

Simply Prepared Meals & Menus

Connie



...mix it
UPI!

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Steps to Successful Menu Planning

Planning your meals ahead of time, either by the week or month, gives you a peace of mind when it comes to that dreaded question, "What's for supper?". You can plan by the week or month. The important thing is to plan ahead and make a list using sale items along with what you have on hand and what your schedule for the week looks like.

Meal planning is rewarding in terms of time and money. It helps you avoid restaurants and fast food establishments, therefore eating and feeding your family healthier.

- ✓ Check out the specials on groceries before you determine for sure which recipes you will be making.
- ✓ Find your recipes.
- ✓ Print or copy recipes you will be using for this week or month. Now you can make a master list of all the ingredients you will need.
- ✓ Check and see what you have on hand in refrigerator, freezer or pantry.
- ✓ Divide up your grocery store list and categorize each item. Your grocery list should have sections broken down into meats, vegetables, fruits, spices and other sections of your store. Be sure to have a category for the right containers and wraps that you will be using.
- ✓ Be sure to include some fresh veggies or salad makings to go along with your main dish.

check Pinterest for many free downloadable templates for Meal Planning, Grocery Shopping, Freezer and Pantry Inventories.

Freezer Cooking

Freezer cooking is a great way to start. “Freezer cooking” can be done in a variety of ways. In fact, probably no two homemakers do freezer cooking exactly the same way. Many times we adapt several ways of freezer cooking. Here are a few of the basic methods.

Cook Once for a Full Month—This method is when you take one day and do all your grocery shopping for the month and then do a full day of cooking 20 to 30 meals to last the entire month. It is a good option for those really busy times in our lives like having a new baby or surgery. Sometimes cooking for a week or two at a time is less daunting.

Make Double Batches—This is often an easier method. When you make a lasagna or casserole just go ahead and make two. Enjoy one for dinner that night, while the other one goes into the freezer for another day. This also works great for meatloaf, soups, stews, chili, spaghetti sauce and other staples. This way, you already have all the ingredients out and you just make a double batch. One chopping, mixing and cooking, one clean up!

Just Make the Staples—This works when you make a big pot of dried beans. Cook a pot full. Then divide the leftovers into smaller freezer bags and freeze so you can have already cooked whenever you need them. This also works well for cooked rice, shredded chicken, or beef for tacos and burritos and more.

All of these meal planning methods require making a commitment, making a shopping list and shopping strategically.

Keeping a freezer inventory helps you to make sure you rotate your food on a timely basis. It will help you when you really didn't have a plan by reminding you what is in the freezer.

A Variety of Storage Methods

There are a variety of packaging methods for freezing. Each individual has their favorites that work better for them.

Freezer Ziptop Bags are great for marinating meats, baked goods and other items that hold their own shape. You can put soups, stews or beans in these as well, but the leakage factor is something to consider if you don't seal them well. One of the benefits of these bags is that they can lie flat, freeze and then be lined up like books on a shelf. They provide a great way to store a lot of food in a small amount of space.

Reusable/Disposable Plastic Containers with Lids are wonderful for storing liquids like red sauce, soups and stews. You will want to be aware of whether they are microwavable or not. There is a huge variety of these on the market!

Disposable Aluminum Baking Pans are very convenient, especially if you know you'll be giving meals as gifts or taking them to potlucks.

Glass or Metal Baking Dishes are the longest lasting. If you have a large supply, this is your best bet. Otherwise, you might not want to have all your pans sitting in the freezer when you need to cook something fresh. You can line them with heavy duty foil and after your food is frozen take it out; then when you are ready to cook slip the frozen foil lined block back into the original container. This will keep you from tying up all of your baking dishes.

Vacuum Seal Bags are also good at keeping food fresh longer. This works best for raw or cooked meat you have bought on sale, or family packs you are dividing and freezing for later use.

The bottom line is use freezer containers or bags. These are moisture-vapor proof to keep out excess moisture that can cause freezer burn. Use heavy duty foil for the freezer and seal well. Remove excess air from ALL packaging. This can be done in a variety of ways, with a straw, displacing air by immersing bag in water or using a vacuum seal system.

The next step is LABEL, LABEL, LABEL!

Make sure you label item, what it is, how to use it or cook it and date you made it. Avoid those mystery packages!

Investment Cooking

Investment cooking revolves around cooking and freezing one type of meat at a time. Here's how it works. Buy large quantities of meat on special. To determine what cycle of weekly specials your favorite supermarket follows, talk to the meat manager. They will usually be more than willing to share how specials are planned and give tips on shopping. You can also check out the newspapers to find the best bargains.

In addition to determining what meat you will be purchasing, purchase any other ingredients you will need such as spices for rubs or items for marinades.

Chicken Freezing Tips

Baked, Grilled or Stir-fried Chicken—Buy a family pack of boneless, skinless chicken breasts. Make four or five different recipes of marinades and rubs. Prick chicken several times with a fork to allow marinades and rubs to penetrate the meat. Package chicken according to your family's size. You may also want to leave some of the raw chicken plain. You could use frozen chicken pieces but **DO NOT THAW AND REFREEZE**.

Combine marinade and breast halves or chicken pieces in labeled freezer bags. Seal bags and knead the pieces of meat to circulate the marinade. Lay bags flat with pieces of meat side by side in a flat pan with sides. Marinate meat for desired time in refrigerator. Place pan in freezer; freeze bags flat. Remove frozen bags from pan and stack in freezer. For kabobs or stir-fry, cut breast halves into cubes or strips and follow the same instructions. This method is sometimes called "**Dump Chicken**".

Cooked Chicken for Casseroles, Wraps, Chicken Salad, etc.—Bring 2 whole chickens and enough water to cover to a boil in a large stockpot. Add 2 celery ribs, 2 carrots, 1 onion and 4 garlic cloves. Reduce heat; cover and simmer about 40 minutes. Remove chicken and discard vegetables, reserving broth. Remove chicken from bones and shred. Place 2 cups shredded chicken in labeled quart-size freezer bags. Seal and freeze.

Bonus: Strain broth, cool and refrigerate. Freeze broth in airtight containers or freezer bags for soups and other recipes.

Chicken breasts could also be cooked in the oven on foil or parchment paper lined cookie sheets at 350 degrees until done; spray lightly with olive oil and lightly season with your favorite seasoning. Once cooked, cut these up into strips and bite size pieces. Place on a clean lined cookie sheet and flash freeze (put them in the freezer for about 20 minutes to keep all the chicken from sticking together). Then package in portions either plain or with added seasonings or sauces. Chicken may also be cooked in the slow cooker for shredding.

Ground Beef Freezing Tips

Ground beef is economical, versatile and excellent for investment cooking. Prepare meat loaves, hamburgers and meatballs. Freeze them uncooked. Or cook the meat plain, or with onions and garlic, and freeze it to use as a base for other dishes. On cooking day, just heat the base and add other needed ingredients to create quick tacos, sloppy joes or beef stroganoff to name a few.

Divide 15 pounds of raw ground beef into 3 (5-pound) portions. Use one portion to make 3 (1½ pound) meatloaves using your favorite recipe; one portion to make 20 hamburger patties; and one portion to make small, medium or large meatballs.

Meatloaf—Line loaf pan with enough foil to cover the top or use a disposable aluminum pan. Press meatloaf into pan; close foil and place in freezer for several hours or overnight. Once frozen, remove from loaf pan. Seal tightly with foil, label and freeze. On cooking day, remove the foil and place frozen loaf in pan to thaw and bake.

Hamburgers—Form patties and place in a single layer on a parchment paper lined baking sheet. Flash freeze by freezing until patties are no longer soft in the center, this will keep them from sticking together. Seal frozen patties in labeled freezer bags and freeze.

Meatballs—Make up meatball mixture using your favorite recipe. Form meatballs using an ice-cream scoop; place on a single layer on a parchment paper lined cookie sheet. Place meatballs in freezer for approximately 30 to 40 minutes. Transfer frozen meatballs to labeled freezer bags and freeze. On cooking day, brown meatballs, add sauce or gravy and enjoy over rice or pasta.

You can use many of these methods with pork, beef steak or stew meat. A little prep on one day saves you a lot of trouble on cooking day.

How long will your freezer meals last?

If you have wrapped and stored your meal or foods properly, freezer meals last at least 3 to 6 months and still taste good. After a period of time the quality of the food will decline.

Sample One Week Menu Plan

Meals Lemon Garlic Chicken, Beef Burritos, Chicken Fajitas, Hawaiian Chicken and Teriyaki Pork

Meat

- 2 pounds London Broil or Top Round Roast
- 5-6 pounds Boneless, Skinless Chicken Breasts
- 4 Pork Chops (about 1 inch thick)

Grocery

- Brown sugar
- White sugar
- White vinegar
- Soy sauce
- 1 can (15½ oz.) pineapple chunks
- Olive oil
- 1 can (16 oz.) plain tomato sauce
- 1 chipotle pepper *You can buy a small can and freeze the leftovers.
- Whole peppercorns
- Chili powder
- Lemon juice
- Chicken broth
- Taco seasoning
- Paprika
- 24 burrito sized flour tortillas
- Sour cream
- 4 cups shredded Mexican cheese
- Gallon sized freezer bags

check your pantry for staples before going to the supermarket.

Be sure and purchase some fresh veggies and salad makings for your sides. Fresh bread would go good with several of the meals too.

Produce

- 12 garlic cloves
- 1 large onion or 2 small onions
- 2 Peppers, *Your choice for the Chicken Tacos.
- Lettuce
- Tomatoes
- Fresh Parsley

Adapted from Pinterest 1 Hour+1 Mess=5 Dinners

Prep Tips

1. Take 5 one gallon size zip top freezer bags. Grab a Sharpie and label each bag. You should also write the instructions on the bag.
2. Cut up the onions—half slices and half diced, cut up peppers and peel the garlic. You can dice the garlic as you fill up your bags.
3. Next add all the meats to the bags.
4. Now add the rest of the ingredients.
5. Lay them flat to freeze for maximize space in freezer.
6. To use, thaw overnight in the refrigerator.
7. Cook according to the instructions.

Slow Cooker Hawaiian Chicken

2 to 3 large boneless, skinless chicken breasts
 ½ cup white sugar
 ½ cup white vinegar
 3 garlic cloves, minced
 2 tablespoons soy sauce
 ½ can (15 ½ oz. can) pineapple chunks, drained
 ½ cup of pineapple juice from the can

Add all the ingredients to a gallon freezer bag. When you are ready to prepare your meal, thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Then dump all the ingredients in your slow cooker and cook 4 to 5 hours on HIGH or 6 to 7 hours on LOW. Serve over rice and enjoy. While the rice is cooking, shred the chicken and put it back in the juice before serving. Makes 4 to 5 servings.

Beef Burritos

1 London Broil or Top Round Roast (about 2 pounds)
 1 diced onion
 4 garlic cloves, minced
 2 tablespoons whole peppercorns
 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
 2 cans (8 oz. ea.) tomato sauce
 1 chipotle pepper in adobo sauce (Use just 1 pepper, freeze the remainder)
 1½ teaspoons chili powder
 16 Burrito size tortillas and favorite toppings *When serving

Add all the ingredients to a gallon freezer bag. When you are ready to prepare your meal, thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Then dump all the ingredients in your slow cooker and cook 4 to 5 hours on HIGH or 6 to 7 hours on LOW. When the meat is cooked, you will need to strain the juices and add the juice back to the slow cooker (You want to remove the peppercorns.) Shred the meat and add back to the juice in the slow cooker for about 30 minutes. Serve with 16 burrito sized flour tortillas and any condiments you like on burritos.

Lemon Garlic Chicken

1½ to 2 pounds boneless, skinless chicken breasts
2 to 3 garlic cloves, minced
2 tablespoon chopped parsley
3 tablespoons lemon juice
1/8 teaspoon pepper

Add all ingredients to a freezer bag. When you are ready to prepare your meal, thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Then dump all the ingredients in your slow cooker and cook 4 to 5 hours on HIGH or 6 to 7 hours on LOW.

Teriyaki Pork Chops

4 pork chops, about 1-inch thick
Salt and pepper, to taste
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1/4 cup soy sauce
1/3 cup chicken broth

Sprinkle the pork chops with salt and pepper. Add the pork chops, garlic, brown sugar, soy sauce and chicken broth to the freezer bag. When you are ready to prepare your meal, thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Then dump all the ingredients in your slow cooker and cook 4 to 5 hours on HIGH or 6 to 7 hours on LOW. Makes 4 servings.

Chicken Fajitas

2 peppers (your favorite)
1 onion
1½ pound chicken breasts
½ cup chicken broth
Taco seasoning packet
1 teaspoon chili powder
½ teaspoon paprika
1 teaspoon salt
Tortillas and favorite toppings.

Put all the ingredients in large gallon freezer bag and freeze, except for tortillas. When you are ready to prepare your meal, thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Then dump all the ingredients in your slow cooker and cook 4 to 5 hours on HIGH or 6 to 7 hours on LOW. When it is cooked, shred the meat and add it back to the pepper mixture and serve on warm tortillas with your favorite toppings.

Safe & Successful Slow Cooking

1. Start with a clean cooker, utensils and work area. Wash hands before and during food preparation, especially after handling raw meat and poultry.
2. Spray the inside of the crock with non-stick cooking spray before adding ingredients to keep the food from sticking. Sometimes the Slow Cooker Liners available are great help! This makes clean up easy.
3. Prepare foods that have high moisture content like chili, soup or spaghetti sauce.
4. Keep perishable foods refrigerated until preparation time. Meat and vegetables should be stored separately in the refrigerator in covered containers. It takes time for slow cookers to reach a temperature hot enough to kill bacteria so keeping these foods refrigerated helps ensure that bacteria, which multiply fast at room temperature, don't get a head start during the first few hours of cooking.

5. Always thaw meat or poultry before putting it into a slow cooker.

6. Fill the cooker between 1/2 and 2/3 full. Vegetables such as potatoes and carrots cook slower than meat and poultry so place them at the bottom of the cooker. Be sure the liquid almost covers the ingredients so there is proper heat transfer throughout the crock. The liquid is needed to generate the steam that cooks the food.
7. Keep the lid on the slow cooker during the cooking process. Remove only to stir the food or check for doneness. Each time the lid is raised, the internal temperature drops 10 to 15 degrees and the cooking process is slowed by 20 to 30 minutes.
8. Use a food thermometer to make sure foods have been cooked to a safe internal temperature. Recommended temperatures are Poultry—165 degrees, Ground Beef—160 degrees, Beef Steaks and Roasts—145 degrees and Pork—160 degrees.
9. Store foods cooked in the slow cooker in shallow, covered containers and refrigerate within two hours of cooking. Reheat foods to 165 degrees using oven, microwave or stove top. Soups, stews and gravies should be brought to a rolling boil before eating.
10. The slow cooker does most of the work, but take time to brown the meat. This extra little step makes a huge difference by adding an extra layer of flavor. If its appearance and texture you're after, broil afterward.
11. Although cooking with the lid sealed tight is ideal for slow cooking, sometimes you want to remove the lid for the last 30 minutes or so to allow for some evaporation.

weekly menu

GROCERY LIST

SUN

MON

TUES

WEDS

THURS

FRI

SAT

Beef Recipes for Slow Cooker

Hamburger Vegetable Soup

2 lbs. ground beef
 1 onion, diced
 3 cloves of garlic, minced
 2 teaspoons thyme
 1 teaspoon salt
 1 teaspoon pepper
 2 cartons (32 oz. ea.) beef broth
 1 can (28 oz.) diced tomatoes
 1 bag (16 oz.) frozen mixed vegetables

Begin by browning the ground beef in a large stockpot. Add onions and garlic and continue to brown until there is no pink in the meat. Drain any grease and add the ground beef, onion and garlic mixture back to the stockpot. Season with thyme, salt and pepper. Pour in beef broth, tomatoes and mixed vegetables. Bring to a boil and reduce heat. Simmer soup for up to an hour.

For slow cooker, use browned ground beef from freezer. Add remaining ingredients and cook on HIGH for 2 to 3 hours or LOW for 5 to 6 hours.

To freeze, cool soup completely. Label containers and divide into portion sizes your family needs. When ready to eat, thaw and reheat on cooktop or microwave.

Quick and Easy Taco Soup

1 pound ground beef
 1 can (15 ozs.) pinto beans
 1 can (15 ozs.) kidney beans
 1 can (15 ozs.) black beans
 2 cans (15 ozs. ea.) fire roasted diced tomatoes

1 can (8 ozs.) tomato sauce
 1 cup water
 2 packets taco seasoning
 1 bag (16 ozs.) frozen corn
 1 cup diced onion
 Sour cream *When serving

Brown ground beef; set aside. Drain and rinse beans; pour into large bowl (if freezing) or large pot (if cooking immediately). Add tomatoes, tomato sauce and water to beans; mix well. Add taco seasoning; mix well. Add corn, onion and beef; mix well.

Write instructions on bag. Thaw, if frozen; cook in slow cooker on HIGH for 2 to 3 hours or bring to a boil on stove then reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes until heated and flavors are blended. Serve with sour cream, if desired. Makes 8 servings.

To freeze, divide mixture into 2 labeled gallon size freezer bags and freeze.

Dr. Pepper Pot Roast

2 to 3 lbs. chuck roast
 1 can (16 oz.) Dr. Pepper, Coke or Root Beer
 2 large garlic cloves, diced
 1 tablespoon Worcestershire Sauce
 Carrots *Add when cooking
 Potatoes *

Write instructions on bag. When you are ready to prepare your meal, thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Add carrots and potatoes. Then dump all the ingredients in your slow cooker and cook 5 to 6 hours on HIGH or 7 to 8 hours on LOW.

To freeze, add roast, soda, garlic and Worcestershire Sauce to a gallon freezer bag.

Slow Cooker Beef Roast

- 1 (2-3 lbs.) chuck roast
- 2 pounds baby carrots
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 Mesquite and Chipotle seasonings packet or
- 3 tablespoons taco seasoning

Write instructions on bag. When you are ready to prepare your meal, thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Then dump all the ingredients in your slow cooker and cook 5 to 6 hours on HIGH or 8 to 10 hours on LOW.

To freeze, combine all ingredients in a gallon-sized freezer bag. Combine all ingredients in your slow cooker. Add lid and cook for LOW for 8 to 10 hours until beef shreds easily with a fork.

Frito Chili

- 2 pounds ground beef, cooked and drained
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 2 garlic cloves, diced
- 2 cups tomato puree or diced tomatoes
- 2 cups water
- 1 cup salsa
- 1 bag Fritos *When serving
- Shredded cheese *
- Sour Cream*

Write instructions on bag. When you are ready to prepare your meal, thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Then dump all the ingredients in your slow cooker and cook 2 to 3 hours on HIGH or 4 to 5 hours on LOW.

To freeze, combine all ingredients in a gallon-sized freezer bag, except *ingredients.

Casserole Spaghetti

- 1½ lb. ground beef, cooked, drained and cooled
- 1 bell pepper, chopped
- 1 large onion, chopped
- ½ cup chopped celery
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 can (28 oz.) crushed tomatoes or tomato sauce
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 2 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1 pkg. (12 oz.) spaghetti or other pasta, cooked *Add when cooking
- 2 cups shredded cheese *

Write instructions on bag. When you are ready to prepare your meal, thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Then dump all the bag ingredients in your slow cooker and cook 5 to 6 hours on HIGH or 7 to 8 hours on LOW. When it's almost done, cook spaghetti according to package and drain. Add cooked spaghetti and about 1 cup cheese to the slow cooker and mix well. Add more cheese to the top and serve. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

To freeze, combine all ingredients except spaghetti and cheese in a gallon freezer bag.



Happiness is homemade

Chicken Recipes for Slow Cooker

Italian Spinach Chicken

1½ to 2 lbs. boneless, skinless
chicken breasts
2 cups Italian tomato sauce
3 cups fresh spinach *Add when cooking
1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese *
Spaghetti, cooked *Serve over

Write instructions on bag. When you are ready to prepare your meal, thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Dump package contents in slow cooker and cook on HIGH 4 to 5 hours or LOW 6 to 7 hours. Add cream cheese and fresh spinach 45 minutes before serving. Serve over spaghetti. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

To freeze, place chicken breasts and tomato sauce in a gallon freezer bag.

Creamy Italian Chicken

1 bottle (16 ozs.) Italian salad
dressing
1 pkg. (.7 oz.) Italian salad
dressing mix
2 pkgs. (8 ozs. ea.) low fat cream
cheese, softened
2 cans (10¾ ozs. ea.) cream of
chicken soup
3 to 4 pounds skinless, boneless
chicken breasts or thighs
Shredded Parmesan cheese *Add
when cooking
Favorite pasta, cooked *Serve over

Write instructions on bag. To use, thaw overnight in refrigerator. Place contents into slow cooker; cook on LOW for 3 to 4 hours until chicken is cooked through. Or, if preferred, bake in shallow dish at 350 degrees for 30 minutes, then sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and broil for several minutes until cheese is lightly browned and

bubbly. Serve over favorite pasta. Note: For a variation you might add 1 pkg. (12 oz.) frozen broccoli along with cream cheese. Makes 8 servings.

To freeze, in a large bowl, whisk together Italian dressing, dressing mix, cream cheese and cream of chicken soup until smooth. Divide cream cheese mixture into 2 one gallon-size freezer bags. (Be sure to label bags first!) Divide chicken into bags; press out air and freeze.

Lemon Chicken

2 lemons (1 sliced, 1 juiced)
½ onion, quartered
2 tablespoons butter, melted
1 pkg. (.7 oz.) Italian Salad
dressing mix
1 whole chicken
Potatoes *Add when cooking

Write instructions on bag. When you are ready to prepare your meal, thaw overnight in the refrigerator. You may want to quarter a few potatoes and wrap each potato in aluminum foil. Add to slow cooker and place chicken breast side down on top of potatoes. Cook package contents on HIGH 4 to 5 hours or LOW 6 to 7 hours.

To freeze, place the onion and some lemon slices inside the chicken. Put the chicken in a gallon freezer bag and add rest of lemon slices. Combine lemon juice, butter and Italian Seasoning and add to bag.

Tortilla Soup

2 large boneless, skinless chicken breasts
 1 can (28 oz.) whole peeled tomatoes, mashed
 1 can (10 oz.) enchilada sauce
 1 can (4 oz.) chopped green chiles
 1 yellow onion, chopped
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 1 carton (32 oz.) chicken broth
 1 teaspoon cumin
 1 teaspoon chili powder
 1 teaspoon salt
 ¼ teaspoon black pepper
 Crumbled tortilla chips *Serve with
 Sour Cream *
 Shredded Cheese*

Write instructions on bag. When you are ready to prepare your meal, thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Cook package contents on HIGH 4 to 5 hours or LOW 6 to 7 hours. When it is done remove chicken and shred with 2 forks. Serve with crumbled tortilla chips, sour cream and shredded cheese.

To freeze, place chicken, tomatoes, enchilada sauce, green chiles, onion, garlic, broth and spices in a 1 gallon freezer bag.

Southwest Chicken

1 can (14½ oz.) corn, drained
 1 can (14½ oz.) black beans, drained and rinsed
 1 jar (16 oz.) salsa
 3 to 4 boneless skinless, chicken breasts (about 2 lbs.)
 1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese *Add when cooking
 Rice, cooked *Serve with
 Shredded Cheese *

Write instructions on bag. When you are ready to prepare your meal, thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Add package contents to slow cooker and cook on HIGH 4 to 5 hours or LOW 6 to 7 hours. About 30 minutes

before it is done remove chicken and shred with 2 forks. Cut cream cheese into chunks and add to slow cooker with chicken last 30 minutes of cooking. Serve over rice and top with shredded cheese.

To freeze, add corn, black beans, salsa and chicken to a 1 gallon freezer bag.

Chicken Pot Pie Recipe

Sauce:

¼ cup butter
 2 small yellow onions, diced
 ¼ cup flour
 ½ teaspoon salt
 ½ teaspoon black pepper
 ½ teaspoon celery seed
 ¼ teaspoon poultry seasoning
 1 cup milk
 2 cup chicken broth

Filling & Topping

1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into bite sized pieces
 1 bag (8 oz.) frozen mixed vegetables
 1 bag (15 oz.) tater tots

Create sauce in a pan on your stovetop. Melt butter, add diced onion and cook until soft and translucent. Add flour and seasonings, mix. Add milk and chicken broth; bring to a boil reduce heat and simmer until the sauce starts to thicken.

Write instructions on bag. When you are ready to prepare your meal, thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Add package contents to slow cooker and cover with tater tots. Cook on HIGH 4 to 5 hours or LOW 6 to 7 hours.

To freeze, combine sauce, chicken and mixed vegetables in a gallon freezer bag. Tape bag of tater tots to freezer bag.

"Dump" Chicken for Oven

Russian "Dump" Chicken

1 bottle (16 oz.) Russian or Catalina Salad Dressing
 1 pkg. Onion Soup Mix
 1 jar (10 oz.) Apricot Preserves
 1½ lbs. chicken pieces
 Salt and Pepper, to taste

For immediate cooking, preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place all ingredients into a large baking dish, turn chicken to coat. Bake until chicken juices run clear (45 to 60 minutes for pieces, or 20 to 30 minutes for breasts).

Write instructions on bag. Thaw overnight in refrigerator. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Dump contents of bag into a large baking dish and bake until the juices run clear (45 to 60 minutes for pieces, or 20 to 30 minutes for breasts).

To freeze, place all ingredients into a 1 gallon freezer bag. Lay flat in freezer.

Pepper-Lime "Dump" Chicken

Zest of one lime
 1 clove garlic, minced
 ¼ cup lime juice
 1 teaspoon pepper
 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
 1 teaspoon basil
 ¼ teaspoon salt
 1½ lbs. chicken pieces

For immediate cooking, preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place all ingredients into large baking dish, turn chicken to coat. Bake until chicken

reaches 165 degrees on meat thermometer (45 to 60 minutes for chicken pieces or 20 to 30 minutes for chicken breasts).

Write instructions on bag. Thaw overnight in refrigerator. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Dump contents of bag into a large baking dish and bake until the juices run clear (45 to 60 minutes for pieces, or 20 to 30 minutes for breasts).

To freeze, place all ingredients into a 1 gallon freezer bag. Lay flat in freezer.

Creole "Dump" Chicken

1 tablespoon olive oil
 ¼ cup chopped onion
 ¼ cup chopped bell pepper
 1 clove garlic, minced
 1 can (14 oz.) diced tomatoes
 2 teaspoons Worcestershire Sauce
 2 teaspoons red wine vinegar
 ½ teaspoon dried basil
 ¼ teaspoon salt
 ¼ teaspoon pepper
 ¼ teaspoon Tabasco Sauce
 1½ lbs. chicken pieces

For immediate cooking, preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place all ingredients into large baking dish, turn chicken to coat. Bake until chicken juices run clear (45 to 60 minutes for chicken pieces or 20 to 30 minutes for chicken breasts).

Write instructions on bag. Thaw overnight in refrigerator. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Dump contents of bag into a large baking dish and bake until chicken reaches 165 degrees with meat thermometer (45 to 60 minutes for pieces, or 20 to 30 minutes for breasts).

To freeze, place all ingredients into a 1 gallon freezer bag. Lay flat in freezer.

Pork Recipes for Slow Cooker

Salsa Verde Pork

2 lbs. boneless pork loin
Salt and Pepper, to taste
¾ cup diced onion
2 cans (4 oz. ea.) diced green chiles
2 tablespoons chopped jalapeno
1 can (10 oz.) diced tomatoes and green chiles
½ cup chicken broth
1 tablespoon cumin
½ teaspoon garlic powder
Serve with rice, if desired

Write instructions on bag. When you are ready to prepare your meal, thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Add package contents to slow cooker. Cook on HIGH 4 to 5 hours or LOW 7 to 8 hours.

To freeze, place all ingredients in gallon freezer bag and freeze

Ranch Pork Chops

1 pkg. (1 oz.) Ranch Dressing Mix
6 boneless pork chops, ½ inch thick
1 can (10½ oz.) cream of mushroom or chicken soup
½ cup milk

Write instructions on bag. When you are ready to prepare your meal, thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Add package contents to slow cooker. Cook on HIGH 4 to 5 hours or LOW 7 to 8 hours.

To freeze, place the pork chops and Ranch Dressing Mix, mix mushroom soup and milk and pour in 1 gallon freezer bag. Lay flat in freezer.

Spicy Dr. Pepper Shredded Pork

3 to 5 lb. pork shoulder roast
1 onion, sliced
2 tablespoons brown sugar
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
1 can (7 oz.) chipotle peppers in adobo sauce
2 cans (12 oz. ea.) Dr. Pepper, Coke or Root Beer *Add when cooking
Serve with flour tortillas and any desired condiments *

Write instructions on bag. When you are ready to prepare your meal, thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Add package contents to slow cooker. Cook on LOW 8 to 10 hours or until meat easily pulls apart with a fork. Shred meat and serve with flour tortillas.

To freeze, place all ingredients, except soda, in a 1 gallon freezer bag and freeze. (Soda could be added but probably won't fit.)

Pulled Pork Sandwiches

3 lb. boneless pork should roast
1 tablespoon paprika
1 tablespoon pepper
1 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon brown sugar
1 cup apple cider vinegar
¾ cup ketchup
2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
12 rolls or hamburger buns *When Serving Cole Slaw, if desired *

Write instructions on bag. When you are ready to prepare your meal, thaw overnight in the refrigerator. Add package contents to slow cooker. Cook on HIGH 4 to 5 hours or LOW 8 to 9 hours. Remove pork and shred. Add back to the juices.

To freeze, combine all ingredients in 1 gallon freezer bag, except buns and cole slaw. Lay flat in freezer.

"Dump" Pork for Oven

Sweet & Spicy "Dump" Pork

1 pkg. Taco Seasoning Mix
1 jar (8 oz.) apricot jam
1 jar (12 oz.) salsa
1 ½ pounds pork chops or loin, cut
into 1 inch pieces

For immediate cooking, preheat oven to 350. Place all ingredients into a large baking dish, turn pork to coat. Bake until center of pork pieces reaches 145 degrees on meat thermometer, 20 to 30 minutes.

Write instructions on bag. Thaw overnight in freezer. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Dump contents of bag into a large baking dish and bake until center of pork pieces reaches 145 degrees, 20 to 30 minutes.

To freeze, place all ingredients into a 1 gallon freezer bag. Lay flat in freezer.

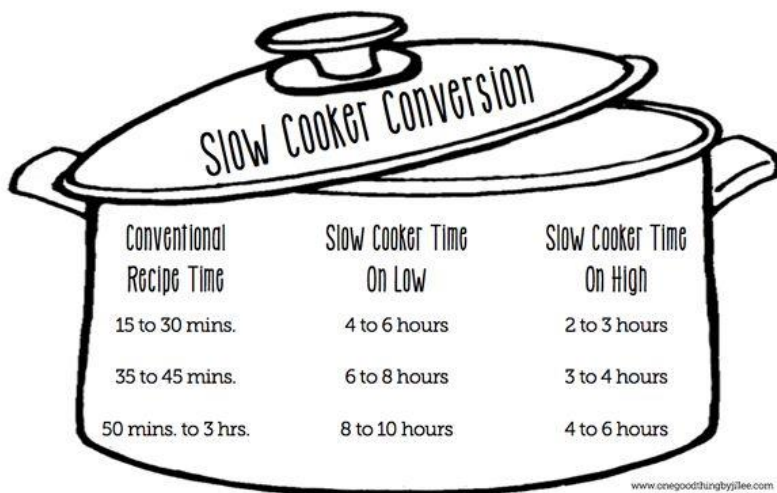
Orange Glazed Pork Chops

1 cup orange marmalade
¼ cup Dijon mustard
¼ cup honey
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons soy sauce
1 tablespoon dried, minced onion
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon seasoned salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
8 pork chops

Write instructions on bag. Thaw overnight in refrigerator. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place pork chops into a shallow baking dish and bake 20 to 25 minutes, turning once. Remove from oven when center of pork chops reached 145 degrees on meat thermometer.

To freeze, in a medium bowl, whisk together marmalade, mustard, honey, olive oil, soy sauce, onion, minced garlic, salt and pepper. Poke each pork chops several times with a fork. Pour marinade mixture into two 1 gallon freezer bags. Place four pork chops into each bag. Marinate for 30 minutes or freeze until needed.

Remember, always freeze in serving sizes that fit your family.



Raw food that has been frozen, thawed properly and cooked may be frozen again, like packages of shredded meat, etc.

DINNER MENU

DINNER MENU		GROCERY LIST
SUNDAY	DATE: / /	
MAIN DISH:		
SIDES:		
MONDAY	DATE: / /	
MAIN DISH:		
SIDES:		
TUESDAY	DATE: / /	
MAIN DISH:		
SIDES:		
WEDNESDAY	DATE: / /	
MAIN DISH:		
SIDES:		
THURSDAY	DATE: / /	
MAIN DISH:		
SIDES:		
FRIDAY	DATE: / /	
MAIN DISH:		
SIDES:		
SATURDAY	DATE: / /	
MAIN DISH:		
SIDES:		

Miscellaneous Freezer Friendly Recipes

Southwestern Egg Casserole

10 eggs or 20 egg whites
 1/2 cup flour
 1 teaspoon baking powder
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 3 cups (12 ozs.) shredded Monterey Jack cheese
 2 cups (16 ozs.) small-curd cottage cheese
 1/2 cup melted butter
 1 can (7 ozs.) chopped mild green chiles
 1 cup salsa, if desired when serving.

In a medium bowl, beat the eggs with a wire whisk. In a separate bowl, combine the flour, baking powder and salt; stir the eggs into the dry ingredients (the batter will be lumpy). Add the cheeses, butter and chiles. Pour into a 13 x 9 x 2-inch baking dish or two 8 x 8 x 2-inch baking dishes that have been treated with nonstick cooking spray.

Write instructions on label. To serve, thaw egg mixture. Bake, uncovered, in preheated 350 degree oven for 30 to 40 minutes, or until knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Let stand for 5 minutes before cutting. Serve with your favorite salsa if desired. Makes 10 servings.

To freeze, cover with heavy duty aluminum foil or lid; label and freeze.

Homemade Freezer Biscuits

4 cups flour
 2 tablespoons baking powder

1 teaspoon salt
 1 cup shortening or butter
 1¾ cup milk

Mix dry ingredients together. Add in the shortening or butter and mix until crumbly. (You can use a big mixer or food processor to save time and effort). Add in the milk and mix until a ball forms. Roll out onto a floured surface and cut into biscuits.

Write instructions on bag. To bake: Pull the desired number of biscuits out. Bake at 450 degrees for 8 to 12 minutes. Makes 24 biscuits.

To freeze, freeze on a cook sheet for 1 to 2 hours. Then remove and place in an airtight freezer bag.

Breakfast Burritos

1/4 cup butter
 1/3 cup chopped onion
 1/3 chopped green pepper
 18 eggs
 1/2 cup milk
 1 cup chopped ham or bacon
 1 teaspoon salt
 1/2 teaspoon pepper
 2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese
 10 flour tortillas

Sauté onions and green pepper in butter. Beat eggs and milk together and pour into the skillet with onions and peppers. Add ham, salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until eggs are set. Mix in cheese and let melt. Scoop ½ cup egg mixture onto tortillas. Fold ends under and roll up. Freeze or put all burritos in a baking dish, top with extra cheese and bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes or until heated through. Serve with salsa. **To freeze,** wrap burritos in wax paper. Seal tightly and place in freezer bags. When bag is full, remove all air and seal. Freeze. To serve heat in microwave. Serve with salsa.

Breakfast Burrito Bites

8 eggs
 ¼ cup milk
 Cheddar cheese, grated
 3 flour tortillas
 Salt and pepper, to taste
 Topping Ideas: spinach, bacon, ham, red peppers, sausage, mushrooms, hash browns, onion, tomatoes, basil, zucchini etc.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cut tortillas into quarters. Grease muffin pan and press a tortilla quarter into each spot, trying to press the tortilla into the bottom to create a nice little cup. Break eggs into a large bowl and add ¼ cup milk; whisk well. Salt and pepper, to taste. Sprinkle each tortilla cup with your favorite toppings. Pour egg mixture over the toppings. Sprinkle cheese over each cup. Bake covered with foil, for 25 minutes or until egg is cooked through. Uncover the last few minutes to make the tortilla edges crispy.

To freeze, set them upright in a single layer in a gallon freezer bag and freeze. To eat, just remove desired amount from the bag, place on a plate and pop in the microwave.

Pizza Dough

2 cups warm water
 2 tablespoons active dry yeast
 2 teaspoons sugar
 2 teaspoons salt
 4 tablespoons oil
 5 cup flour

Pour the warm water into a bowl and sprinkle with yeast over it. Stir to dissolve. Add the remaining ingredients and mix. Dump onto a floured surface and knead dough for two to five minutes until smooth and no longer sticky.

Write instructions on bag. To bake: Place frozen dough in a greased bowl and thaw at room temperature for at least 3 to 4 hours. Roll out and shape onto a greased pizza pan. Add pizza toppings of your choice. Bake at 450 degrees for around 10 minutes, until the crust is crispy and lightly browned.

To freeze, cut lump of dough in half and place each half in an airtight freezer bag.

Chicken Salsa Pockets

1 tablespoon active dry yeast
 1 cup warm water
 1 teaspoon sugar
 1 teaspoon salt
 2 tablespoons oil
 2½ cups flour
 ½ cup salsa
 1½ cups shredded cheese
 1 to 2 cups baked chicken, chopped or shredded

Mix yeast into warm water until dissolved. Add sugar, salt, oil and flour. Mix well and dump onto a floured surface and knead for 3 to 5 minutes, until a soft dough forms. Divide dough into 8 to 10 pieces. Roll pieces into balls. Flatten balls into circles with rolling pin. Dollop a spoonful of salsa onto dough circle; sprinkle with cheese and chicken. Fold over and seal tightly. Bake on a greased cookie sheet at 450 degrees for 10 to 15 minutes until browned.

Write instructions on bag. Remove desired number of pockets from freezer and warm them individually in the microwave for about two minutes or until heated through. Or, warm on a cookie sheet in a preheated 350 degree oven for 20 minutes, or until heated through. Makes 8 to 10 pockets.

To freeze, cool completely and store in an airtight freezer bag for up to 2 to 3 months.

Make-Ahead Mini Chicken Pot Pies

1 3/4 lbs. boneless, skinless chicken breasts
 Salt and Pepper
 1 tablespoon canola oil
 1 carton (48 oz.) chicken broth
 2 tablespoons butter
 1 1/3 cup sliced carrots
 1 1/3 cups finely diced celery
 1 bunch green onions, sliced
 1/2 cup flour
 1/4 cup milk
 1 1/2 cups frozen green peas
 1 pkg. (14 oz. 2 crust size) refrigerated pie crust
 Small foil loaf pans

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large Dutch oven over medium heat. Rinse the chicken under cold water and pat dry with paper towels. Season the chicken with salt and pepper. Brown the chicken on both sides. Add the broth and bring to a boil. Cover and simmer over medium-low heat for 8 minutes. Remove the chicken to a plate and set aside. Pour the broth into a large bowl and set aside. Melt butter in the empty Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the carrots, celery and green onion. Stir occasionally and cook until lightly browned. Add the flour to the vegetables and whisk for 1 minute. Add the broth and milk and whisk until it thickens, about 5 minutes or so. Set the sauce aside to cool. Using a fork shred the chicken into bite sized pieces. Add the chicken to the sauce, season with salt and pepper and mix well. Cover and refrigerate until completely cooled.

Remove the 2 wrapped pie crust rolls from the box. Let the wrapped crust rolls sit out on the counter for 15 minutes or so. Unwrap one pie crust; unroll it on a flour dusted counter. Turn an empty mini loaf pan over on the pie dough and cut around

it 3 times to get 3 pie crusts. Repeat with the second pie dough. Cut 3 steam vents in each crust.

Write instruction on label of each chicken pot pie. Tape cooking directions on top. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Unwrap frozen pot pie and arrange on rimmed baking sheet. Cover with foil and bake 40 minutes. Uncover and bake until crusts are golden brown, about 35 minutes. Let pot pies rest 10 minutes before serving.

To freeze, remove the vegetable/sauce mixture from the refrigerator. Mix in the frozen peas. Spoon the mixture into 6 mini loaf tins evenly. Top each with a pie crust. Wrap well in plastic wrap and aluminum foil.

Swiss Cheese Chicken

4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
 6 slices Swiss cheese (or Pepper Jack)
 1 can (10¾ oz.) cream of chicken soup
 ¼ cup milk
 Stuffing Mix (about ½ box)
 ¼ cup butter, melted

Cover bottom of 11½ x7½ inch pan with chicken. Lay cheese slices over chicken. Mix soup and milk; pour over chicken. Top with ½ bag or more of stuffing mix. Drizzle butter on top. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 to 60 minutes.

Write instructions on label. When you are ready to cook, let it thaw in refrigerator overnight. Then top with stuffing and butter; bake.

To freeze, after pouring soup mixture over chicken prepare for freezing.

Pecan-Crusted Chicken Strips

- 2 pounds, boneless, skinless chicken breast halves
- 2/3 cup honey
- 1/3 cup spicy brown mustard
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 cup panko bread crumbs
- 1/2 cup pecans, finely ground
- 2 one gallon freezer bags (1 labeled and 1 for chicken) 1 one quart freezer bag

Write instructions on bag.

Completely thaw in the refrigerator overnight. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Shake to combine the panko and pecans; then empty into a plate. Let excess marinade drip off each piece of chicken, then roll in crumbs and place on a greased baking sheet. Bake for 30 minutes, or until chicken pulls apart easily and crust is golden brown.

To freeze, trim chicken and cut each half breast lengthwise into three strips. Divide chicken evenly into the unlabeled gallon freezer bag. Whisk together honey, mustard, oil, salt, garlic and pepper in a medium bowl. Divide the sauce evenly over the chicken. Squeeze air out and seal the bags. Into 1 quart bag, add panko bread crumbs and pecans; seal. Place bag of chicken and bag of panko mixture into labeled gallon bag. Seal, lay flat and freeze.

There is a restaurant in Las Cruces that has Pecan Encrusted chicken strips, green chile strips that they serve separately or on salads and hamburgers YUMMY! when you try these out, I bet you will want to make a bigger batch!

Beef Green Chile Taco Casserole

- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 can (4 oz.) diced green chiles
- 1 can (10¾ oz.) cream of mushroom soup
- 1 soup can milk
- 1 can (4 oz.) chopped olives
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 cups sour cream
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 1 dozen corn tortillas
- 1½ cups shredded Monterrey Jack cheese
- 1/2 cup shredded Cheddar cheese

Brown meat and onion together. Drain. Combine chiles, soup, milk, olives, garlic, sour cream, salt and pepper. Alternate tortillas, sauce, meat and cheese in a 9 x 13 inch baking dish. Top with cheese and bake in a preheated oven at 350 degrees for 1 hour. Makes 8 to 10 servings. This will freeze well. If you don't need this much make in two 8 x 8 inch baking dishes. Eat one now and freeze the other for later. Thaw overnight before cooking. Label.

Freezer Inventory

Year: 2018

PREPARED MEALS			
Dinner: El Frito Manil	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chicken Pot Pie	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kushners	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taco Meat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Soup	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
London Broil (in marinade)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chili (red)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chili (white)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
MEATS & SEAFOOD		SNACKS & TREATS	
Chicken (boneless/skinless)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chocolate Chip Cookies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chicken (cooked/stranded)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ice Cream	<input type="checkbox"/>
Steak Beef	<input type="checkbox"/>	Coffee Cake	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ground Turkey	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Pork Roast	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Meatballs	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Bacon	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Roast Sitak	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
BREAD & PASTRIES		FRUITS & VEGETABLES	
Garlic Toast	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bananas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cinnamon Rolls	<input type="checkbox"/>	Strawberries	<input type="checkbox"/>
Banana Bread	<input type="checkbox"/>	Smoothie Mix	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pancakes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Yogurt Mix	<input type="checkbox"/>
Waffles	<input type="checkbox"/>	Peppers (chopped)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pizza Dough	<input type="checkbox"/>	Onions (chopped)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

Taco Pie

1½ lbs. ground beef
 1 cup salsa
 1 pkg. taco seasoning
 1/3 cup water
 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
 1 can (15 oz.) black beans, drained and rinsed
 1 can (11 oz.) whole kernel corn, drained
 2 pkg. (8½ oz. ea.) cornbread mix, prepared

Write instructions on the label.

Thaw overnight in the refrigerator before baking. Bake 25 to 30 minutes at 400 degrees, until cornbread is done.

To freeze, cook and drain ground beef. Add salsa, taco seasoning and water. Simmer on low for 5 minutes. Transfer to 9 x 13 inch pan and top evenly with cheese. Top with black beans and corn. Prepare the cornbread mix according to package directions. Spread evenly over the beans and corn. Bake 25 to 30 minutes at 400 degrees, until cornbread is done. This freezes well and can be divided into two 8 x 8-inch dishes.

Shepherd's Pie

3 cups diced potatoes
 4 tablespoons butter
 ½ cup whole milk
 Salt and pepper, to taste
 1 lb. ground beef
 1 onion, chopped
 1 can (10¾ oz.) cream of mushroom soup
 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
 1 pkg. (16 oz.) frozen mixed vegetables
 2 cups shredded Cheddar Cheese

Place potatoes in a large pot, covered with water and bring to a boil. Cook until fork tender. Cook ground beef

and onion; drain. Mix together cooked beef, cream of mushroom soup and frozen mixed vegetables. Pour into an 8 x 8 inch baking pan. Drain potatoes and mash with butter, milk, salt and pepper until they reach desired consistency. Gently spoon over meat mixture; sprinkle cheese over top. Bake at 350 degrees for about 30 minutes, or until heated through and potatoes are lightly browned.

Write instructions on label. Thaw overnight in refrigerator, bake at 450 degrees for 3 minutes or until heated through and lightly browned.

To freeze, prepare as directed above but do not bake. Cool pie if needed. Cover tightly with foil, label and freeze.

Apple Crisp

2 cups firmly packed brown sugar
 2 cups flour
 1 cup old fashioned oats
 ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
 1 cup butter, melted
 2½ cups sliced apples

Combine the sugar, flour, oats, cinnamon and nutmeg. Add butter and mix until crumbly. Place apples in a greased 8 x 8 inch pan. Pour toppings over apples. Bake in a 350 degree oven for 30 minutes.

To freeze, wrapped unbaked pie, label and freeze. Label. Frozen pie could be baked by adding additional time.

Freeze unbaked muffins, cakes, pies and cookie dough. Take out and bake as usual adding additional time. Fresh from the oven baked goods!

Freezer Skillet Dinners

Cheeseburger Skillet Dinner

6 oz. (1/2 box) rotini, penne or rigatoni
 Olive oil
 1/2 pound ground beef
 1 can (14 oz.) diced tomatoes
 1 tablespoon butter
 1 tablespoon flour
 1 cup milk
 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese

Write instructions on bag. Dump frozen contents of bag into a skillet over medium heat. Cover for 1 to 2 minutes, stir. Cover again and continue to cook, stirring until sauce cubes are completely melted and everything is heated through.

To freeze, prepare pasta according to box directions. Cook to al dente stage. Drain, cool. Coat with a small amount of olive oil before freezing to help with sticking. When cool, scatter over a large cookie sheet covered in wax paper; freeze. In a skillet, brown the ground beef. Drain and cool. When cool, scatter all over a large plate and set in the freezer. Pour tomatoes into an ice cube tray, silicone works best.

In a skillet, melt the butter. Stir in the flour and cook, stirring until thickened and bubbly. Gradually whisk in the milk. Cook, stirring, until thick and bubbly. Remove from heat and stir in the cheese; add salt and pepper, to taste. Spoon one or two tablespoons of sauce into ice cube trays. Only fill about half full. Cover with plastic wrap and freeze for several hours, until completely firm. When everything is well-frozen, place contents together in a gallon freezer bag.

Chicken Linguini Skillet Dinner

1 box (12 oz.) whole grain linguini
 Olive oil
 2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cooked and cubed
 Red, green and yellow bell peppers, sliced
 1 cup tomato sauce
 1/2 cup Ricotta cheese
 1/4 cup half and half

Write instructions on bag. Pour contents of bag into a skillet over medium heat. Cover and cook for 3 minutes. Stir and continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until sauce is melted and everything is heated.

To freeze, prepare pasta according to package directions until al dente. Toss with a little olive oil; set aside to cool. Mix tomato sauce, ricotta cheese and half and half in saucepan and bring to boil; cool. Place cooked, cubed chicken in freezer bag and freeze. When sauce mixture is cooled, pour into ice cube tray and freeze. When pasta is cooled, gather a forkful of noodles and twirl into little "nests" on a cookie sheet lined with parchment or wax paper. Place in freezer. Also freeze pepper slices individually on cookie sheet or use previously frozen sliced peppers. After flash freezing ingredients, place all in a gallon freezer bag.

This method of "Skillet Meals in A Bag" is convenient like the more expensive ones in the supermarket but not as high in sodium. I am sure you can come up with some other combinations on your own.

I hope that this cooking school and booklet has given you new ideas to try as well as reminding you of old ones too. Everyone has their own cooking style and these ideas can be adapted to your own.

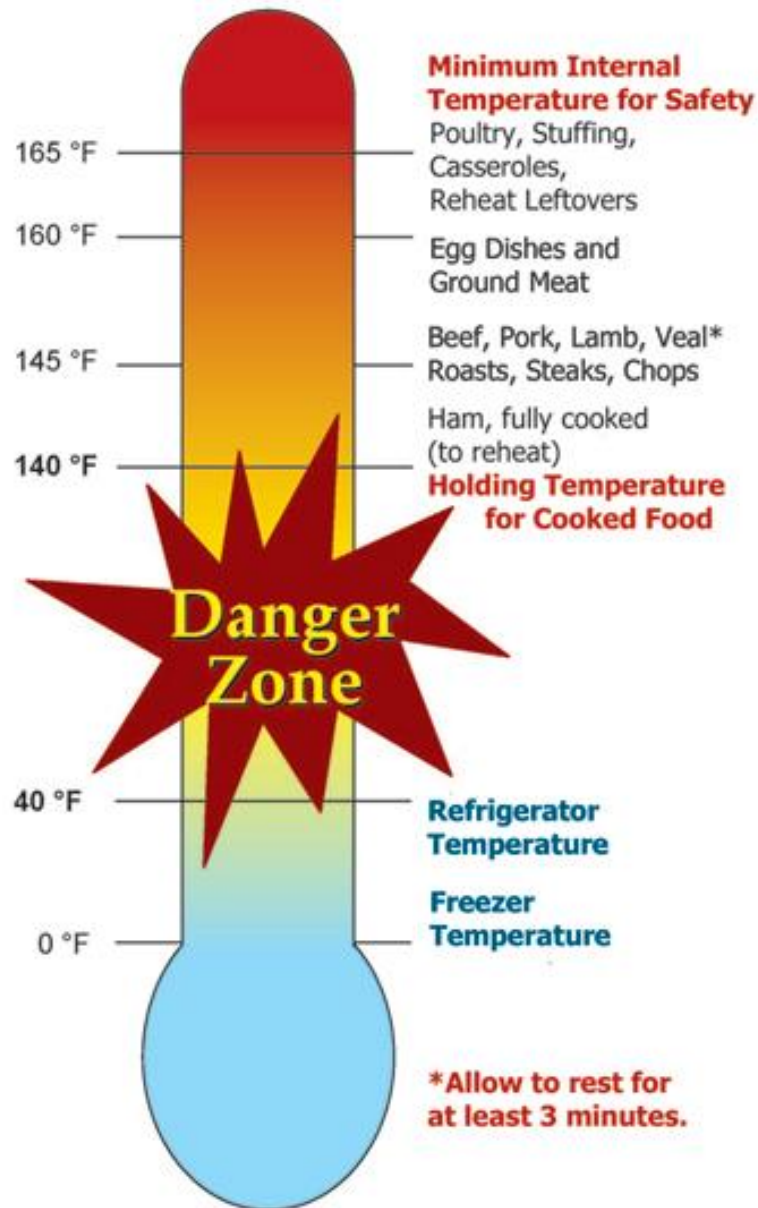
Many of these recipes were adapted from Pinterest.com. You need to remember that not all recipes and information you find on the Internet are researched based. Therefore you should be careful and follow food safety rules that are USDA recommended. On my personal Pinterest account (Connie Moyers) I have a board that is "Simply Prepared Meals and Menus". You are welcome to scan through these. I was very selective in picking the ones I used for this booklet and adapted them to my own style and format, adding food safety information.

Other recipe booklets that I have created with quick and easy recipes to fit into your menu plans are available on our county website

rooseveltextension.nmsu.edu

Fast and Fabulous Recipes
Homestyle in a Hurry
No Mess No Fuss Meals
Speedy Suppers
Somewhat Homemade

Enjoy!
Connie



2015



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"IF YOU SEE SOMETHING, SAY SOMETHING!"

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