

Nutrition Tidbits

March 2021



Nutrition Tidbits, Arkansas Foodbank Senior Newsletter, gives health recommendations, recipes, and budget friendly nutrition information and tips for Arkansas grown produce. Distributed monthly, this is our primary contact to provide simple and practical messages that promote positive dietary behaviors and needs for seniors.

Harvest of the Month



Why Lentils are good for you:

Lentils are high in protein and fiber and low in fat. They're also packed with folate, iron, phosphorus, potassium and fiber.

How much do I need?

Refer to the chart below to see the daily recommendation for your age group.

	Age 19-30	Age 31-50	Age 50+
Males	3 cups	3 cups	2 cups
Females	2 1/2 cups	2 1/2 cups	2 1/2 cups

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Please feel free to contact us at 501-565-8121 if you have questions.

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Lentil Tips



Did you know?

Beans, peas, and lentils belong to a group of vegetables called “pulses.” Because they are similar to meats, poultry, and fish in their contribution of protein, iron and zinc, they are considered part of the Protein Foods Group.

Storage Tip:

Store dried lentils in an airtight container in the cupboard or in a cool dry place for up to one year.

Buying Tip:

Lentils come in different varieties. Each color has a different consistency and flavor. Try red lentils for a soft and sweet option or green for a firm texture and nutty taste.

Money \$aving Tip:

Compare the cost of canned and dried lentils. Rinse and drain to reduce sodium if using canned varieties.



Savory Lentil Meatballs

Makes: 18 Serves: 6

Ingredients

¾ cup dried green (brown) lentils
1 ½ cups low-sodium vegetable broth
2 tsp olive oil
½ cup diced yellow onion
1 cup shredded carrots
2 tsp minced garlic

½ cup rolled oats
1 ½ tbsp tomato paste
1 tsp dried oregano
1 tbsp dried parsley flakes
1 large egg
salt and pepper to taste

How to prepare

1. Rinse lentils well under cool water. Drain. Pick over, removing any shriveled lentils or other debris.
2. Add rinsed lentils to a medium saucepan with vegetable broth. Bring to a rapid simmer over medium high, reduce heat to a very low simmer for 20 minutes or until tender. If lentils are not yet tender but liquid has been absorbed, add more water and continue to cook. Drain off any excess liquid, set aside.
3. Meanwhile, heat olive oil in a medium skillet over medium-low heat. Once hot, add onion and cook until onion is translucent and lightly brown, 6 to 8 minutes. Stir in carrots and cook for another 2 minutes, stir in the garlic and cook until fragrant, about another minute.
4. Place oats and parsley in the bottom of a food processor or blender, pulse a few times to begin breaking up oats. Add cooked lentils, onion mixture, tomato paste, oregano, salt, and pepper. Pulse a few times to start combining the mixture, add egg. Pulse a few more times until the mixture is combined but lentils still have some texture. Set aside and let rest for 10 minutes or refrigerate overnight.
5. Preheat the oven to 425°. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper, coat paper with nonstick spray. Roll lentil mixture into balls roughly 1 1/2 inches across or about golf ball size. Arrange in a single layer on baking sheet, mist tops with nonstick spray. Cook for 10 minutes, then turn, mist again with nonstick spray, and continue baking 8 to 10 additional minutes, until the meatballs are browned and lightly crisp. Serve warm with pasta or vegetable noodles and your desired sauce.

Nutrients per 1 serving: 144 Calories, 3g Total Fat, 31mg Cholesterol, 242mg sodium, 21g carbohydrates, 8.6g fiber, 8.7g protein



Health News: Spring Cleaning



As the days grow warmer, many of us start to focus on the annual spring cleaning. Deep cleaning the house after a long, cold winter has the obvious benefit of organized cabinets, shiny counters, and more room to move around in. It also has the less obvious benefit of improving mental health. Clearing away the clutter can help to decrease stress and improve mood by removing distractions and making the house smell and look fresh and clean.

Spring cleaning doesn't have to be overwhelming or take a lot of time. Even little changes make a difference. Below are some tips for spring cleaning:

- **Make a to-do list** – before starting, make a list of what needs to be done.
- **Put away the clutter** – put everything away where it belongs and throw away the rest.
- **If you haven't used it, get rid of it** – if you haven't used it in the past year, give it away, sell it, or throw it away.
- **Throw away expired items** – getting rid of expired medications and food is a great way to cut down on clutter.

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