1. **Serving size** allows you to know how many calories, fat, fiber and other nutrients you are eating at one time. It is important to check the serving sizes as most labels give the information for a much smaller portion than what we actually eat.

2. **Calories** measure how much energy you will get from eating a serving of food.

3. **Total fat, saturated fats, trans fats, or sodium:** A diet high in these may increase the risk of heart disease and stroke, and high blood pressure.

Emphasize healthier unsaturated fats found in olive and canola oils, walnuts, avocado and fish, and limit saturated and trans fat in the diet.

Sodium intake should be less than 2300 mg per day.

4. **Fiber:** A food is a good source of fiber if it has 2.5-4.9 grams (g) of fiber per serving and a high source of fiber if it has 5g or more.

5. **Total Sugars and Added Sugars:** The daily recommended amount of added sugar is 28-36 grams or 7-9 teaspoons of sugar.

6. **Vitamins and minerals** in foods are also important in helping to maintain the health of your body. The four vitamins and minerals listed on the food labels are the most common nutrients that are lacking in the American diet.

7. **The % Daily Value** is a guide in seeing how much of a nutrient is in one serving of food. It is an estimate based on a 2000 calorie diet and can make it quick and easy to compare nutrients in two similar products.

Choose foods with a lower % Daily Value of saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium (found in the yellow section).

Choose foods with a higher % Daily Value of fiber, vitamins, and minerals.
**VEGETABLES:**
Healthy whether fresh, frozen, or canned. Canned vegetables should be low to no sodium added. You want to get a wide variety of different types of vegetables every week to get all vitamins and minerals. The vegetable subgroups are dark green, red and orange, beans, starches, and other. At least 3 servings of veggies per day!

**FRUITS:**
Healthy, whether fresh, frozen or canned. Whole fruits are important because they have fiber. This helps with digestion. A cup of 100% fruit juice counts as 1 serving per day. At least 2 servings of fruit per day!

**GRAINS:**
You want half the grains you eat to be whole grains. Whole grains have 3 parts: bran, germ, and endosperm. They contain fiber, healthy fats, and B vitamins. Some examples of whole grains are brown rice, oatmeal, and popcorn.

**PROTEIN:**
All foods made from seafood; meat, poultry, and eggs; beans, peas, and lentils; nuts, seeds, and soy products are all considered sources of protein. Meat and poultry should be low-fat, like 93% lean ground beef, pork loin, and skinless chicken breasts. Vegetarian options include beans, peas, lentils, nuts, seeds, and soy products.

**DAIRY:**
The dairy group includes milk, yogurt, cheese, lactose-free milk and fortified milk alternatives and yogurt. It does not include products with little calcium and a high fat content, such as cream cheese, sour cream, cream, and butter. Must contain about 300 mg calcium per serving to count as a serving of dairy.
**COOKING TIPS**

- **Planning:** Create a menu based on what you have in your pantry, refrigerator, and freezer.
- **Shopping:** Check what you have and make a list for what you need.
- **Going to the store:** Bring your list and eat before going to the store to stay on budget.
- **Meal prepping:** Cook in batches and eat throughout the week; you can freeze leftovers!
- **Cook together:** Get the family involved, distributing duties to each member!

**RECIPE KEY**

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VEGETABLE FRITTATA

INGREDIENTS
6 eggs
1 Tbsp chopped parsley
2 Tbsp olive oil
1 small onion, chopped finely
1 cup broccoli
1 large tomato, diced
1 Tbsp Parmesan cheese
Salt & pepper to taste

NOTES
Add in any vegetables that you have in your pantry whether fresh, frozen or canned.

NUTRITION
1 slice:
Calories: 130
Fat: 7g.
Saturated fat: 1g.
Sodium: 305mg.
Carbs: 6g.
Fiber: 2g.
Protein: 7g.

PREP 5 mins | COOK 20 minutes | SERVINGS 4

DIRECTIONS
1. Heat oven to 350° F.
2. In a bowl, beat the eggs with parsley, salt, and pepper, then set aside.
3. Heat a medium skillet over medium-high heat. Add 1 tablespoon of olive oil to the skillet and cook onions until lightly browned. Remove the onions and set aside.
4. Add the rest of the olive oil to the skillet and add the eggs.
5. Cook until the eggs begin to set (3-4 minutes) then sprinkle the onions, broccoli, and tomato over the top.
6. Sprinkle on Parmesan cheese and put the pan in the oven for 5-10 minutes. Cut into slices and serve.
# Maple Pumpkin Oat Muffins

## Ingredients
- 1/2 cup dry quick oats
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 1/2 cup whole wheat flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/4 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 1/4 cup canned pumpkin
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 1/2 cup maple syrup

## Notes
Applesauce is a useful alternative to butter or oil in baking to reduce the saturated fat content and calories. If you don’t have apple sauce on hand you can use 1/2 cup of butter or oil instead.

## Nutrition
- Calories: 102
- Fat: 2g.
- Saturated Fat: 0g.
- Sodium: 147 mg.
- Carbs: 18g.
- Fiber: 1g.
- Sugar: 7g.
- Protein: 3g.

## Directions
1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Place cupcake liners into a small muffin tin or spray with cooking spray to prevent sticking.
3. Combine oats and milk in a small bowl and set aside for 5-10 minutes.
4. In a large bowl combine the flour, baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt.
5. In a medium bowl combine pumpkin, eggs, applesauce, and maple syrup. Add pumpkin mixture and oat mixture to the large bowl with the dry ingredients and stir until fully combined.
6. Divide batter among muffin cups, filling each 2/3 full. Bake for 20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center of a muffin comes out clean. Allow to cool before serving.
PEANUT BUTTER ENERGY BITES

INGREDIENTS
1/2 cup peanut butter
1/3 cup honey
1 cup dry old-fashioned oats
1/2 cup chocolate chips

NOTES
Add in 1 tablespoon of flax seeds, chia seeds, raisins, coconut flakes, or nuts of your choosing. Substitute for peanut butter with almond, sunflower, or any nut butter you have on hand.

NUTRITION
Calories: 200
Fat: 13g.
Saturated fat: 3g.
Sodium: 70mg.
Carbs: 16g.
Fiber: 4g.
Sugar: 7g.
Protein: 6g.

PREP 10 mins  |  COOK 0 minutes  |  SERVINGS 8

DIRECTIONS
1. Using a microwave or stove top, melt the peanut butter and honey together in a bowl.
2. Add the oats, chocolate chips, or any additional ingredients to the warm peanut butter and honey.
3. Roll the mixture into bite-sized rounds.
4. Let energy bites sit in the refrigerator for 30 minutes, then enjoy!
OVERNIGHT OATS

INGREDIENTS
1/2 cup quick oats
1/2 cup milk
1/4 cup plain Greek yogurt
1/4 cup fruit
1 tsp maple syrup or other sweetener

NOTES
Can add 1/4 tsp of cinnamon or other spices to enhance flavor. Swap out the dairy for dairy alternatives like almond milk or coconut yogurt.

NUTRITION
Calories: 290
Fat: 4.5g
Saturated fat: 1.5g
Sodium: 75g
Carbs: 49g
Sugars: 19g
Protein: 15g

DIRECTIONS
1. Using a 16-ounce container or mason jar, add oats and milk and stir together.
2. Layer the rest of the ingredients (yogurt, fruit, nuts, spices).
3. Refrigerate overnight and stir together before eating. Serve cold.
Lunch
CURRY CAULIFLOWER SOUP

INGREDIENTS
1 Tbsp olive oil
1 onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, chopped
2 tsp ginger
2 tsp curry powder
2 tsp cumin
1 medium head cauliflower
1 potato, peeled and diced
2 quarts low sodium vegetable stock
Salt & pepper to taste
(Optional) Chopped cilantro for garnish

NOTES
Swap out the vegetable stock for the same amount of water to reduce the amount of sodium.

NUTRITION
Calories: 140
Fat: 7g.
Saturated fat: 1g.
Sodium: 340 mg.
Carbs: 16g.
Fiber: 5g.
Sugar: 6g.
Protein: 4g.

PREP 10 mins | COOK 45 minutes | SERVINGS 6

DIRECTIONS
1. Heat oil over medium heat in a large soup pot.
2. Add the onion and cook until tender, about 5 minutes.
3. Add the garlic, ginger, curry powder, and cumin to the pot and stir for 30 seconds.
4. Add the cauliflower, potato, and stock and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 30 minutes.
5 Using an immersion blender or regular blender, puree the soup until very smooth. Return to the pot, heat through, and add salt and pepper to taste. (Optional) Garnish each bowl with chopped cilantro.
SLOW COOKER STUFFED PEPPER SOUP

INGREDIENTS
1 medium onion
1 pound lean ground beef
2 medium green bell peppers, chopped
1 package (8.8 oz) ready to serve brown rice
3 Tbsp brown sugar
1/2 tsp salt
1/2 tsp dried basil
2 15 oz. can tomato sauce
2 14.5 oz. can no salt added diced tomatoes, undrained
1/2 tsp oregano
32 oz. low sodium beef broth

NOTES
For regular brown rice, cook ahead of time until just before tender.

NUTRITION
1 1/2 cups:
Calories: 200
Fat: 3g.
Saturated fat: 1g.
Sodium: 550mg
Carbs: 18g.
Fiber: 3g.
Sugar: 8g.
Protein: 11g.

PREP 15 mins | COOK 5-6 hours | SERVINGS 12

DIRECTIONS
1. In a large skillet, cook onions over medium high heat until tender.
2. Add ground beef; cook and break apart until no longer pink, 5 to 7 minutes.
3. Transfer to a 6 quart slow cooker or crock pot. Stir in the remaining ingredients.
4. Cook covered, on low until flavors are blended, 5 to 6 hours. Adjust salt and pepper to taste and serve.
ROASTED BUTTERNUT SQUASH BISQUE

INGREDIENTS
1 medium butternut squash
3 Tbsp olive oil
1/2 yellow onion, diced
2 carrots, diced
1/2 tsp salt
1/4 tsp black pepper
1/4 tsp nutmeg
3 cups vegetable broth
1/2 cup milk

NOTES
Swap out the dairy for any unsweetened dairy alternative like almond, oat, or coconut milk.

NUTRITION
Calories: 270
Fat: 20g.
Saturated fat: 7g.
Sodium: 300mg.
Carbs: 20g.
Fiber: 4g.
Sugars: 5g.
Protein: 3g.

DIRECTIONS
1. Heat oven to 350° F.
2. Cut the squash in half and remove seeds using a spoon.
3. Place squash on a tin foil-lined baking sheet. Coat with 1 tablespoon of olive oil. Place in the oven for 1-1 1/2 hours or until tender.
4. Remove squash and allow to cool. Scoop out the flesh of the squash and discard the skin.
5. In a medium-sized pot, add 2 tablespoons of olive oil over medium-high heat. Add onion, carrots, salt, pepper, and nutmeg and sauté until the onions are tender.
6. Add squash and cook for another 5 minutes. Add vegetable broth and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low-medium and simmer until the carrots are cooked through.
7. Using an immersion blender or regular blender, puree the soup until completely smooth.
8. Once smooth, return soup to the pot on medium-high heat and add milk. Heat through and add additional salt and pepper to taste.
BROWN RICE AND CORN SALAD

INGREDIENTS
2 cups corn
1 cup cooked brown rice
2-15 oz. cans pinto beans, drained and rinsed
1 red bell pepper
1 jalapeño, diced
2 Tbsp of chopped green onion
3 Tbsp olive oil
2 Tbsp lime juice
1 tsp cumin
1 clove garlic
3 Tbsp chopped cilantro
Salt and pepper to taste

NOTES
Can add crumbled queso fresco or feta cheese on top. Can use fresh, frozen, or canned corn for the salad. Grill or cook the corn in a skillet on medium-high heat with olive oil and salt and pepper to add a nice charred flavor.

NUTRITION
1 cup:
Calories: 336
Fat: 13g.
Saturated Fat: 3g.
Sodium: 422mg.
Carbs: 40g.
Fiber: 11g.
Protein: 16g.

PREP 20 mins | COOK 15 minutes | SERVINGS 8 (1 cup)

DIRECTIONS
1. Add corn, brown rice, beans, red bell pepper, jalapeño, and green onions to a large bowl.
2. In a smaller bowl, whisk together the olive oil, lime juice, cumin, garlic, cilantro, and salt and pepper.
3. Fold dressing into the veggies. Serve cold.
CITRUS KALE SALAD

INGREDIENTS
1 bunch of kale
(about 6 cups)
2/3 cup sliced toasted
almonds
1/3 cup sliced green onions
2 mandarin oranges, peeled
and segmented

Vinaigrette:
3 Tbsp white balsamic
vinaigre
3 Tbsp olive oil
2 Tbsp orange juice,
1/2 tsp salt
1 tsp Dijon mustard
1 tsp honey

NOTES
Can substitute the white
balsamic vinegar for regular
balsamic, rice wine, or white
wine vinegar. To prep kale, you want
to remove the stem from the
leaves and chop the leaves into
small strips. To make kale more
tender, massage with olive oil
for 3-4 minutes by pinching and
squeezing the kale leaves or let
the kale marinate in the dressing
in the refrigerator for an hour.

NUTRITION
Calories: 320
Fat: 17g.
Saturated fat: 2g.
Sodium: 177mg.
Carbs: 25g.
Fiber: 4g.
Total Sugars: 15g
Protein: 5g.

PREP 5 mins | COOK 0 minutes | SERVINGS 4

DIRECTIONS
1. Add kale, half of the almonds, half of the green onions and
the mandarin oranges to a salad bowl.
2. In a mixing bowl whisk together all the vinaigrette ingredients
until combined. If you do not have white balsamic vinegar you can
substitute regular balsamic, rice wine, or white wine vinegar.
3. Pour vinaigrette dressing over the salad, then toss.
4. Top with the remaining almonds and green onions. Chill until ready
to serve.
TUNA APPLE SALAD

INGREDIENTS
12 oz. can of tuna
   (packed in water)
2 Tbsp of minced red onion
5 Tbsp of light Italian dressing
1 apple chopped
1 cup celery chopped

NOTES
Substitute 2 Tbsp of olive oil and 2 Tbsp of any vinegar to replace the Italian dressing.
Can be used in sandwiches, pitas, or on a salad.

NUTRITION
Calories: 320
Fat: 17g.
Saturated fat: 2g.
Sodium: 177mg,
Carbs: 25g.
Fiber: 4g.
Total Sugars: 15g.
Protein: 5g.

DIRECTIONS
Mix all ingredients together and enjoy! Toss with fresh herbs to give more flavor.

The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts
Dinner
TURKEY SWEET POTATO COWBOY PIE

INGREDIENTS
3 large sweet potatoes, peeled
2 cloves of garlic
1/4 cup milk
12 oz. ground turkey
1 cup chopped carrots (fresh or frozen)
1/2 cup corn (canned, fresh, or frozen)
1/4 cup water
8 oz. tomato paste
2 Tbsp Worcestershire sauce (optional)
1/2 tsp dried sage
Salt & pepper to taste

NOTES
Ground turkey is a lower saturated fat and calorie option than ground beef.

NUTRITION
1 cup:
Calories: 268
Fat: 1g
Saturated Fat: 0g
Sodium: 684 mg
Carbs: 41g
Fiber: 7g
Protein: 24g

PREP 20 minutes | COOK 2 hours | SERVINGS 4

DIRECTIONS
1. Preheat oven to 375°F.
2. Cut sweet potatoes into 2-inch cubes. In a medium sauce pan, boil the sweet potatoes and garlic in lightly salted water and cover for 15-20 minutes.
3. Drain water and mash potato and garlic together. Gradually add milk and 1/2 tsp salt, mashing together until light and fluffy. Cover and keep warm.
4. Meanwhile in a large skillet, cook and break up the ground turkey over medium heat until browned. Drain if needed. Stir in carrots, corn, and water. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 5 to 10 minutes or until vegetables are tender.
5. Add tomato paste, Worcestershire sauce, sage, salt and pepper to the pan and heat through. Spoon the turkey mixture into an 8x8 baking dish and spread into a bottom layer. Add a layer of mashed sweet potatoes on top of the turkey.
6. Bake uncovered in the oven for 20 to 25 minutes.
VEGAN LENTIL SOUP

INGREDIENTS
1/4 cup olive oil
1 medium onion
2 carrots, peeled and chopped
2 garlic cloves, diced
2 tsp cumin
1 tsp curry powder
1/2 tsp dried thyme
1-28 oz. can diced tomatoes, drained
1 cup lentils
4 cups vegetable broth
2 cups water
1 cup collard greens or kale, chopped
Salt and pepper to taste

PREP 5 minutes  |  COOK 5 minutes  |  SERVINGS 4

DIRECTIONS
1. Heat olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add onions and carrots and cook until the onion is softened and translucent, about 5 minutes.
2. Add the garlic, cumin, curry powder, and thyme and cook about 30 seconds.
3. Pour in the drained diced tomatoes and cook for 3 to 4 minutes stirring often.
4. Pour in the lentils, broth, and water. Season generously with black pepper and bring the pot to a boil.
5. Reduce the heat, partially cover the pot, and simmer. Cook until lentils are tender but still hold their shape, about 30 minutes depending on the type of lentil you choose.
6. To make soup creamier, blend about 2 cups of the soup or partially blend the soup with an immersion blender. Add the chopped greens and cook for 5 more minutes. Remove the pot from heat and season with salt and pepper to taste. You can also add lemon juice and red pepper flakes for more flavor.

NUTRITION
1 cup:
Calories: 380
Fat: 16g.
Saturated fat: 2g.
Sodium: 775mg.
Carbs: 49g.
Fiber: 11g.
Sugar: 10g.
Protein: 14g.

Dinner

The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts
**CHICKEN CHILI**

**INGREDIENTS**
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 small onion
- 1 garlic clove
- 1 medium bell pepper
- 1 pound ground chicken
- 3 Tbsp chili powder
- 1 Tbsp cumin
- 28 oz. can no-salt added diced tomatoes
- 15 oz. can kidney beans rinsed and drained,
- 15 oz. can corn rinsed and drained
- 1 cup chicken broth
- Salt & pepper to taste

**NOTES**
Add 1/2 tsp of cayenne pepper for more spice.

**NUTRITION**
1 1/2 cups:
- Calories: 340
- Fat: 5g
- Sodium: 360mg
- Carbs: 42g
- Fiber: 9g
- Protein: 16g.

**DIRECTIONS**
1. Heat oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add in chopped onion, minced garlic, and bell pepper and sauté for 5 to 7 minutes, stirring frequently.
2. Add in ground chicken and break up the meat, cooking until no longer pink. Add in chili powder and cumin and stir for about 20 seconds.
3. Add in diced tomatoes, kidney beans, corn, and chicken broth.
4. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes or until chili thickens. Taste and season with salt and pepper to taste. Garnish with sour cream, cheese, avocado, cilantro, or any topping of your choice!
COCONUT CURRY CHICKPEA STEW

INGREDIENTS
1 Tbsp neutral oil
2 cloves garlic minced
1/2 onion, chopped
1-inch piece ginger, finely chopped or grated
1-2 Tbsp Thai red curry paste (or 1 Tbsp of flour and 1 tsp of curry powder)
15 oz. can chickpeas drained and rinsed
1/2 cup coconut milk
1 cup low-sodium vegetable broth
1 bunch kale stems removed and torn into bite sized pieces
Salt and pepper (optional) 1/2 cup fresh mint or cilantro to finish

PREP 5 minutes | COOK 40 minutes | SERVINGS 6

NOTES
Substitute water for the vegetable broth and adjust the seasoning to taste. This can help you control how much sodium is in the stew.

NUTRITION
1 cup:
Calories: 529
Fat: 14.89g
Sodium: 779mg
Fiber: 23.5g
Carbs: 79.93g
Protein: 25g

DIRECTIONS
1. Heat the oil in a pot over medium heat. Add the garlic, onion, and ginger.
2. Cook, stirring occasionally until the onions are soft, but not brown, 2-3 minutes.
3. Add the curry paste and chickpeas and fry, stirring frequently, until the chickpeas start to sizzle and get slightly brown and crisp, 8-10 minutes.
4. Remove some chickpeas for garnish and set aside. Use a wooden spoon or potato masher to mash chickpeas – the starch will help thicken the stew.
5. Add the coconut milk and broth, scraping up any bits on the bottom of the pan. Bring to a simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened to your liking, 20-30 minutes. Stir in the greens and cook until wilted. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Scoop into bowls and top with reserved chickpeas, fresh herbs, and a drizzle of olive oil.

Adapted from: i am a food blog

Dinner
SPAGHETTI SQUASH PRIMAVERA

INGREDIENTS
1 medium spaghetti squash
2 Tbsp olive oil
1 onion chopped
1 garlic clove minced
1 large zucchini, diced
1 bell pepper, chopped
1 Tbsp Italian seasoning
1 1/2 cup diced tomatoes
3/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
Salt & pepper to taste

NOTES
Instead of in the microwave, cut the squash in half, scoop out the seeds, and drizzle with olive oil and salt and pepper. Roast for 30-40 minutes in the oven at 400° F. Then continue with step 3.

NUTRITION
1 cup:
Calories: 380
Fat: 16g.
Saturated fat: 2g.
Sodium: 775mg.
Carbs: 49g.
Fiber: 11g.
Sugar: 10g.
Protein: 14g.

PREP 15 minutes  |  COOK 20 minutes  |  SERVINGS 6

DIRECTIONS
1. Pierce the shell of the spaghetti squash with a fork and place in a microwave-safe dish. Cook in the microwave on high for 12 minutes, flipping halfway through. Set aside to cool enough to handle.

2. Slice the squash in half lengthwise and remove the seeds. Use a fork to pull the flesh of the squash away from the shell and place into a large bowl. Fluff with a fork to separate the strands as much as possible.

3. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and cook in the hot oil until just tender, about 3 minutes. Add the garlic and continue cooking and stirring another 2 minutes.

4. Add the zucchini and bell pepper into the mixture. Season with the Italian herb seasoning and black pepper.

5. Add the tomatoes into the skillet. Continue cooking until the tomatoes are warmed, 3 to 5 minutes.

6. Add the squash to the skillet and toss until evenly mixed. Sprinkle with the feta cheese and toss again to serve.
Dessert
GLUTEN-FREE BLACK BEAN BROWNIES

INGREDIENTS
1-15 oz. can black beans, drained and rinsed
3 large eggs
3 Tbsp canola oil
3/4 cup sugar
1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1 tsp vanilla
1/2 tsp baking powder
Pinch of salt
1/2 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

NOTES
The black beans make a dense, moist brownie and reduce the amount of carbohydrates and increase the fiber.

NUTRITION
Calories: 135
Fat: 6g.
Saturated fat: 2g.
Sodium: 121 mg.
Carbs: 19g.
Fiber: 2g
Sugars: 14g.
Protein: 3g.

PREP 15 minutes | COOK 35 minutes | SERVINGS 16

DIRECTIONS
1. Preheat oven to 350° F.
2. Lightly oil an 8x8 inch baking pan with non-stick cooking spray or line with parchment paper.
3. Place the black beans in a food processor or blender with a little bit of water and process until smooth.
4. Add eggs, oil, sugar, cocoa powder, vanilla extract, baking powder, and salt. Process until combined. Add 1/4 cup of the chocolate chips and pulse until the chips are incorporated.
5. Pour the batter into the pan and smooth the top of the brownies. Sprinkle the remaining chocolate chips on top.
6. Bake for 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Let cool before slicing into 16 (2-inch) squares.

Can make them as individually packaged brownies using cupcake liners (as shown in picture). Reduce the timing to 25-30 minutes in the oven.
WHITE BEAN CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

INGREDIENTS
1/4 cup unsalted butter softened
3/4 cup packed dark brown sugar
1/2 cup canned cannellini beans
2 Tbsp maple syrup
2 large eggs room temperature
1 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1/2 tsp baking soda
1/2 tsp salt
1 cup semi-crisp chocolate chips

NOTES
The cannellini beans help add fiber and reduce the fat content in these cookies. If you do not have a food processor, you can use a potato masher or fork to mash the beans until smooth.

NUTRITION
Calories: 100
Fat: 3.5g.
Saturated fat: 2g.
Sodium: 72 mg.
Carbs: 15g.
Fiber: 1g.
Sugars: 9g.
Protein: 2g.

PREP 20 minutes | COOK 12 minutes | SERVINGS 24

DIRECTIONS
1. Preheat oven to 375° F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper or spray with cooking spray.
2. In a bowl, beat the butter and sugar on medium speed until smooth.
3. Put the beans in a food processor and add the maple syrup. Puree until smooth. Add the beans to the butter mixture and process until completely smooth.
4. Add the eggs, one at a time. Then add the vanilla and mix until combined.
5. Sift the flour, baking soda, and salt together in a bowl and add to the wet ingredients. Mix until combined. Stir in the chocolate chips.
6. Drop tablespoons of dough onto the prepared pans, about 2 inches apart. Bake until the cookies begin to turn golden around the edges, 10 to 12 minutes.

Dessert
CHICKPEA BLONDIES

INGREDIENTS
1-15 oz. can chickpeas
1/2 cup almond butter
1/3 cup maple syrup
2 tsp vanilla extract
1/2 tsp salt
1/4 tsp baking powder
1/4 tsp baking soda
1/3 cup chocolate chips

NOTES
Can use any nut butter in place of almond butter in the recipe. Can be stored in the fridge for up to 5 days.

NUTRITION
Calories: 120
Fat: 6g.
Sodium: 177mg.
Carbs: 14g.
Fiber: 2g.
Sugars: 7g.
Protein: 4g.

PREP 10 minutes  |  COOK 25 minutes  |  SERVINGS 16

DIRECTIONS
1. Preheat oven to 350° F and spray an 8x8 inch baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.
2. In a food processor or blender, add all ingredients except the chocolate chips and process until smooth.
3. Fold in 1/3 cup of chocolate chips. Spread the batter evenly in the baking dish.
4. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean and edges are slightly brown. Let cool before slicing into 16 (2 inch) blondies.
   Can make them into individual bite-sized blondies using small cupcake tin (as shown in picture). Reduce the timing to 15-20 minutes in the oven.

Adapted From: AmbitiousKitchen.com
MAPLE BALSAMIC ROASTED VEGGIES

INGREDIENTS
5 Tbsp olive oil, divided
2 Tbsp Italian seasoning
Salt and pepper to taste
1 bell pepper, chopped
1 head of broccoli, chopped
2 summer squashes, chopped
1 onion, chopped
1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
1 small garlic clove, minced
2 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
1 tsp maple syrup

NOTES
Roasting is a great way to cook any vegetables that are about to go bad and this marinade makes everything taste delicious.

NUTRITION
1 cup:
Calories: 223
Fat: 14g.
Saturated Fat: 2g.
Sodium: 55mg.
Carbs: 15g.
Fiber: 2g.
Sugar: 6.5g
Protein: 3.5g.

PREP 15 minutes | COOK 30 minutes | SERVINGS 4 (1 cup)

DIRECTIONS
1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. In a small bowl, add 2 tablespoons olive oil, Italian seasoning, salt, and pepper and stir together.
3. Combine all the chopped vegetables in a large bowl, pour on the olive oil dressing, and stir until the vegetables are evenly coated with olive oil.
4. Spread the vegetables on a baking sheet. Bake for 30 minutes or until vegetables are tender. When they are done, place the vegetables back in the large bowl and refrigerate until cool.
5. In a separate bowl, combine the rest of the olive oil, balsamic vinegar, and maple syrup until blended. Once the vegetables are completely cooled, drizzle vinaigrette over the vegetables and stir. Serve cold.
CAULIFLOWER FRIED RICE

INGREDIENTS
1 large head of cauliflower
2 Tbsp canola oil
2 large eggs, beaten
2 Tbsp minced garlic
1/2 cup thinly sliced onions
1 cup carrots, peeled and diced
1 cup broccoli, chopped
1 cup cherry tomatoes
2 Tbsp reduced-sodium soy sauce
Salt & pepper to taste

NOTES
Add chopped cilantro on top for a nice garnish. You can chop the cauliflower by hand into a rice-like consistency instead of using a blender or food processor.

NUTRITION
1/2 cup:
Calories: 138
Fat: 9g.
Saturated fat: 1g.
Sodium: 273mg.
Carbs: 13g.
Fiber: 4g.
Protein: 6g.

PREP 20 minutes | COOK 15 minutes | SERVINGS 6 (1/2 cup)

DIRECTIONS
1. Chop the cauliflower head into 1-inch florets and add into a blender or food processor.
2. Pulse the cauliflower until it has a rice-like appearance and set aside.
3. Heat a medium pan over high heat until water evaporates immediately in the pan. Add in 1 Tbsp of canola oil, coating the bottom completely. Add beaten eggs and cook, tilting to cover the surface in a thin layer to make an egg pancake.
4. When the pancake is just set, 30 seconds to 1 minute, flip using a metal spatula and allow it to set for about 5 seconds. Transfer to a cutting board and chop into bite-size pieces.
5. Add the other 1 Tbsp of oil into the pan. Add garlic and onions and stir-fry until fragrant, about 10 seconds. Add carrots and broccoli, reduce the heat to medium-high and stir-fry until the vegetables are nearly cooked through, about 2 minutes.
6. Add cauliflower “rice”, tomatoes, egg pieces, and soy sauce and cook until heated through or the cauliflower has reached the texture you desire. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Sides

The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts
APPLE CABBAGE SLAW

INGREDIENTS
1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
1 cup mayonnaise
1/3 cup honey
1/2 tsp salt
1 tsp pepper
1 medium cabbage, finely shredded
4 large apples, peeled, cored, and cut into sticks
2 large carrots, peeled and cut into sticks

NOTES
Look for mayonnaise made with olive oil to increase healthy fats.

NUTRITION
1 cup:
Calories: 250
Fat: 20g.
Saturated Fat: 1g.
Sodium: 350mg.
Carbs: 16g.
Fiber: 1g.
Protein: 1g.

DIRECTIONS
1. Add apple cider vinegar, mayonnaise, honey, salt and pepper in a bowl and mix until blended.
2. In a separate bowl, combine cabbage, apples, and carrots. Pour the dressing over the vegetables and toss until completely coated.
3. Refrigerate at least 1 hour before serving.
CRISPY KALE CHIPS

INGREDIENTS
1 head of kale, washed and dried
2 Tbsp olive oil
Salt & pepper to taste

NOTES
Add in any flavor or spice you want like garlic salt, ranch seasoning, and cayenne pepper.

NUTRITION
1/2 cup:
Calories: 90
Fat: 6g
Saturated Fat: 1g.
Sodium: 310mg.
Carbs: 7g.
Fiber: 1g.
Protein: 2g.

DIRECTIONS
1. Preheat oven to 275° F.
2. Remove the stems from the kale leaves. Rip the leaves into 2-inch pieces or the desired size of chip.
3. Lay them flat on the baking sheet and cover both sides with olive oil, salt, and any additional seasoning of your choice.
4. Bake in the oven for about 20 to 25 minutes, rotating halfway through, or until crisp.
HUMMUS

INGREDIENTS
2-15 oz. can chickpeas, drained liquid reserved
5 garlic cloves
1/3 cup tahini
5 Tbsp lemon juice
2 Tbsp reserved chickpea liquid
1 Tbsp olive oil
Salt to taste

NOTES
Enhance the flavor by adding in roasted red peppers, sun dried tomatoes, or jalapeños to add some spice.

NUTRITION
1/4 cup:
Calories: 144
Fat: 7g.
Saturated Fat: 1g.
Sodium: 130mg.
Carbs: 16g.
Fiber: 5g.
Protein: 6g.

DIRECTIONS
1. Place all the ingredients except salt in the food processor.
2. Process mixture until coarsely pureed. Add salt to taste.
3. Serve at room temperature or cold.
GREEK YOGURT FRENCH ONION DIP

INGREDIENTS
3 Tbsp olive oil
1 large onion, sliced
1 Tbsp garlic, minced
1/2 tsp paprika
1 1/4 cup Greek yogurt
1/2 cup reduced fat cream cheese
Salt and pepper to taste

NOTES
Greek yogurt helps reduce the calories and amount of saturated fat in this recipe.

NUTRITION
1/4 cup:
Calories: 111
Fat: 9g.
Saturated Fat: 3g.
Sodium: 100mg.
Carbs: 4g.
Fiber: 2g.
Protein: 5g.

DIRECTIONS
1. Heat the olive oil in a large, non-stick pan on medium heat.
2. Add in the sliced onion and coat in the oil. Cook until the onions are soft and deep golden brown, stirring occasionally, about 25 minutes. The trick is to let them sit long enough to brown, but not too long so that they burn. You may need to reduce the heat as they cook.
3. Once the onions are golden, stir in the garlic, paprika, and a pinch of salt. Reduce the heat if needed and cook an additional 5 minutes or so, until the garlic begins to brown.
4. Place the onions into a large bowl and roughly chop them. Add in the remaining ingredients and stir until well combined. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Adapted from FoodFaithFitness.com
VINAIGRETTE SALAD DRESSING

INGREDIENTS
1/2 cup olive oil
3 Tbsp vinegar
  (balsamic, red wine, white wine, etc)
1 Tbsp Dijon mustard
1 Tbsp sweetener
  (maple syrup, honey, agave)
2 cloves garlic
Salt & pepper to taste

NOTES
Can be creative with different dried spices and vinegars.

NUTRITION
1 tablespoon:
Calories: 83
Fat: 9g.
Saturated Fat: 1g.
Sodium: 34mg.
Carbs: 1g.
Protein: 0.5g.

DIRECTIONS
Mix all ingredients together and enjoy!
STOCKING YOUR PANTRY

PANTRY

Proteins: canned tuna, salmon, or chicken; nuts; nut butters; canned beans; dried beans
Grains: rice, pasta, tortillas, couscous, oats, popcorn kernels
Baking: flour, cornmeal, baking powder, baking soda
Cooking: oils, vinegars, dried spices, stock/bouillon
Fruits and vegetables: canned low sodium, no added sugar

FREEZER

Breads and baked goods: can last another 6 months in the freezer
Cooked vegetables: like pureed squash
Meat: cooked or raw (not cold cuts) can last another 6 months when frozen
Cooked grains and beans: freeze into portions that work for you, so you can pull out just want you need and reheat as a side or main dish
Fresh fruits: like berries, peaches, and bananas (after freezing they’re best for mixing into things like yogurt, smoothies, and pancakes)
Uncooked vegetables: like squash, carrots, and broccoli (they’ll be best when used in cooking)

DRIED BEANS

Soaking: Soaking your beans helps them cook faster and more evenly, and it can also make them easier to digest. If you add salt to the soaking water (in other words, make a brine), your beans will cook even faster; the salt helps break down their skins. Here are a few methods; choose the one that best fits your schedule.

Overnight Soaking: To soak beans the traditional way, cover them with water by 2 inches, add 2 tablespoons coarse kosher salt (or 1 tablespoon fine salt) per pound of beans, and let them soak for at least 4 hours or up to 12 hours. Drain them and rinse before using.

Quick Soaking: Another option is quick-soaking, which allows you to make a pot of beans within a few hours flat without sacrificing flavor or texture. Put the beans in a pot on the stove, cover with water by two inches, add salt if you like, and bring to a boil. Turn off the heat and let them soak for an hour. Drain, rinse and proceed with your recipe.

DRIED LENTILS

Soaking: You do not need to soak lentils.

To Cook: Cook on a stove top, using 3 cups of liquid (water, stock, etc) to 1 cup of dry lentils. Be sure to use a large enough saucepan as the lentils will double or triple in size. Bring to a boil, cover tightly, reduce heat and simmer until they are tender. For whole lentils, cook time is typically 15-20 minutes.

Using Your Lentils: They can be tossed into green and grain salads, used in sandwich wraps, added to soups and chilies, and even made into veggie burgers.
The Flexible Pantry:
A Food Bank Cookbook
by Osvaldina Rodrigues and Kristina Mullin,
The Food Bank Nutrition Team

The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts is located in Hatfield and provides food and support to individuals facing hunger and leads communities towards long-term solutions to the problem of hunger in our region. In 2021, we served around 12 million meals to food insecure neighbors across Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden and Hampshire counties.

The Food Bank is the leading provider of emergency food to partner agencies and individuals in Western Massachusetts. We are committed to feeding our neighbors in need and leading the community to end hunger. The Food Bank seeks to make nutritious food affordable and accessible for all residents in our region.

If you need help finding resources or want to get involved in your community, visit www.foodbankwma.org or call 413-247-9738.

About the Food Bank Nutrition Team

Osvaldina Rodrigues (left) began working at The Food Bank in 2020 and graduated from UMass Amherst with a degree in Nutrition and Food Science. She is interested in a wholistic lifestyle and enjoys preparing vibrant colorful dishes with her daughters.

Kristina (right) began working at The Food Bank since 2018 after graduating from Framingham State University with a degree in Food and Nutrition with a concentration in Dietetics. Before that, she worked in food service and loves cooking and trying new recipes in her free time.

A special thank you to the partner agencies, nutrition students, and volunteers that donated their time and expertise to help create and finish this cookbook and share their recipes with us.