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## UMaine Cooperative Extension 2015 Winter Eat Well Newsletter

University of Maine Cooperative Extension

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## Winter 2015

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# Eat Well!

A Newsletter for Healthy Eating

## Canned Foods Can Be Healthy!



By Ronni Tolman, Dietetic Intern

**E**ating more nutritious foods, such as fruits, vegetables, beans and seafood, is a solution to better health and nutrition. Research shows that canned foods not only provide the important nutrients our bodies need, but often cost less than fresh, frozen or dried food.

### Protein

Canned foods offer a fast, easy and inexpensive way to meet daily protein needs. Canned poultry and fish are both sources of high quality protein. These foods have comparable nutritional value to fresh.

*Seafood* - Canned fish, like tuna, salmon and other seafood packed in water, are rich in

essential omega-3 fatty acid. Some varieties of canned fish have higher calcium levels than fresh cooked fish. Canned seafood can be used to create

- sandwiches,
- seafood patties,
- pot pies,
- salads,
- pasta dishes, and
- casseroles.

*Plant Protein* - In addition to being good sources of protein, canned beans and other legumes are naturally low in fat and high in fiber. Canned legumes are great protein options and may be used to add flavor, color and texture to a variety of dishes.

*Other Canned Meats* - Canned meats, such as chicken, can provide simple ways to add

*(Continued on page 2)*



**Looking for ways to save money on food?** The *Eat Well!* newsletter has always given you great ideas on how to save money on food. Now these ideas are even easier to spot. Look for this picture in the *Eat Well* newsletter to find great tips to save money on food. **SAVE MONEY.**

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protein to pasta dishes, casseroles, quesadillas or enchiladas.

## Fruits and Vegetables

When it comes to canned fruits and vegetables, they are always in season. Canned items are packed at the peak of freshness to seal in taste and nutrients.

*Stock Up* - Almost all canned fruits and vegetables are fat-free and excellent sources of fiber and nutrients. In general, fresh, frozen and canned fruits and vegetables contain similar amounts of fiber. You can keep canned tomatoes, fruits and other vegetables on hand to quickly create meals or boost the nutritional content of your go-to recipes.

*Comparing Nutrients* - Canned fruits and vegetables generally have the same nutrients as their fresh counterparts. Some canned foods, such as canned asparagus, grapefruits

and pineapple, are important sources of vitamin C and many canned fruits and vegetables are as high in vitamin A as frozen or fresh items. Some nutrients are actually higher in canned foods: canned pumpkin contains a higher amount of beta-carotene than fresh pumpkin because of the canning process and canned tomatoes are higher in lycopene than fresh tomatoes. In fact, your body uses lycopene from cooked or canned tomatoes better than from fresh.

### Sources:

“Get More Nutrients for Your Money with Canned Foods”. Canned Food Alliance. [www.mealtime.org](http://www.mealtime.org)

“Canned Food Fills MyPlate”. Canned Food Alliance. [www.mealtime.org](http://www.mealtime.org)

“Did You Know?”. Canned Food Alliance. <http://www.mealtime.org/professionals-and-government/frequently-asked-questions/did-you-know.aspx#2000>. Accessed August 11, 2014.

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## Ask Eat Well!

**Laurie Colton** Community Education Assistant, Aroostook County

Laurie has worked for the University of Maine Cooperative Extension Eat Well Nutrition Education Program in Aroostook County for 19 years and is very passionate about what she does. When Laurie is not working, she enjoys walking with her 12-year-old black Lab, biking, snowshoeing, hiking and snowmobiling.



### Q. I need to watch my salt intake. How can I reduce the salt in canned foods?

**A.** Start by looking for “reduced sodium,” “low sodium” and “no salt” options when buying canned foods. Also, draining and rinsing canned vegetables and beans will reduce sodium by as much as 41%. Draining alone will decrease the sodium content by 36%. Lastly, understand the nutrition facts label.

Look for a percent daily value for sodium that is under 15% per serving. Remember, the sodium content includes the liquid in the can.

### Source:

Duyff RL, Mount JR, Jones JB. Sodium Reduction in Canned Beans after Draining, Rinsing. *Journal of Culinary Science*. 2011; 9:160-112.



# Kid's Korner Easy Hummus



## Ingredients

- 1 (15 oz) can of chickpeas or garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed\*
- ½ cup plain low-fat yogurt
- 1-2 cloves garlic
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin

## Directions

1. In a food processor or blender, combine beans, yogurt, garlic, and lemon juice. Blend well.
2. Add cumin and blend to a smooth and creamy dip. If your hummus is too thick, add warm water, about a teaspoon at a time to thin the hummus.

\*To change the flavor of this recipe, add 1/2 cup diced red bell pepper or substitute edamame for chickpeas.

## Serving Suggestion

Use as a dip for fresh vegetables or pita chips.

Makes 16 servings Serving Size: 2 Tablespoons

Cost per recipe: \$2.40 Cost per serving: \$0.15

## Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 2 Tablespoons (35g)  
Servings Per Container 16

Amount Per Serving

**Calories 25**      Calories from Fat 5

% Daily Value\*

**Total Fat 0g**      **0%**

Saturated Fat 0g      **0%**

Trans Fat 0g

**Cholesterol 0mg**      **0%**

**Sodium 65mg**      **3%**

**Total Carbohydrate 4g**      **1%**

Dietary Fiber 1g      **4%**

Sugars 1g

**Protein 1g**

Vitamin A 0%      • Vitamin C 0%

Calcium 2%      • Iron 2%

\*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



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# Food Safety Corner

## Canned Food Safety Shaunda Neptune, Dietetic Intern

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### What if my canned foods freeze?

Cans that freeze accidentally, such as those left in a car or basement in sub-zero temperatures, can present health problems. When cans are frozen, they cause the food inside to expand and swell the can. However, cans may also swell from the contamination of bacteria. Any swollen cans should be discarded.

Even if the can is not swollen after freezing, it is still dangerous to consume foods that are thawed at 40°F or higher. Cans that have thawed and refrozen are not safe and should be thrown away.

If you discover a can that is frozen and has not thawed, you can safely defrost this in your refrigerator. However, if the product does not look and/or smell normal, throw it out.

If the product looks or smells normal, thoroughly cook the food right away. Once cooked, these products can then be refrigerated or frozen for later use.

### Recommended can storage:

- Store canned foods in a cool, dry place.
- Never put them near the stove, under the sink, in a damp garage or basement, or

any place exposed to extreme high or low temperatures.

- Temperatures below 85°F are best. The risk of spoilage increases as storage temperatures rise.

### Other canned food safety tips:

#### Is it safe to use food from dented cans?

- If a can has a small dent, but otherwise is in good shape, the food should be safe to eat.
- Discard deeply dented cans. These are dents that you can lay your finger into.
- Discard any can with a deep dent on any seam. These dents can allow bacteria to enter the can.

#### Is it safe to use rusted canned foods?

- Discard heavily rusted cans. These may have holes in them that allow bacteria to enter.
- Surface rust that you can remove is not a problem. You can keep these canned foods.
- If the can has rust inside, do not eat the food. Rust is not safe to eat.

#### Source:

USDA Shelf-Stable Food Safety  
<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/safe-food-handling/shelf-stable-food-safety>

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**Eat Well!** is published four times a year for current, past and future UMaine Extension Eat Well program participants. For more information on Eat Well, contact your County Extension office. **Managing Editor:** Kate Yerxa, MS, RD, **Extension Editor:** Phoebe Nylund, Eat Well Program. **Eat Well Committee:** Kathleen Savoie, MS, RD, Extension Educator; Kate Yerxa, MS, RD, Extension Educator; and Christine Finemore, Community Education Assistant. **Design and Production:** Phoebe Nylund, Eat Well Program.

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# Food Bites

## Food Product Dating Shaunda Neptune, Dietetic Intern

Canned foods may be labeled with a "use by", "sell by" or "best if used by" date.

### What do these dates really mean?

The dates on canned goods are used to show when the products are at their best quality. Although foods consumed after the date labeled are not a safety risk for foodborne illness, you should follow the date of expiration.

### What if I consume foods after the "use by," "sell by," or "best if used by" date?

- Foods can change in taste and/or texture and may not be desirable
- Foods may have a lower nutritional value since they are past peak quality

Typical recommendations for storing canned products on the shelf and after opening are as follows:

FOOD	STORAGE ON SHELF	STORAGE AFTER OPENING
<b>Low-Acid Foods</b> Canned meat & poultry Stews and soups (except tomato) Carrots Beans and peas Pumpkin Potatoes Corn Spinach Beets	2 to 5 years	3 to 4 days in the refrigerator
<b>High-Acid Foods</b> Tomatoes Pineapple Apples & apple products Pickles & sauerkraut Grapefruit Mixed fruit Peaches Plums All berries	12 to 18 months	5 to 7 days in the refrigerator

### Source:

USDA Shelf-Stable Food Safety  
<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/food-safety-education/get-answers/food-safety-fact-sheets/safe-food-handling/shelf-stable-food-safety>





## Quick and Easy Eat Well Recipe Tuna Potato Patties



### Ingredients

- 1 (12 oz) can tuna in water, drained
- 1 cup mashed potatoes, prepared
- 1/3 cup dry bread crumbs
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons canola oil

### Directions

1. In a medium bowl, combine tuna, mashed potatoes, bread crumbs, garlic, celery and pepper. Mix well.
2. In a skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Divide tuna mixture evenly to make four patties. Place formed patties in skillet.
3. Cook 3 to 4 minutes or until browned. Carefully turn; cook 3 to 4 minutes more.

Makes 4 servings Serving Size: 1 patty

Cost per recipe: \$3.76 Cost per serving: \$0.94

### Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 Patty (145g)  
 Servings Per Container 4

Amount Per Serving		% Daily Value*	
<b>Calories</b> 230	<b>Calories from Fat</b> 70		
<b>Total Fat</b> 8g			<b>12%</b>
Saturated Fat 0.5g			<b>3%</b>
Trans Fat 0g			
<b>Cholesterol</b> 25mg			<b>8%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 120mg			<b>5%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 13g			<b>4%</b>
Dietary Fiber 1g			<b>4%</b>
Sugars 1g			
<b>Protein</b> 24g			
Vitamin A 2%		Vitamin C 8%	
Calcium 2%		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
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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