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Happy New Year!



Hoppin' John with Rice

It's a new year! Time to start anew and make resolutions to work on for 2013. To help you make your list, add "eating healthier" as a goal.



In the Southern states, especially South Carolina, a traditional dish on New Year's Day is Hoppin' John. It is a mixture of black-eyed peas, ham, greens

such as cabbage, mustard, kale, spinach or collard greens. Serve with a side of corn bread.

How this dish got the name Hoppin' John has many theories. Many say it has African/French/Caribbean roots. Some of the stories are below.

- Children gathered around the table and when the dish came from the kitchen, they hopped around the table prior to eating.
- A man named John came "a-hoppin'" when his wife took the dish off the stove.
- A South Carolina custom to invite guests to eat was "Hop in, John."
- It dates back to 1841 and was hawked in the streets of Charleston, South Carolina.

Source: NC Cooperative Extension, What's Up, Jan 20, 2011

Did You Know?

- Black eyed peas are actually beans.
- Select dry beans that are dry, firm, clean, not shriveled.
- Store dry beans are room temperature in a sealed container.
- They are low in fat, sodium, saturated fat free, and cholesterol free.

Chocolate without the Mess

Do you love chocolate, but not the melted mess on your hands? Cadbury has discovered how to keep chocolate from melting in hot weather.

Typical chocolate can

start to melt at 93°F. This new chocolate stays solid at 104°F for over three hours. The secret is in the "conching" step. The sugar particles are finely ground to reduce how fat covers the parti-

cles. This makes it more heat-resistant.

So far, this chocolate will be sold in India and Brazil.

Source: <http://bit.ly/YXrmsZ>

Get vitamin D from Mushrooms

An estimated 40 percent of Americans don't get enough vitamin D. The nutrient is essential for strong bones, properly functioning liver and kidneys, and a robust immune system. Some research suggests that vitamin D may reduce risk of cardiovascular disease, certain cancers, and Alzheimer's disease.

Research, done by the USDA Agricultural Research Service, proved that treating mushrooms with UV-B light can give fresh mushrooms at least 100 percent of vitamin D recommended intake in a 3-ounce serving.

So far, the types of mushrooms being treated include white,

brown and portabella varieties.

So when the sun is hiding behind clouds, add some mushrooms to your omelet, salad or side dish to get your vitamin D.



Sources: www.ars.usda.gov/is/pr/2008/081112.htm
<http://mushroominfo.com/all-about-vitamin-d/>
<http://1.usa.gov/fdud2S>



Other dairy products that don't freeze well include sour cream, milk sauces, and cream or custard fillings. See more at <http://bit.ly/wneJSk>.

Can Cream Cheese be Frozen?

The first answer is "yes."

The second answer is "yes, but the texture will be poor." So what happens?

Cream cheese is high in

moisture. Freezing causes ice crystals to form. This makes the texture gritty.

The cheese will get crumbly, grainy and look like cheese curds. The

texture is similar to ricotta cheese.

The best use of frozen cream cheese is in recipes where the cheese texture doesn't matter.

Source: Cook's Illustrated, January 2013

Snack Consumption Rising

In the 1970s, snack consumption by children was only one snack a day. Today, they consume about three snacks a day. That's is about a 200 calorie increase. And today's snacks are high-calorie, low-nutrient foods possibly leading to obesity. Replace one of those snacks with a fruit or vegetable. This can lead to about a half pound less body weight per month.

Switching common snacks with 1/2-cup of fruits or vegetables can be budget friendly. To see a cost comparison of common snacks versus fruit and vegetable substitutes, see the December 2012 issue of Amber Waves at <http://1.usa.gov/Vr0nDX>.





Good sources of magnesium.
USDA/ARS

Magnesium: A Crucial Mineral

Magnesium is a power-packed mineral. It is a part of energy production, cell growth, blood pressure, bone health, and heart, nerve and muscle function. Potentially, it can reduce chronic disease. Supplements may help, but it is best to get magnesium from food. Here are some examples magnesium benefits.

- For the heart, it boosts HDL cholesterol, prevents arrhythmia and artery spasms, and keeps blood vessels healthy.
- For diabetes, it helps the body use insulin properly and burns carbohydrates.
- For bone health, magnesium works with calcium and vitamin D to strengthen bones and teeth. It can reduce the risk for osteoporosis.

Foods rich in magnesium include whole grains, nuts, beans, seeds, fish, avocados, and leafy greens.

Source: <http://bit.ly/W3yYVe>



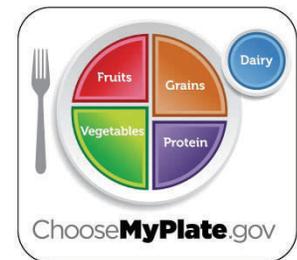
MyPlate at Home in Chinese and French

If you are looking for classroom materials for MyPlate information in other languages, Team Nutrition has them!

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service now has

Serving Up MyPlate materials in English, Spanish, traditional Chinese, and French. The MyPlate at Home handout is for parents to help reinforce class lessons at home.

Look for these and other materials at <http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/servingupmyplate.htm>.



Preventing Fruit from Browning

When some fresh fruits are cut, the enzyme polyphenol oxidase reacts with oxygen and starts the browning reaction. This can be prevented in many ways, such as using lemon juice.

Another method to try is using honey water. Dilute two tablespoons of honey in one cup of water. Submerge the fruit in this mixture for 30 seconds. The fruit will stay looking fresh for at least 8 hours or even up to 24 hours.

A peptide compound in honey deactivates the polyphenol oxidase enzyme in the fruit to prevent browning. Besides fruit, it can also be used on potatoes.

Source: Cook's Illustrated, January 2013



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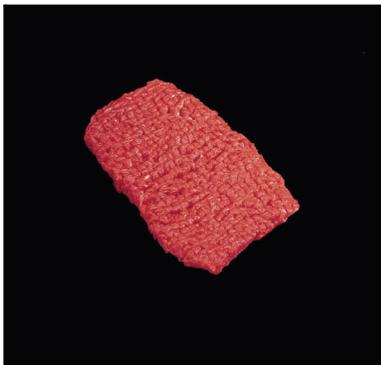
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Tenderized Meat FAQs



Cubed steak, www.beefretail.org

Nobody likes to eat a tough piece of meat. So to meet the demand for tender meat, processors use techniques to improve the eating experience. This is done with a marinade or mechanically to break the muscle fibers and connective tissue within the meat.



Marinades are typically injected into the meat. Another method is to tumble or massage the marinade into the meat. These are labeled as "enhanced" products.

Mechanical tenderization is done by inserting sharp blades into the meat to physically break the muscle fibers and connective tissue. The meat is then called "non-intact" meat.

The safety of these processes have been studied and the risk of illness is very low. It is still up to the consumer to cook meat properly.

Sources: www.meatami.com/ht/a/GetDocumentAction/i/82526
<http://bit.ly/SYm2Ps>



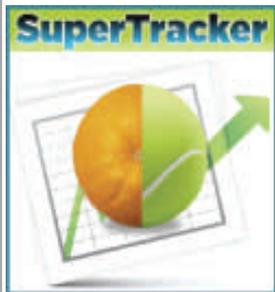
Karen Blakeslee, M.S.

On the Web at
www.rrc.ksu.edu



The 2012 Most Popular Diets

The search engine Google tracks trends on various topics. Here are the top ten diet searches for 2012.



Try SuperTracker from www.choosemyplate.gov for a better way to meet your weight control goals.

1. Michael Phelps Diet
2. Beyond Diet
3. Raspberry Ketone Diet
4. PINK Method Diet
5. Adriana

Lima Diet

6. Miranda Kerr Diet
7. NV Diet Pill
8. Feeding Tube Diet
9. Juicing Diet
10. Marisa Miller Diet

Learn about these fad diets at <http://ti.me/W677nk>