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Working to stretch your food budget and improve your family's nutrition, look no further. Consider adding BEANS. Beans are a rich source of protein, fiber, vitamins and minerals. Replace the fat in baked goods such as brownies with mashed black beans. Beans can be added to casseroles or soups to add flavor, texture and more nutrients. Start slowly and be sure to drink extra fluids because of the increased fiber.

Enchilada Casserole (Makes 12 servings)

- 1 lb ground beef
- 1 can (15 or 16 oz) kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 can (15 or 16 oz) pinto beans, rinsed/drained
- 1 c chopped onion
- ½ c green pepper
- 2 medium tomatoes, diced
- 1 10-oz. can enchilada sauce
- 1/3 c water
- 1 tsp chili powder
- ½ tsp cumin
- 2 c Colby-jack cheese
- 6 whole wheat or flour tortillas

Preheat oven to 425°F. Wash hands with soap and warm water. Brown ground beef, onion, and green pepper. Drain excess liquid. Mix beef, onion, pepper, beans, tomatoes and spices. In a 9x13 greased pan, layer tortillas, ground beef and vegetable mixture, and cheese. Continue to layer tortilla/meat mixture/cheese until full. Bake for 30 minutes. Casserole should be browned on top.

Nutrition per serving: 300 calories, 10 g fat, 23 g protein, 28 g carbohydrate, 5 g fiber, and 620 mg sodium.



Beans are a part of the legume family. MyPlate classifies beans into two food groups; the Protein group and the Vegetable group.

MyPlate recommendations for protein foods are measured in ounces whereas recommendations for vegetables are measured in cups.

- ¼ cup cook beans = 1-ounce equivalent for the Protein food group
- 1 cup cooked beans = 1 cup of vegetables.

Tips for adding beans to your diet

Experiment with different kinds of beans to find the best flavor combination for your dish.

Here are few ideas:

- Main dishes:** add beans to chili, burgers, and rice for a satisfying entrée
- Side dishes:** Baked beans or bean salad would make a great addition to any meal.
- Salads:** Add beans to salads for added nutrition and color.
- Pasta:** Adding beans to pasta dishes will add not only another dimension of flavor but boost the appearance of your dish.
- Dips and spreads:** Bean dips and spreads make a great snack or an appetizer.
- Baked goods:** Replace all or part of the fat ingredients with mashed or pureed beans in foods such as brownies and cookies. You will add protein and fiber while cutting back on fat, cholesterol, and calories.

For more information:

- www.LLM.unl.edu or
- www.food.unl.edu

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Black Bean Brownies

- (Makes 16 servings)
- 1 can (15 oz.) black beans, drained, rinsed
- 3 eggs
- 3 Tbsp vegetable oil
- ¼ c cocoa powder
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ¾ c white sugar
- ½ c semi-sweet chocolate chips



Preheat oven to 350°F. Wash hands with soap and warm water. Lightly grease an 8-inch by 8-inch baking dish. Combine all ingredients except chocolate chips in a blender; blend until smooth; pour mixture into prepared baking dish. Sprinkle with chocolate chips. Top will appear dry and sides will pull away from the baking dish; about 30 minutes.

Nutrition Per serving: 130 calories, 6 g fat, 3 g protein, 19 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, and 105 mg sodium