6.** Bake for at least 50 minutes, or until a knife inserted in the center comes out almost clean. Serve hot or cold. **7.** Tightly cover cooled leftovers. Bread may be frozen.

Nutrition Facts for one of 12 slices: 160 calories, 6g fat, 0.5g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 30mg cholesterol, 85mg sodium, 24g carbohydrate, 2g dietary fiber and 3g protein. Daily Values: 15% vitamin A, 6% vitamin C, 4% calcium, 6% iron.



**Cooperative Extension Service
K-State Research and Extension**

K-State, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.

K-State is an equal opportunity provider and employer.