



DINING ON A DIME

Eating Better for Less
April, 2004

Magic of Mixes

Today's busy lifestyles have created a trend towards the use of time-saving foods and mixes. Shelves at the grocery store abound with these pre-prepared, costly convenience foods. Many of these products can be prepared at home. Homemade mixes can be made for half the cost and offer more nutritional benefit. Read on to learn more about basic mix preparation, storage, and labeling tips, and check out page 3 for mix recipes. Call your local county extension office for more mix recipes.

Preparation

Select one day a month when you can prepare mixes to save time later. Make up several mixes at once to save clean-up time.

Storage

Most mixes are best stored in air-tight containers placed in a cool, dry, dark place. Select clean, dry, tightly covered plastic containers, plastic bags, or jars. Mixtures containing perishable ingredients must be refrigerated or frozen and have a shorter "stay fresh" life.

Labeling

It is important to label each container. If you divide the mix into pre-measured amounts, indicate the amount in the container. Include content and expiration date. Mixes should be used within the time periods shown below:

Dry mixes - keep for up to 6-8 months

Refrigerated or Freezer mixes - keep for up to 3 months

Source: www.pioneerthinking.com/mixes.html





Playing It Safe With Eggs

To avoid the risk of foodborne illness, fresh eggs must be handled carefully. Even eggs with clean, uncracked shells may sometimes contain bacteria. This bacteria, called salmonella, can cause illness. The best way to prevent egg-related sickness is by knowing how to buy, store, handle, and cook eggs safely. Read more to

learn how to play it safe with eggs.

Buy Right

- Buy eggs only if sold from a refrigerated case.
- Open the carton to make sure the eggs are clean and the shells are not cracked.
- Refrigerate promptly.
- Store eggs in their original carton. Use them within 3 weeks for best quality.

Safe Handling

- Wash hands, utensils, equipment, and work surfaces with hot, soapy water before and after they come in contact with uncooked eggs and egg-containing foods.

Cook Thoroughly

- Cook eggs until both the yolk and the white are firm. Scrambled eggs should not be runny. Eggs and egg dishes may be refrigerated for serving later, but should be thoroughly reheated to 165 degrees F before serving. Be sure to avoid foods that often contain raw eggs, such as cookie dough or homemade ice cream. Use pasteurized egg substitute in such cases.

Chill Properly

- If traveling, pack cooked eggs with enough ice or frozen gel packs to keep them cold.
- Carry coolers in the air-conditioned cab of the car rather than the hot trunk.

Source: Excerpted from the FDA Consumer's The Unwelcome Dinner Guest: Preventing Foodborne Illness, Jan.-Feb. 1991; Revised Jun. 2000, at <http://vm.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/fdunwelc.html>

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The Magic of Mixes

Taco Mix

2 teaspoons dry minced onion
1 teaspoon chili powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon cornstarch
1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon crushed dried red pepper
1/4 teaspoon dried oregano leaves
Combine all ingredients. Wrap in a 6-inch square of aluminum foil and place in a small resealable bag. Makes 1 package. Recipe may be tripled or more, if more packages are desired. One package Taco Mix serves 4. Each serving has 10 calories, 2 g carbohydrate, 0 g protein, 0 g fat, 300 mg sodium.



Serving suggestion:

1 pound ground beef, browned and drained
1 package taco mix
3/4 cup water
4 taco shells
1 cup chopped lettuce
2 chopped tomatoes
Combine beef, taco mix and water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat. Cook uncovered for 10 minutes, stirring twice. Serve with taco shells, lettuce and tomatoes. Serves 4. Each serving has 310 calories, 11 g carbohydrate, 25 g protein, 19 g fat, 430 mg sodium.

Adapted from: www.ext.colostate.edu/PUBS/columncc/cc960620.html

Mix for Hamburger Dinners

2 cups nonfat dried milk powder
1 cup corn starch
1/4 cup beef bouillon granules
2 Tablespoons dried onion flakes
2 Tablespoons dried parsley
1 Tablespoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon dried basil
1 teaspoon dried thyme
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
Combine all ingredients. Store in an air-tight container. Makes about 3 1/2 cups, for use in 7 beef dinners, such as the stroganoff recipe at right. 1/2 cup Mix for Hamburger Dinners serves 4. One serving has 40 calories, 7 g carbohydrate, 2 g protein, 0 g fat, 190 mg sodium.

Beef Stroganoff

1 pound ground beef, browned and drained
2 cups water
1/2 cup Mix for Hamburger Dinners
2 cups uncooked egg noodles
1/2 cup reduced fat sour cream

Combine ingredients except sour cream. Boil gently for 20 minutes. Stir in light sour cream. Serve hot. Serves 4. One serving has 420 calories, 25 g carbohydrate, 29 g protein, 21 g fat, 290 mg sodium.



Adapted from: www.cdktichen.com/recipes/recs/9/Almost_Hamburger_Helper531.shtml

Dining on a Dime Cooks' Corner Have a devil of a good time mixing up this *eggs*-tra special recipe. Whip these treats up for a summer picnic or neighborhood barbecue. Just in time for summer!

Deviled Eggs

Ingredients

6 hard cooked eggs, shells removed
2 tablespoons low-fat mayonnaise
3/4 teaspoon prepared mustard
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper

Directions

1. Cut eggs in half lengthwise. Remove yolks. Set aside the egg whites.
 2. Place yolks in a 1 quart freezer bag with remaining ingredients. Press out air. Close bag and knead until ingredients are well blended.
 3. Push contents toward corner of bag. Snip about 1/2 inch or less off corner of bag.
 4. Squeezing bag gently, fill reserved whites with yolk mixture. Chill until served.
- Serves 6. Each serving of 2 halves has: 90 calories, 2 g carbohydrate, 6 g protein, 6 g fat, 210 mg sodium, 210 mg cholesterol.

Source: Adapted from Kansas State University Research and Extension's [Mission Nutrition](#), at www.oznet.ksu.edu/humannutrition/pub.htm



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