MINI LESSON

Healthy Cooking with the Microwave

OBJECTIVE

Participants will learn how to use the microwave to safely prepare healthy meals.

PREPARATION

Talk with your food pantry about what food is being distributed on the day of your visit. Try to focus on foods that the pantry has trouble distributing or thinks clients are unfamiliar with.

Prepare a sample that highlights the use of cooking with the microwave. Remember, recipes can often be adapted depending on what is available.

Consider the flow of clients through the pantry. If time and set-up allows, you can demonstrate how to prepare the recipe that is being sampled.

Recipe

Microwave Baked Apples
(Cook Smart Eat Smart)

Other Possible Recipe:
Oven-baked Potato (EFNEP)

Cook Smart | Eat Smart

Microwave Baked Apples

Estimated time: 10 minutes, prep; 4 minutes, cook; 2 minutes, cool

KITCHEN EQUIPMENT NEEDED

Apple corer or paring knife
Cutting board
Measuring spoons
Small mixing bowl
Spoon
Microwave safe deep casserole dish with lid

INGREDIENTS

- 2 apples
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons raisins
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons butter (optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. Core the apple leaving the bottom intact.
2. In a bowl, mix brown sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg and raisins. Spoon the sugar mixture into the apples and set a teaspoon of butter on top of each apple.
3. Place the apples in a deep casserole dish and cover with the lid.
4. Microwave for 3½–4 minutes or until tender. Let the apples sit for 2 minutes before serving.

NOTES

This recipe works well as ***hands-on*** or ***demonstration***.

Dried cranberries or cherries can be substituted for raisins.

Apple-pie spice or pumpkin-pie spice can be substituted for nutmeg and cinnamon.

Any variety of apples such as Golden Delicious, Fuji, Granny Smith, Gala or Braeburn can be used.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING (Makes 2 servings)
Made without butter.

Calories **130** | Total Fat **0 g** | Saturated Fat **0 g** | Protein **1 g**
Carbohydrates **35 g** | Fiber **4 g** | Sodium **5 mg**

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TALKING POINTS

- Ask participants if they use the microwave to prepare meals.
- Explain that microwave cooking can help to save time, and it can be a healthy way to prepare many foods.
- It's important to pay attention to safety when cooking in the microwave, as microwaves can leave "cold spots" in the food where harmful bacteria can thrive.
- To steam foods, use a small amount of water to heat them in the microwave—this helps the foods to retain their vitamins and minerals. Be sure that foods are arranged evenly in the dish. Cover with a lid or plastic wrap, but be sure to loosen or vent the lid or wrap to allow steam to get out. This type of steaming will allow the food to cook evenly and will kill harmful bacteria.
- Be sure to use a food thermometer to make sure that the food is cooked to a safe temperature. The cooking times may vary because microwaves differ in how powerful or efficient they are. After the food has cooked, check the temperature with a thermometer.

Here is some guidance from the USDA on temperatures:

- Cook all raw beef, pork, lamb and veal steaks, chops, and roasts to a minimum internal temperature of 145°F as measured with a food thermometer before removing meat from the heat source. For safety and quality, allow meat to rest for at least three minutes before carving or consuming. For reasons of personal preference, consumers may choose to cook meat to higher temperatures.
- Cook all raw ground beef, pork, lamb, and veal to an internal temperature of 160°F as measured with a food thermometer.
- Cook all poultry to a safe minimum internal temperature of 165°F as measured with a food thermometer.
- Microwaving stuffed, whole poultry is not recommended. The stuffing might not reach the temperature needed to destroy harmful bacteria. Cook stuffing separately to 165°F.
- Cook egg dishes and casseroles to 160°F.
- Reheat leftovers to 165°F.

- Containers that have a microwave-safe label have been evaluated by the FDA and found to be safe. Most takeout containers, plastic tubs or jars which contained purchased foods, or water bottles are not microwave-safe.
- Allow participants to taste a sample that was prepared in a microwave. Talk to them about the recipe and how to prepare it. If time and/or set-up allows, you can demonstrate how to prepare the recipe that is being sampled.

MINI LESSON

Easy Roasted Vegetables Technique

OBJECTIVE

Participants will understand the technique of roasting vegetables, including what equipment is needed and simple ingredient combinations for roasting.

PREPARATION

Talk with your food pantry about what food is being distributed on the day of your visit. Try to focus on foods that the pantry has trouble distributing or thinks clients are unfamiliar with.

Prepare a sample that highlights the use of available vegetables prepared through roasting. Remember, recipes can often be adapted depending on what is available.

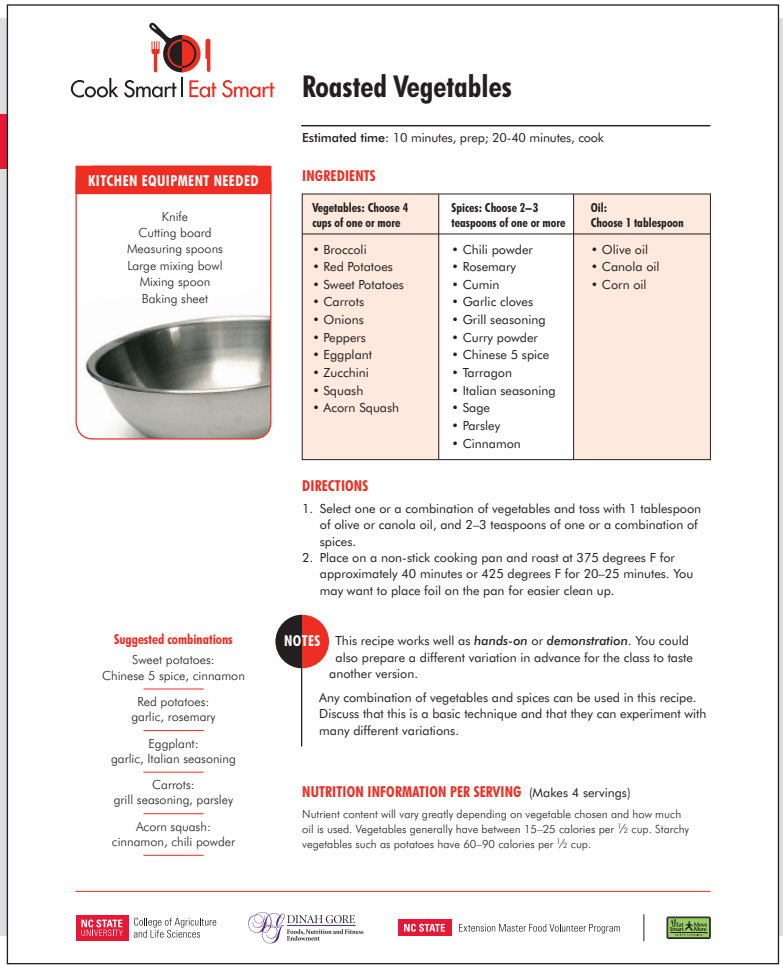
Consider the flow of clients through the pantry. If time and set-up allows, you can demonstrate how to prepare the recipe that is being sampled.

Recipe

Guide to Roasting/Spice and Vegetable Pairing
(Cook Smart Eat Smart)

If you need a reminder of how to demonstrate roasting, see this video: **www.youtube.com/watch?v=A8JofmTRvtw**

If your pantry has the ability to play videos, this could be shared during your presentation.



Cook Smart | Eat Smart

Roasted Vegetables

Estimated time: 10 minutes, prep; 20-40 minutes, cook

KITCHEN EQUIPMENT NEEDED

Knife
Cutting board
Measuring spoons
Large mixing bowl
Mixing spoon
Baking sheet

INGREDIENTS

Vegetables: Choose 4 cups of one or more	Spices: Choose 2–3 teaspoons of one or more	Oil: Choose 1 tablespoon
• Broccoli • Red Potatoes • Sweet Potatoes • Carrots • Onions • Peppers • Eggplant • Zucchini • Squash • Acorn Squash	• Chili powder • Rosemary • Cumin • Garlic cloves • Grill seasoning • Curry powder • Chinese 5 spice • Tarragon • Italian seasoning • Sage • Parsley • Cinnamon	• Olive oil • Canola oil • Corn oil

DIRECTIONS

1. Select one or a combination of vegetables and toss with 1 tablespoon of olive or canola oil, and 2–3 teaspoons of one or a combination of spices.
2. Place on a non-stick cooking pan and roast at 375 degrees F for approximately 40 minutes or 425 degrees F for 20–25 minutes. You may want to place foil on the pan for easier clean up.

Suggested combinations

Sweet potatoes: Chinese 5 spice, cinnamon

Red potatoes: garlic, rosemary

Eggplant: garlic, Italian seasoning

Carrots: grill seasoning, parsley

Acorn squash: cinnamon, chili powder

NOTES

This recipe works well as ***hands-on*** or ***demonstration***. You could also prepare a different variation in advance for the class to taste another version.

Any combination of vegetables and spices can be used in this recipe. Discuss that this is a basic technique and that they can experiment with many different variations.

NUTRITION INFORMATION PER SERVING (Makes 4 servings)

Nutrient content will vary greatly depending on vegetable chosen and how much oil is used. Vegetables generally have between 15–25 calories per ½ cup. Starchy vegetables such as potatoes have 60–90 calories per ½ cup.

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TALKING POINTS

- Ask participants how they normally prepare the vegetable they will be sampling that day.
- Tell participants that the technique of roasting uses dry heat to caramelize the surface of the food which enhances the flavor. Roasting is a great way to prepare almost any vegetable! Roasted vegetables are quick and easy to prepare, require very little equipment, and there are many delicious combinations!
- Tell participants that roasting multiple trays of vegetables at the beginning of the week allows you to utilize the oven being on and allows for leftovers or "planned-overs" to eat throughout the week. Roast one pan of broccoli with olive oil, chili powder and garlic and roast another pan of squash and zucchini with olive oil, garlic, and parmesan cheese. That way you only turn your oven on once during the week but have about 6–10 servings of vegetables for the week, which can be incorporated into other recipes. For example, you could serve roasted vegetables over pasta, add them to a frittata, or serve over a salad.
- Remind participants that there are four keys to remember when roasting:
  1. Keep the pieces the same size so they will cook evenly.
  2. Don't overcrowd the baking sheet/roasting pan.
  3. Most vegetables can be roasted between 350 and 425°F. The amount of time it will take foods to roast will depend on the food and the heat of the oven. Vegetables are ready when they are a little brown and are tender enough to pierce with a fork.
  4. Vegetables can be roasted with just a little bit of oil and seasonings. Using what you have on hand is a great way to bring variety to your meals or side dishes.
- Tell participants that often people who don't like a certain vegetable raw, love it roasted—making it a great way to incorporate more vegetables every day! Allow them to taste test a sample of a vegetable or a combination of vegetables that have been roasted. Remind participants that they can try vegetables they like best and see what new combinations they can create.

MINI LESSON

Simple Sautéing

OBJECTIVE

Participants will understand the technique of sautéing foods, including what equipment is needed and simple ingredient combinations for sautéing.

PREPARATION

Talk with your food pantry about what food is being distributed on the day of your visit. Try to focus on foods that the pantry has trouble distributing or thinks clients are unfamiliar with.

Prepare a sample that highlights the use of available food prepared using a sauté or stir-fry technique. Remember, recipes can often be adapted depending on what is available.

Consider the flow of clients through the pantry. If time and set-up allows, you can demonstrate how to prepare the recipe that is being sampled.

Recipe

Apple Glazed Stir-fry (Food Pantry Recipe Card)

Other Possible Recipe: Simple Stir Fry Sauce[1] (EFNEP)

Apple-Glazed Stir Fry

- 4 cups sliced **mixed vegetables**
- 1 **apple**, sliced thinly
- 1/2 cup **unsweetened applesauce**
- 1/2 cup **water**
- 1 tsp **ginger** (optional)
- 1 tsp **cajun seasoning** (or favorite seasoning blend)
- 2 Tbl **vinegar**
- 1 Tbl **low-sodium soy sauce**

1. Place a skillet over high heat and add your vegetables. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring frequently.
2. While vegetables are cooking, stir together the remaining ingredients in a bowl.
3. Once vegetables are slightly browned, pour mixture over the vegetables and stir well. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook for another 5-10 minutes.
4. Serve vegetables as a side dish or over rice.

Makes 5 servings

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 Cup
Servings Per Container 5

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 140	Calories from Fat 50
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 6g	9%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 210mg	9%
Total Carbohydrate 21g	7%
Dietary Fiber 3g	12%
Sugars 15g	
Protein 2g	
Vitamin A 110% • Vitamin C 90%	
Calcium 4% • Iron 4%	

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Reheating Frozen Veggies and Sauce:

1. Add 1 cup of frozen vegetables and two cubes of sauce to a medium saucepan over medium heat.
2. Cook 5-10 minutes or until sauce has coated the vegetables and vegetables are hot.

If you need a reminder of how to stir-fry or sauté, see this video:
localfood.ces.ncsu.edu/local-food-nutrition-health/cooking-local-foods/sauteing-and-stir-frying

If your pantry has the ability to play videos, this could be shared during your presentation.

1. ncefnep.org/participants/tips/super-stir-fry

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TALKING POINTS

- Ask participants if they have ever tried making a stir-fry at home. Explain that stir frying is just like sautéing, but typically uses a wok. You can use a shallow pan instead if you don't have a wok at home.
- Tell participants that sautéing or stir-frying is the quick-cooking of meat and/or vegetables using a small amount of added fat (usually oil) in a skillet over high heat. This helps retain texture and flavor.
- Tell participants that sautéing requires very little time and equipment and can be used for a variety of different foods! It's also great for making large batches and then eating leftovers or "planned-overs" throughout the week.
- Show participants an example of a wide, flat-bottomed pan with low sides, such as a sauté pan, frying pan, skillet, or wok, if the setting is appropriate for this.
- Remind participants that there are four keys to a good sauté:
  1. Keep the pieces the same size so they will cook evenly. The smaller the pieces, the less time they will need to cook. Vegetables should be cooked in order of thickness or denseness so they are cooked evenly.
  2. Add just enough oil to lightly coat the bottom of the pan. Turn the burner on to medium-high heat. Make sure the pan is hot before adding food. The first piece of food should sizzle when it hits the pan, letting you know it is hot. Keep the pan hot during cooking.
  3. Place food in a single layer and don't overcrowd the pan. Be careful with oil splatters.
  4. Keep the food moving by stirring frequently in an uncovered pan.
- Tell participants that a sauté can be all veggies or include a protein. For example, canned beans, edamame, eggs, or tofu make great additions, as well as chicken, beef, pork, or seafood! If you are using meat or seafood from a can, be sure to drain any excess liquid and rinse it before adding to your stir fry. There are endless variations based on what you have at home, what's in season, or what you and your family like!
- Explain to participants that meat, poultry and seafood should be cooked first to the correct temperature, taken out of the pan while cooking vegetables, and then added back to the pan before adding sauce. Remind participants that a food thermometer is the most accurate way to make sure that food is cooked to a safe temperature.

Here is some guidance from the USDA on safe cooking temperatures:

- Steaks: 145°F
- Ground beef: 160°F
- Poultry: 165°F
- Pork: 145°F
- Fish 145°F

- Allow participants to taste a sample that was prepared using a sauté/stir fry technique. Talk to them about the recipe and how to prepare it. If time and/or set-up allows, you can demonstrate how to prepare the recipe that is being sampled.

MINI LESSON

Dressings

OBJECTIVE

Participants will learn how to build their own salad and make a homemade dressing.

PREPARATION

Talk with your food pantry about what food is being distributed on the day of your visit. Try to focus on foods that the pantry has trouble distributing or thinks clients are unfamiliar with.

Prepare a sample that highlights the use of available food to make a salad. Remember, recipes can often be adapted depending on what is available.

Consider the flow of clients through the pantry. If time and set-up allows, you can demonstrate how to prepare the recipe that is being sampled.

Recipe

Build-Your-Own Salad and Dressing (EFNEP Cookbook)

Build-Your-Own Salad

There are limitless combinations for great salads. Salads are a great way to be creative in the kitchen and to create your own style.

Makes 1 serving
Serving Size: about 1½ cups

Choose 1–2 leafy greens (1 cup per serving)
- Iceberg
- Spinach
- Romaine
- Arugula
- Bibb lettuce
- Mixed greens

Choose 1 topping (optional)
- Grapes
- Dried cranberries
- Mandarin oranges
- Pineapple chunks
- Grapefruit slices
- Almonds
- Raisins

Choose 1–3 vegetables (1/4 cup each)
- Carrots
- Mushrooms
- Onions
- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Asparagus
- Green pepper
- Tomato
- Frozen green peas
- Snow peas
- Summer squash

Directions
1. Wash and combine all above ingredients.
2. Choose a dressing. (See salad dressing recipes.) Add 1-2 teaspoons per serving.
3. Toss well to coat all ingredients with dressing.

Nutrition Information Per Serving
40 Calories, Total Fat 0g, Saturated Fat 0g, Protein 2g, Total Carbohydrates 8g, Dietary Fiber 3g, Sodium 35mg. Excellent source of vitamins A and C.

Analyzed with romaine, carrots, green pepper, and tomatoes.

Build-Your-Own Dressing

Serving Size: 1 teaspoon

Choose 3 tablespoons acid
- Lemon juice
- Rice vinegar
- Red wine vinegar
- Sherry vinegar
- Balsamic vinegar
- White wine vinegar
- Cider vinegar

Choose 1/2 cup or less oil
- Olive oil
- Safflower oil
- Canola oil
- Vegetable oil

Choose 1/2 teaspoon add-in
- Herbs
- Spices
- Dijon mustard
- Minced shallots
- Minced garlic
- Parmesan cheese

Directions
1. Place all ingredients in a jar or plastic container, and shake to mix together.
2. Store in refrigerator. Separation is normal. Shake or stir prior to using.

Nutrition Information Per Serving
30 Calories, Total Fat 3g, Saturated Fat 0g, Protein 0g, Total Carbohydrate 0g, Dietary Fiber 0g, Sodium 35mg

Lemon Vinaigrette
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/2 tablespoon oregano

Balsamic Vinaigrette
- 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/2 tablespoon Dijon mustard

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TALKING POINTS

- Tell participants that building a salad is an easy way to add vegetables to your plate.
- Teach participants that they can create a salad at home using whatever produce they have on hand:

1. **Choose leafy greens:** iceberg, spinach, arugula, romaine, bibb lettuce, mixed greens, kale
2. **Choose vegetables:** carrots, mushrooms, onions, broccoli, cauliflower, celery, asparagus, bell pepper, tomato, cucumber, snow peas, summer squash, or others
3. **Choose toppings:** grapes, apples, dried cranberries, mandarin oranges, pineapple chunks, grapefruit slices, nuts, berries, sunflower seeds, or others

- Remind participants that they can add extra protein, like chicken, tuna, shrimp, hard boiled eggs or beans, to create a more filling salad that can be eaten as a meal.
- Ask participants if they've ever made homemade dressing.
- Tell participants that creating your own dressing is often less expensive and healthier than store-bought salad dressings, which often include unhealthy hydrogenated oils and lots of added sodium and sugar. Consider showing participants the label of a store-bought dressing and teaching them how to identify the sodium, added sugar, and hydrogenated oils.
- Teach participants why it is important to reduce added sodium and sugar.

  Sugar: Added sugar, sometimes found unexpectedly in pre-made seasonings or condiments, can lead to numerous health concerns, including tooth decay, heart disease, diabetes and obesity.

  Sodium: Sodium is a component of table salt. Consuming less sodium may help reduce the risk of stroke, heart failure, osteoporosis, and kidney disease.
- Show participants how easy it is to create their own healthy dressing using whatever ingredients they have available:

1. **Choose 3 tablespoons acid:** lemon juice, rice vinegar, red wine vinegar, balsamic vinegar, white wine vinegar, cider vinegar
2. **Choose 12 cup or less oil:** olive oil, canola oil, vegetable oil
3. **Choose 12 teaspoon add-in:** herbs, spices, dijon mustard, minced shallots, minced garlic, parmesan cheese

- Tell participants that homemade dressing should be stored in the refrigerator in an airtight container (like a jar) for 1–2 weeks. Oils will separate so be sure to shake or whisk again before using.
- Remind participants to use about 1 tablespoon of dressing per 2 cups of greens. Be careful to only lightly coat, not drown, your salad with dressing to add flavor while keeping calories low.
- Let participants know that a simple dressing can also be used to marinate meat, seafood, or tofu before cooking to add extra flavor to their meals.
- Allow participants to taste a sample of salad with homemade dressing. Talk to them about the recipe and how to prepare it. If time and/or set-up allows, you can demonstrate how to prepare the homemade dressing.

MINI LESSON

Freezing Fruits, Vegetables and Meals

OBJECTIVE

Participants will:

1. Understand the benefits of storing fruits, vegetables and meals in the freezer.
2. Learn the steps to storing fresh fruits and vegetables in the freezer.
3. Learn how to freeze meals or leftovers for future use.

PREPARATION

Talk with your food pantry about what food is being distributed on the day of your visit. Try to focus on foods that the pantry has trouble distributing or thinks clients are unfamiliar with.

Prepare a sample that highlights the use of available frozen foods, or food that can be prepared and then frozen. Remember, recipes can often be adapted depending on what is available.

Consider the flow of clients through the pantry. If time and set-up allows, you can demonstrate how to prepare the recipe that is being sampled.

Recipe

Choose a recipe that highlights what produce the pantry is distributing the day of your visit. Select a recipe that can be frozen easily or utilizes frozen produce.

Apple-Glazed Stir Fry

- 4 cups sliced **mixed vegetables**
- 1 **apple**, sliced thinly
- 1/2 cup **unsweetened applesauce**
- 1/2 cup **water**
- 1 tsp **ginger** (optional)
- 1 tsp **cajun seasoning** (or favorite seasoning blend)
- 2 Tbl **vinegar**
- 1 Tbl **low-sodium soy sauce**

1. Place a skillet over high heat and add your vegetables. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring frequently.
2. While vegetables are cooking, stir together the remaining ingredients in a bowl.
3. Once vegetables are slightly browned, pour mixture over the vegetables and stir well. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook for another 5-10 minutes.
4. Serve vegetables as a side dish or over rice.

Makes 5 servings

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 Cup
Servings Per Container 5

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 140	Calories from Fat 50
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 6g	9%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 210mg	9%
Total Carbohydrate 21g	7%
Dietary Fiber 3g	12%
Sugars 15g	
Protein 2g	
Vitamin A 110% • Vitamin C 90%	
Calcium 4% • Iron 4%	

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Reheating Frozen Veggies and Sauce:

1. Add 1 cup of frozen vegetables and two cubes of sauce to a medium saucepan over medium heat.
2. Cook 5-10 minutes or until sauce has coated the vegetables and vegetables are hot.

The following Food Pantry Recipe Card may fit well with this lesson: **Apple Glazed Stir-Fry**

The **"How to save fruits/vegetables for future meals"** Food Pantry Recipe Card has tips and information for storing fresh fruit and produce and can be distributed with this lesson.

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TALKING POINTS

- There are a number of ways to save fruits and vegetables for future meals. This is a great strategy if you have fruits, vegetable, or even meals, that you do not want to go to waste.
- Freezing produce can also be a great way to save money! Consider buying extra when they are on sale to use throughout the year.

Freezing Vegetables

- To maintain the best quality, color, and flavor, most vegetables should be blanched before freezing.
- Blanching is scalding vegetables in boiling water or steam for a short time followed by quick cooling in very cold water.
- Good vegetables for blanching include greens, broccoli, cauliflower, green beans, carrots, corn, peppers and celery.
- Here are the steps for blanching and freezing vegetables:
  1. Wash and cut vegetables like you would for a meal.
  2. Boil vegetables for 3 to 4 minutes.
  3. Removed cooked vegetables from boiling water and shock them in a bowl of 1/2 ice and 1/2 water. This stops the vegetables from cooking more.
  4. Put vegetables in a single layer on a baking sheet.
  5. Place baking sheet in freezer for 2 to 3 hours or until frozen solid.
  6. Remove vegetables from baking sheet and place into a sealed bag.
  7. Return to freezer immediately.
- Vegetables can be stored for at least a year in your freezer.
- You can roast, saute, or microwave immediately from freezer or thaw in the refrigerator or under cool running water first before cooking.

Freezing Fruit

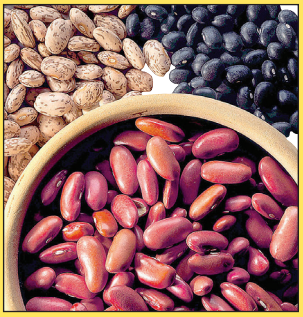
- Fresh fruit can also be frozen for later use by following these steps:
  1. Wash fruit and remove any stems.
  2. Cut fruit in small pieces or leave small fruits whole.
  3. Put fruit in a single layer on a baking sheet.
  4. Place baking sheet in freezer for 2 to 3 hours or until frozen solid.
  5. Remove fruit from baking sheet and place into a sealed bag.
  6. Return to freezer immediately.
- Fruit can be stored for up to a year in the freezer.
- Frozen fruit can be added to oatmeal or yogurt, used in smoothies, or added to baked goods.

Freezing Meals

- Freezing leftovers is a great way to keep your food from going to waste.
- Many meals can be prepared ahead of time and put in the freezer to save for a quick meal in the future. To save time later, make a double batch of your favorite meal—eat one now and save the other in the freezer for a quick weeknight meal. Make sure to reheat leftovers to 165°F.
- You can also freeze meals in single-serving portions to pull out as needed.
- Examples of meals that freeze well include soups, stews, and casseroles.
- To freeze a cooked meal, cool the dish in the refrigerator for 1 to 2 hours. After cooled, place in a freezer-safe, sealed container in the freezer. When ready to eat, thaw in the refrigerator before cooking.
- Label foods with the name of food, packaging date, number of servings or amount, and any additional helpful information such as special instructions.
- Most frozen meals can last up to a year.

MINI LESSON

Change It Up



OBJECTIVE

Participants will understand how to make adaptations to recipes, while preserving the flavor and health of the original recipe.

PREPARATION

Talk with your food pantry about what food is being distributed on the day of your visit. Try to focus on foods that the pantry has trouble distributing or thinks clients are unfamiliar with.

Prepare a sample that highlights the use of available food and allows for demonstration of recipe adaptations. Remember, recipes can often be adapted depending on what is available.

Consider the flow of clients through the pantry. If time and set-up allows, you can demonstrate how to prepare the recipe that is being sampled.

Recipe

Tuscan Bean Soup (Food Pantry Recipe Card)

Other Possible Recipes:

- Apple Glazed Stir Fry (Food Pantry Recipe Card)
- Beef Stir Fry[1] (EFNEP)
- Mini-Meat Loaves[2] (EFNEP)
- Tuna Burger[3] (Med Instead of Meds)

Tuscan Bean Soup

- 2 Tbl **oil**
- 1 **medium onion**, chopped
- 4 **garlic cloves**, sliced thinly
- 2 **medium carrots**, sliced thinly
- 2 **ribs celery**, sliced thinly
- 1 tsp **salt**
- 1 (28 oz) can **tomato puree or crushed tomatoes**
- 6 cups combined **kale**, **collard greens** and/or **cabbage**
- 2 (15 oz) cans **white beans**, drained and rinsed
- 1 tsp **dried rosemary** (or other dried herbs)
- 4 cups low sodium **chicken** or **vegetable stock**
- 1 Tbl **sugar** (optional)
- **Black pepper** to taste

1. Heat a large pot over medium heat. Add oil, let it get hot. Add black pepper and onions to the oil with a small pinch of salt. Cook 10 to 12 minutes or until onions have softened and are starting to brown at edges.
2. Add the garlic, carrots, and celery with the remainder of the salt. Cook for 7 to 10 minutes or until vegetables have softened.
3. Add the tomatoes, greens, beans, rosemary, sugar and stock. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium-low. Simmer for 30 to 40 minutes. Serve with bread.

Makes 10 servings

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 cup
Servings Per Container 10

Amount Per Serving

Calories 190	Calories from Fat 30
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 3g	5%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 500mg	21%
Total Carbohydrate 32g	11%
Dietary Fiber 8g	32%
Sugars 6g	
Protein 10g	

Vitamin A 70% • Vitamin C 30%
Calcium 15% • Iron 25%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Add bread in the last five minutes of cooking to make your Bean Soup into a tasty Ribollita or "Tuscan Bread Soup."

1. ncefnep.org/links/handouts/Handout12-MyPlate.pdf
2. ncefnep.org/links/handouts/Handout2-FixItSafe.pdf
3. medinsteadofmeds.com/tuna-burger

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TALKING POINTS

- Ask participants if they ever make changes to recipes, and how they do so.
- Tell participants that a recipe is just a guide. Most recipes can be adapted based on the ingredients you have on hand, what's on sale, or what you like. One of the best things about cooking at home is that you are in charge of what you and your family eat.
- Encourage participants to make a note on the recipe whenever they make changes. That way next time you make the dish, you can remember what you liked and didn't like about the changes you made.
- Tell participants that the meat you use in a recipe can be substituted for a different type of meat, or a non-meat protein like beans or tofu. For example, ground turkey is often a great substitute for recipes with ground beef, including burgers, tacos, and lasagna. Meat or seafood from a can, such as canned chicken or tuna, can also be a substitute for other proteins in recipes like pastas and casseroles. Depending on the canned protein, you might need to use a fork to separate the meat or seafood into smaller pieces.
- Let participants know that they can change many recipes to adjust to what's in season. For example, if a recipe calls for spinach, they can use kale, collards, mustard greens, or any other type of greens. Making a stir fry or a frittata is a great way to use whatever vegetables are available.
- Allow participants to taste a sample that highlights how a recipe can be adapted. Talk to them about the recipe and how to prepare it. If time and/or set-up allows, you can demonstrate how to prepare the recipe that is being sampled.

MINI LESSON

Knife Skills

OBJECTIVE

Participants will learn about proper knife skills, knife safety, and knife care.

PREPARATION

Talk with your food pantry about what food is being distributed on the day of your visit. Try to focus on foods that the pantry has trouble distributing or thinks clients are unfamiliar with.

Prepare a sample that highlights the use of available food and requires the use of basic knife skills. Remember, recipes can often be adapted depending on what is available.

Consider the flow of clients through the pantry. If time and set-up allows, you can demonstrate how to prepare the recipe that is being sampled. This material would be more effectively delivered with 5–10 minutes for an uninterrupted lesson with participants.

Recipe

Best-Ever Home Fries (Food Pantry Recipe Card)

Other Possible Recipe: Apple-Glazed Stir Fry (Food Pantry Recipe Card)

Recipe card includes instructions about how to cut a pepper.

Best Ever Home Fries

- 2-3 **potatoes**, cut into 1/4-inch cubes
- 1 medium **onion**, cut small
- 2-3 **carrots**, shredded
- **Garlic** to taste, sliced thinly
- 1 cup **broccoli**, chopped into tiny pieces
- 3 Tbl **canola oil**
- 1/2 tsp **salt**
- **Black pepper** to taste

1. Heat oil in a hot skillet over medium-high heat.
2. Add potatoes in a single layer in the pan. Sprinkle with a small pinch of salt and black pepper to taste. Cook for 5 minutes before stirring. Potatoes should be whistling.
3. Cook 10 more minutes, stirring twice.
4. Push potatoes to the outside of the pan. Add onions with a small pinch of salt. Cook 7 to 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
5. When onion is soft and turning brown at the edges, stir in with the potatoes. Add carrots, garlic and broccoli to the center of the pan with the rest of the salt.
6. Cook for 5 to 7 minutes, stirring about once a minute. When the broccoli has softened and turned a bright green color, the home fries are done!

Makes 6 servings

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1/2 cup
Servings Per Container About 6

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 140	Calories from Fat 60
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 7g	11%
Saturated Fat 0.5g	3%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 210mg	9%
Total Carbohydrate 17g	6%
Dietary Fiber 3g	12%
Sugars 2g	
Protein 2g	
Vitamin A 50% • Vitamin C 45%	
Calcium 2% • Iron 4%	

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

For an example of how knife skills can be demonstrated, see these videos:
localfood.ces.ncsu.edu/local-food-nutrition-health/cooking-local-foods/knife-skills

If your pantry has the ability to play videos, this could be shared during your presentation.

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TALKING POINTS

- Explain to participants that learning how to properly use a knife will make their cooking time safer and easier.
- Tell participants that a sharp knife is a safe knife because it allows you to better control and avoid the knife slipping off the food and cutting you. Knives should be sharpened regularly. Before starting to cut or chop, make sure you have a cutting board that is secure on the table with either rubber feet or a damp paper towel or dish towel underneath.
- Teach participants about the different types of knives and when each would be used. If you have time, you can demonstrate using all four, or you can adjust and just showcase one or two.

Chefs Knife

Demo options: Slice carrots, chop onions, etc.

- A chef's knife is the perfect all-purpose knife to have in your kitchen.
- Chef's knives are usually between 6 and 12 inches long and have a curved edge and a point to allow you to rock the knife on the cutting board. This is safer and more efficient. A chef's knife should be held close to the blade to give you better control. *(Demo where to hold the knife.)*
  - — The first step is to cut the food into manageable pieces. Aim the point of the knife towards the cutting board at a 45 degree angle above the food. Your other hand should hold the food with fingers curled under like you are making a claw. If you are holding the food with your pinky and thumb, make sure they are further back than your other fingers.
  - — Use a rocking motion to slice or chop the food by bringing the knife straight down to the cutting board, pushing forward slightly and lifting back up as you draw the knife back. The point of the knife should touch the cutting board at all times during the process for safety. (Demo the rocking motion.)
  - — Remember, practice makes perfect and speed will come but go slow until you get the hang of it!

Paring Knife

Demo options: Hull strawberries, peel apple, etc.

- A paring knife is another great tool for every kitchen. Since it is only about 2–4 inches long, it should be, used for peeling, removing the core or hull, or small cutting jobs.

Serrated Knife

Demo option: slice tomato

- A serrated knife is great for cutting bread, soft fruits like tomatoes, or carving meat like chicken or turkey. The edge of this knife is more rigid and is designed to be used in a sawing motion. Serrated knives can also be used for fruits that are hard on the outside and soft on the inside, such as watermelons or cantaloupes.

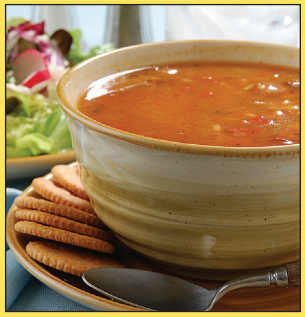
Kitchen Shears

- Kitchen shears can come in handy for cutting chicken, snipping herbs, or other tasks such as opening packages. Just make sure to clean them well and only use them for food purposes.

- Allow participants to taste a sample that has been prepared using basic knife skills. Talk to them about the recipe and how to prepare it. If time and/or set-up allows, you can demonstrate how to prepare the recipe that is being sampled.

MINI LESSON

Ripe Fruits and Vegetables



OBJECTIVE

Participants will learn tips for using ripe fruits and vegetables.

PREPARATION

Talk with your food pantry about what food is being distributed on the day of your visit. Try to focus on foods that the pantry has trouble distributing or thinks clients are unfamiliar with.

Prepare a sample that highlights the use of available fresh produce. Remember, recipes can often be adapted depending on what is available.

Consider the flow of clients through the pantry. If time and set-up allows, you can demonstrate how to prepare the recipe that is being sampled.

Recipe

Oatmeal with Ripe Fruit (Food Pantry Recipe Card)

Other Possible Recipe: Homemade Vegetable Stock (Food Pantry Recipe Card)

Oatmeal with Ripe Fruit

- 2 cups **quick oats**
- 3 1/2 cup **water**
- 1/2 cup **dried fruit** (such as raisins or dried cranberries)
- 1 **ripe apple**, **pear**, or 3/4 cup **ripe berries**
- 1/4 tsp **salt**
- 1 tsp **brown sugar** (optional)
- 1/2 tsp **cinnamon**

1. Cut apple off of core and dice into small pieces.
2. Combine all ingredients above in a saucepan. If using berries, add at the end of cooking.
3. Bring to a boil. Cook 1 minute over medium heat, stirring occasionally.
4. Serve with extra fruit, cinnamon or honey on top.

Makes 6 servings

Other Recipes Using Ripe Fruit:

- Applesauce (Can also be done with pears.)
- Roasted apples with winter squash or sweet potatoes
- Add fruit to your favorite muffin recipe
- Add fruit to your pancakes

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 3/4 cup
Servings Per Container 6

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 170	Calories from Fat 20
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 2g	3%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 105mg	4%
Total Carbohydrate 35g	12%
Dietary Fiber 4g	16%
Sugars 13g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 2%	
Calcium 4% • Iron 10%	

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Courtesy of Greater Pittsburgh community food bank

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The **"How to save fruits/vegetables for future meals"** Food Pantry Recipe Card has tips and information for storing fresh fruit and produce and can be distributed with this lesson.

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TALKING POINTS

- Ask participants what they do with fruits or vegetables that are ripe.
- Tell participants that there are many ways to use produce that may be just beyond its peak ripeness.
  1. Making soup or vegetable stock (recipe card available for making homemade stock)
  2. Using in a recipe like oatmeal (recipe card available), stir fry, smoothies or as banana bread
- Show participants how they can cut off bruised or soft spots on fruits and vegetables so that they can use the rest.
- Remind participants that if they are worried they will not be able to use produce before it goes bad, they can freeze it.
  1. For example, if you have citrus fruits that are discolored, you can squeeze out the juice and save it in the fridge or freezer to add to marinades, dressings or smoothies.
  2. You can use frozen fruit to bake with, or in smoothies. You can use frozen vegetables in a stir fry or soups.
- Allow participants to taste a sample that uses ripe produce (if available). Talk to them about the recipe and how to prepare it. If time and/or set-up allows, you can demonstrate how to prepare the recipe that is being sampled.

MINI LESSON

Eating with the Seasons

OBJECTIVE

Participants will learn how to prepare fresh fruits and vegetables that are grown in North Carolina.

PREPARATION

Talk with your food pantry about what food is being distributed on the day of your visit. Try to focus on produce that has been donated from local North Carolina farms. Please note that the types of produce available will change depending on the time of the year.

Prepare a sample that highlights North Carolina grown fruits and vegetables, or which could have grown in North Carolina (for example, this lesson isn't appropriate to use with tropical fruits or vegetables, such as avocados, bananas, etc).

Choose a recipe from the Food Pantry Recipe Cards that showcases the seasonal item that is available when you are conducting the taste test. Remember, recipes can often be adapted depending on what is available.

Recipe

Stuffed Cabbage Soup (Food Pantry Recipe Card)

Other Possible Recipes:

- Ratatouille (Food Pantry Recipe Card)
- Apple Glazed Stir Fry (Food Pantry Recipe Card)

Stuffed Cabbage Soup

- 2 Tbl **oil**
- 1 small **cabbage** (about 7 cups), chopped
- 1 medium **onion** (about 2 cups), chopped
- 4 cloves **garlic**, minced
- 1 tsp **dried herbs** (basil, oregano, parsley and/or thyme)
- 1 tsp **salt**
- 1 lb **ground beef** (optional)
- 1 (28 oz) can **crushed tomatoes**
- 1 Tbl **brown sugar** (optional)
- 1 cup **cooked rice**
- 3 cups **vegetable or chicken stock**
- **Black pepper** and **Hot pepper** to taste

1. Heat a large pot over medium heat. Add oil.
2. Add the onions and cabbage. Cook for 10-12 minutes or until onions begin to brown.
3. If using ground beef, add it now. Cook 5-7 minutes or until it begins to brown.
4. Add the garlic and continue cooking for 5 minutes.
5. Add tomatoes, stock, herbs, salt and brown sugar. Continue cooking for 20-30 minutes or until cabbage is soft and beef is cooked through.
6. While soup is cooking, cook rice according to package directions.
7. Right before serving, add rice to soup and enjoy.

Makes 6 servings

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1/6 recipe
Servings Per Container 6

Amount Per Serving

Calories 220	Calories from Fat 25
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 3g	5%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 730mg	30%
Total Carbohydrate 46g	15%
Dietary Fiber 6g	24%
Sugars 14g	
Protein 6g	
Vitamin A 8% •	Vitamin C 100%
Calcium 10% •	Iron 20%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Leftover soup? Freeze it and keep it for up to a year.

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ADDITIONAL HANDOUTS/RESOURCES

- North Carolina Department of Agriculture (NCDA) Seasonality Chart
- EMFV North Carolina Agricultural Facts and Commodity Nutrient Content
- Steps to Health Harvest of the Month Handouts
- If your pantry has sweet potatoes that were gleaned and weren't cured, check out this handout about storing and preparing gleaned sweet potatoes. It includes the EFNEP recipe for baked sweet potato fries.
  content.ces.ncsu.edu/gleaned-sweetpotatoes-storage-recipes-and-quick-facts

Before you do this demonstration, you may want to look up local markets in your area: **ncfarmfresh.com**, and check on which of these accept SNAP-EBT so that you can share this information with clients.

TALKING POINTS

- Ask participants if they ever buy food directly from a farmer, or if they grow their own.
  - — If participants grow their own food, remind them that the Extension Master Gardeners are a good source for gardening advice.
  - — If people are interested in growing their own food, connect them to your Horticulture Agent and/or Extension Master Gardeners.
- Remind participants that we grow many of their favorite fruits and vegetables here in North Carolina. In fact, North Carolina is the largest producer in the country of sweet potatoes, and also grows a lot of cucumbers, apples and blueberries.
- Let participants know that they can change many recipes to adjust to what's in season. For example, if a recipe calls for spinach, they can use kale, collards, mustard greens, or any other type of greens. A stir fry is a great example of a recipe that can be prepared using whatever vegetables are available. Frittatas are also great for including whatever vegetables are in season.
- Share the NCDA Seasonality Chart. Remind participants that seasonality charts offer an average of availability for the entire state, and therefore might not reflect regional differences. For example, it's cooler in the mountains and hotter in the east, so many spring/summer vegetables will ripen later in the mountains… but it also means they can grow things like apples!
- Let people know where they can find local produce in your community using the list you prepared before the demonstration.
  - — If your local farmers' market accepts SNAP-EBT or offers an incentive program, you may want to bring some information from the market to share with participants.
  - — If participants are interested in saving money, you may suggest that they try purchasing at roadside stands, or looking for common items at the peak of the season (for example, zucchini is really inexpensive in the summer since it grows so fast!).
  - — You-Pick farms let you pick your own produce, and often charge less than you'd find at the store. It's a great way to get outside, engage your kids, and save some money. Be prepared to buy in bulk!
  - — Remind participants that local food isn't always less expensive than food at the supermarket.
  - — Don't forget that your local supermarket may offer North Carolina produce at reasonable prices.
- Allow participants to taste a sample that uses North Carolina produce. Talk to them about the recipe and how to prepare it. If time and/or set-up allows, you can demonstrate how to prepare the recipe that is being sampled.

MINI LESSON

Spice It Up!

OBJECTIVE

Participants will learn how to create simple seasoning combinations to add flavor to food without added fat, sugar, and sodium.

PREPARATION

Talk with your food pantry about what food is being distributed on the day of your visit. Try to focus on foods that the pantry has trouble distributing or thinks clients are unfamiliar with.

Prepare a sample that highlights the use of available food flavored with simple seasoning combinations. Remember, recipes can often be adapted depending on what is available.

Consider the flow of clients through the pantry. If time and set-up allows, you can demonstrate how to prepare the recipe that is being sampled.

Recipe

Ratatouille
(Food Pantry Recipe Card)

Other Possible Recipes:

- Tuscan Bean Soup (Food Pantry Recipe Card)
- Homemade Vegetable Stock (Food Pantry Recipe Card)
- Homemade Taco Seasoning[1] (Med Instead of Meds)

Ratatouille

- 2 Tbl **oil**
- 1 medium **onion**, chopped
- 2 **bell peppers**, chopped
- 6 cloves **garlic**, minced
- 2 medium **zucchini** and/or **yellow squash**, cut into cubes
- 1 medium **eggplant**, cut into cubes
- 1 pound **tomatoes**, chopped or 1 (28 oz) can **diced tomatoes**
- 1 1/2 tsp **salt**
- **Black pepper** to taste
- 1 1/2 tsp **dried basil** (or other herbs)

1. Add 1 tsp of salt to cubed eggplant in a bowl and let sit for 20 minutes. Rinse and allow to dry.
2. Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add onion and cook for 3 to 5 minutes.
3. Add bell pepper and cook for 3 to 5 minutes.
4. Add garlic and cook for 1 to 2 minutes.
5. Add zucchini, yellow squash and eggplant and cook for 5 to 10 minutes.
6. Add tomatoes, salt, pepper and dried basil and simmer for 10 more minutes.

Makes 6 servings

Nutrition Facts
Serving Size 1 Cup
Servings Per Container 6

Amount Per Serving	
Calories 140	Calories from Fat 50
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 6g	9%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 5mg	2%
Sodium 250mg	10%
Total Carbohydrate 20g	7%
Dietary Fiber 7g	28%
Sugars 10g	
Protein 4g	
Vitamin A 20% • Vitamin C 160%	
Calcium 8% • Iron 8%	

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Slow Cooker Instructions:

1. Add all ingredients to a large slow cooker. Stir to combine.
2. Cover and cook on low for 7 to 9 hours.

ADDITIONAL HANDOUT/RESOURCE

- Eat Smart Move More Weigh Less Control Your Sodium[2]

1. medinsteadofmeds.com/homemade-taco-seasoning
2. esmmweighless.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/ESMMWL_SodiumHandout_Compressed.pdf

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TALKING POINTS

- Ask participants about their favorite spices and seasonings. For example, do they like things spicy? Do they like cinnamon, or oregano? Have they ever tasted these spices?
- Tell participants that spices and herbs are an easy way to give lots of flavor to your food while cutting back on added sugar and sodium.
- Teach participants why it is important to reduce added sodium and sugar.

  Sugar: Added sugar, sometimes found in unexpected pre-made seasonings or condiments, can lead to numerous health concerns, including tooth decay, heart disease, diabetes and obesity.

  Sodium: Sodium is a component of table salt. Consuming less sodium may help reduce the risk of stroke, heart failure, osteoporosis, and kidney disease.
- Explain that spices can be used for savory or sweet dishes.
  - — Sweet-tasting spices, such as allspice, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, and nutmeg, can be used to reduce or eliminate the sugar you add to foods such as oatmeal or yogurt.
  - — Instead of adding salt, try using other savory spices such as black pepper, garlic powder, curry powder, cumin, basil, ginger, coriander and onion powder.
- Remind participants to be sure to check the label to see if "salt", "sodium" or "sugar" are listed as ingredients when using premade seasoning mixes.
- Encourage participants to get creative and try experimenting with small amounts of spices and herbs to figure out what combinations they like best. For example, adding garlic, ground ginger, and red pepper flakes can give a dish an Asian flair, while cumin, chili powder, and garlic are commonly used in dishes from Mexico and Central America.
- Tell participants that roasting vegetables or meats can be a great way to try out different seasoning combinations. Share a few examples of possible combinations to try:
  - — Sweet potatoes with cinnamon
  - — Red potatoes with garlic and rosemary
  - — Eggplant with garlic and italian seasoning
  - — Carrots with parsley
  - — Acorn squash with cinnamon and chili powder

Give participants tips on how much seasoning to use:

- Start by adding just a pinch. You can always add more, but you can't remove it. The total amount of spice you use depends on personal preference.
- Try tasting your recipe before adding salt, adding a little at the end if needed. A dish may still taste great with less salt than the recipe calls for.

- Remind participants that a recipe is just a guide. If a recipe calls for a spice or herb you do not have or do not like, you can substitute for another or leave it out entirely.
- Allow participants to taste a sample that uses simple seasonings. Talk to them about the recipe and how to prepare it. If time and/or set-up allows, you can demonstrate how to prepare the recipe that is being sampled.

MINI LESSON

Storage and Shelf Life

OBJECTIVE

Participants will learn basic tips related to safely choosing, storing, and preparing commonly available fresh produce.

PREPARATION

Talk with your food pantry about what food is being distributed on the day of your visit. Try to focus on foods that the pantry has trouble distributing or thinks clients are unfamiliar with.

Prepare a sample that highlights the use of available fresh produce. Remember, recipes can often be adapted depending on what is available.

Consider the flow of clients through the pantry. If time and set-up allows, you can demonstrate how to prepare the recipe that is being sampled.

When highlighting produce, you may not necessarily need to prepare a full recipe if the produce being highlighted may be unfamiliar to clients and can be consumed raw, such as mangos. Other simple ideas could include serving almost any fruit with a simple yogurt dip or vegetables with hummus.

Recipe

White Bean Hummus[1]
(Med Instead of Meds)

1. medinsteadofmeds.com/white-bean-hummus

White Bean Hummus

MED instead of MEDS

Serves 14
Serving Size: ¼ cup
Prep Time: Dried beans: 24 hours, Canned beans: 10 minutes
Cook Time: (to cook dried beans) 1 hour 30 minutes
Total Time: 15 minutes (once beans are cooked)

Ingredients:

- 3 cups dried white beans (great Northern beans or other white bean) (can used canned, see note below)
- ½ cup lemon juice (more if you like lemon)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil to taste
- ⅔ cup Tahini
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Olive oil for drizzling

Directions:

1. Soak the beans overnight covered in water.
2. Cook beans slowly (a slow cooker works well) until very done. They should be very mushy when you smash them between your fingers. Drain. (Note: you can use 3 cans of canned beans – rinse, drain well, and cook until very mushy.)
3. In food processor or Vitamix style blender, place all the beans and process with some of the lemon juice and olive oil, adjusting as needed for taste and consistency.
4. Add water as needed to make a smooth mixture. Process well until very smooth.
5. Place the smooth mixture in a bowl and add the tahini. Stir well and adjust with water for texture.
6. Add salt and pepper to taste.
7. Drizzle with olive oil.

Nutrition Information per Serving:
(Based on ¼ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper)

- Serving Size: ¼ cup
- Vegetables: ¼ cup
- Fruits: 0 cups
- Calories: 141 calories
- Carbohydrates: 12 grams
- Fiber: 3 grams
- Protein: 6 grams
- Fat: 8 grams
- Sodium: 57 mg

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ADDITIONAL HANDOUTS/ RESOURCES

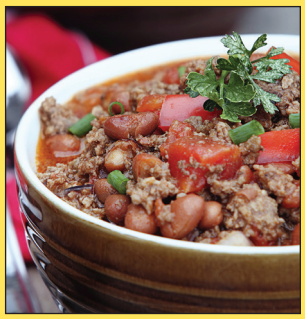
- The **"How to save fruits and vegetables for future meals"** Food Pantry Recipe Card has tips and information for storing fresh fruit and produce and can be distributed with this lesson.
- Steps to Health Harvest of the Month Handouts

TALKING POINTS

- Observe the fresh produce available at the pantry during your visit. Ask participants if they know where to store the produce they will take home that day.
- Tell participants that fresh fruits and vegetables should be kept separate from raw meat, seafood, and poultry products. When stored in the fridge, fruits and vegetables should be stored on shelves or in bins above meats, poultry and seafood to reduce the risk of cross-contamination from dripping juices.
- Remind participants that perishable produce (such as berries, leafy greens, precut and ready-to-eat bagged produce, etc.) should be stored in a clean refrigerator at 41°F or below to maintain quality and safety. Other produce (such as uncut melons, pineapples, bananas, and potatoes, etc.) do not need to be refrigerated, but should be stored on a clean countertop or in a pantry out of direct sunlight.
- Explain that some fruits (such as apples, peaches, pears, bananas, and mangoes) release ethylene, an odorless, colorless gas, as they ripen. This gas will speed the ripening of nearby ethylene-sensitive vegetables, which may make them go bad faster than usual. Separate ethylene producing fruits from other produce in your refrigerator and on your countertop to extend shelf life. You can also use ethylene-producing fruits to help ripen other fruit faster. Examples include placing a ripe banana in a paper bag with unripe peaches, or storing an apple in a bag with a green avocado.
- Tell participants that produce should be rinsed with tap water (not soap, baking soda or other cleaning solutions) immediately before use. Rinsing produce prior to storage can speed up spoilage.
- Remind participants that if they are worried they will not be able to use produce before it goes bad, they can freeze it.
  1. For example, if you have citrus fruits that are discolored, you can squeeze out the juice and save it in the fridge or freezer to add to marinades, dressings or smoothies.
  2. You can use frozen fruit to bake with, or in smoothies. You can use frozen vegetables in a stir fry or soups.
- Allow participants to taste a sample that uses fresh produce. Talk to them about the recipe and how to prepare it. If time and/or set-up allows, you can demonstrate how to prepare the recipe that is being sampled.

MINI LESSON

Cooking with Venison



OBJECTIVE

Participants will learn how to prepare venison.

PREPARATION

Check to see if the food pantry you're working with receives donations of venison. Coordinate with the food pantry to do a demonstration and taste test on the day that they are distributing frozen ground venison.

Recipe

Quick Chili[1] (EFNEP)

Other Possible Recipes: Ground venison can be substituted for ground beef in most recipes from the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP).

Quick Chili

Makes: 4 Servings This simple chili uses basic ingredients to make a protein-packed main dish. Serve with bread or pour over rice or potatoes for a quick, easy meal!

Ingredients

- 1 cup low-sodium tomato sauce
- 1/2 pound ground beef (or ground turkey)
- 1 can low-sodium kidney beans with liquid (about 15 oz)
- 1 tablespoon dried onion (or 1/4 cup chopped onion)
- 1 1/2 tablespoons chili powder

Directions 1. In a large skillet, cook ground beef until browned. 2. Drain off any fat. 3. Stir in kidney beans with liquid, tomato sauce, onion, and chili powder. 4. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 10 minutes. Increase your vegetable intake by adding your favorite veggies! Try mushrooms, spinach or kale, and corn. Source: USDA recipe finder

1. ncefnep.org/participants/tips/quick-chili

Steps to Health
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed)

NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
Local Food Program

EFNEP
Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program

TALKING POINTS

- Ask participants if they or any of their families or friends hunt.
  - — If so, ask them their favorite recipe for preparing venison.
  - — If people aren't familiar with venison, let them know that it refers to the meat that comes from the whitetail deer. Whitetail deer are overpopulated, and can cause damage to crops, as well as car accidents.
- Make sure people understand where the donated venison comes from. There are programs in North Carolina that allow hunters to donate venison to food pantries. These programs make sure that the meat has been handled properly to ensure that it is safe to eat. This means that it was butchered in an approved meat handling facility, and has been stored at the proper temperature.
- Let participants know that some people find that meat from wild deer has a stronger flavor than other types of meat. It also has a lot less fat and isn't quite as tender. One way to cook venison is to use a crock pot that will allow it to simmer for a long time, making it more tender.
- If participants are receiving frozen venison, tell them to store it in a freezer at 0°F or colder for 3 months for best quality. Meat quality and flavor will deteriorate in the freezer over time.
- Make sure that participants know to never thaw frozen venison on the counter. Share with participants that there are several safe methods to defrost frozen meat:

  1. **In the refrigerator**
     a. Venison thawed in the refrigerator may be safely refrozen without cooking it first.
     b. Once the meat thaws, it can be safely stored in the refrigerator an additional day or two before cooking.
  2. **In cold water**
     a. To thaw venison in cold water, do not remove the packaging. Be sure the packaging is airtight or put it in a leak-proof bag. Submerge the product in cold water, changing the water every 30 minutes.
     b. If you defrost venison in cold water, cook it before refreezing.
  3. **In the microwave**
     a. When microwave-defrosting venison, plan to cook it immediately after thawing because some areas of the meat may become warm and begin to cook during microwaving.
     b. If you defrost venison in the microwave, cook it before refreezing.

- Tell participants to cook venison to 160°F, and to test the temperature of the meat with a digital thermometer (if possible). Remind them that if the venison reaches 160°F it is safe to eat, even if it's a little bit pink.
- Allow participants to taste a sample that uses venison. Talk to them about the recipe and how to prepare it. If time and/or set-up allows, you can demonstrate how to prepare the recipe that is being sampled.