



Enjoy More Dry Beans

Article written by Ann Fenton, (ann.fenton@unl.edu), Extension Educator

We know dry beans are good for us, but many people don't realize how delicious they taste! Beans are an inexpensive MyPlate protein option that can boost the flavor of family meals. Examples of dry beans include kidney, black, pinto and garbanzo. Dry beans are available both in the dry form in sealed bags and precooked in cans. If you are looking for quick, canned beans should be at the top of your list.

Want a quick meal but don't have a lot of time? This tasty quesadilla is flavorful without overwhelming the taste buds.

Easy Black Bean and Cheese Quesadillas

- 1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
 - ½ small onion, scrubbed with a vegetable brush under running water and diced
 - 1 cup low-sodium canned black beans, (or any type of canned dried bean), drained
 - ¼ teaspoon seasoned salt
 - ½ cup Monterey Jack cheese, shredded
 - 4 (8-inch) whole wheat tortillas
1. Wash hands with soap and water. Heat heavy skillet over medium heat. Add oil and sauté onion and seasoned salt until onion is tender.
 2. Add beans and heat through, about 2-3 minutes.
 3. To make quesadilla, spray non-stick spray in a heavy skillet. Add one tortilla. Spread with 2 tablespoons cheese, ½ of bean mixture then 2 more tablespoons of cheese.
 4. Top with second tortilla. When cheese is melted and bottom of tortilla is golden, flip to other side. Brown for 1 to 2 minutes. Remove to cutting board or plate. Cut into wedges and serve. Repeat with remaining ingredients.



Recipe makes four servings. Each serving contains 268 calories, 12 g fat, 30 g carbohydrate, 9 g fiber and 507 mg sodium.

Sources:

1. Beans and Peas are Unique Foods. United States Department of Agriculture: <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/eathealthy/vegetables/vegetables-beans-and-peas>
2. Serve More Dry Beans and Peas, United States Department of Agriculture: http://permanent.access.gpo.gov/gpo55572/jtf_beans.pdf



For more information check out Food Fun for Young Children at:

<http://go.unl.edu/youngchildren>

Here are a few ideas for adding more beans to family meals:

- Add beans and peas to your children's favorite pasta dishes, tacos, casseroles, stews, and side dishes.
- Make "Mexican Pizza" by topping whole-wheat pita bread with refried beans, tomato salsa, spinach, and shredded low-fat cheese.
- Make food fun. Add kidney and pinto beans in chili and serve it in a baked sweet potato "chili boat."
- Let children mash beans in a plastic baggie, and then make a "Smashed Bean Burrito" (using a whole-grain tortilla, spinach, and their favorite veggies).
- Bean dip or hummus – Purée garbanzo beans and serve with veggie sticks.