



Wellness Wakeup Call

Newsletter for Grades 6-12

Month #4: Legumes and Foods from Around the World

Welcome to Wellness Wakeup Call! This newsletter contains messages to be read each morning in school over the loud speaker for morning announcements. This program is an easy way to help fulfill the requirements of nutrition education goals for the federally mandated Local Wellness Policies. If there are more messages than school days in the month, please combine a few so that you will be able to read them all. New messages are available on our website each month, and are generally ready by the 25th. We encourage you to notify parents about this program through the district or PTA/PTO newsletters to learn what their children are learning, and so they can try a healthy recipe! This document is available as PDF files at www.healthylunches.org, and you are welcome to post these files on the district website.

- Each day, start the message with: **"Good morning, this is your Wellness Wakeup Call!"**
- Then read the message for the day. End each message with **"Enjoy your day, the healthy way!"**

1. It is fun to try foods that are commonly eaten in another region but are new to you. Eating at a restaurant that serves ethnic food, or visiting the home of a friend whose family comes from another country, can give you a taste of traveling far away.
2. Young people in different parts of the world have healthy diets that provide all the necessary protein, vitamins and minerals, yet the foods that are eaten can be completely different from those in another part of the world.
3. Legumes, also known as beans, peas and lentils, are special because they are high in protein and can help us last for a long time between meals without getting hungry. They contain no cholesterol, very little fat, and plenty of fiber. Legumes grow in pods that have a string along one side, like a little zipper.
4. People from Mexico, Spain, and South America have discovered delicious and nutritious ways to combine beans, rice, and colorful vegetables such as tomatoes, avocado, and lettuce in wrappers made from wheat or corn. We call these burritos or tacos.
5. How many types of beans can you think of that are used in Mexican and Spanish dishes? Black beans, pinto beans, kidney beans, lima beans, and green beans are five different types.
6. Spanish and Mexican food can be spicy because chili peppers are used. Some chili peppers are very hot; some are not. If we prefer mild tastes, we can add just a little bit of chili pepper.
7. Mexican meals often start with a soup. Soups can be made from onions, garlic, beans, tomatoes, and perhaps more vegetables than you can list, making these soups valuable sources of vitamins and protein. Probably every soup that has ever been made tastes slightly different from any other soup.
8. Soups are a wonderful way to try flavors from other lands! Indian dahl ("DOLL"), Italian minestrone ("mirrehsTRONEE"), Spanish gazpacho ("gahsPAcho"), and Japanese miso ("MEEso") soups are very popular and delicious.
9. People who come from Russia and Eastern Europe eat a soup called Borscht that is made from beets. They also eat a grain called buckwheat. When these are cooking in a home or restaurant, the kitchen is filled with wonderful aromas.
10. People who come to America from Italy know how to prepare tasty dishes using tomato, eggplant, olives, green or red peppers, and white beans. The Mediterranean diet is based on nutritious foods like these and is known to be very good for your heart.
11. In Italy, people eat pasta that is made from wheat; it is delicious with sauce made from tomatoes. The herbs basil and oregano give flavor and aroma. Now pasta is available in whole grain varieties, and these are great because they have fiber.
12. In China and other parts of Southeast Asia, people eat rice from a bowl, along with colorful vegetables plus high protein foods such as tofu, made from soybeans. Even small children learn to eat with chopsticks.
13. Chinese restaurants serve some foods that we recognize right away and some tasty foods that we may never have seen. In Chinese diets, calcium comes from greens, tofu, and almonds. Whereas some dishes in Chinese Restaurants are very high in fat and sodium, it is possible to make very healthy Chinese food.
14. In Africa, people eat peanuts, which are a very healthful food. Peanuts also are called groundnuts because they grow underground where the plant's roots are. Some people are highly allergic to peanuts, and must take great care to avoid them.
15. Peanuts and the peanut butter that is made from them are excellent sources of protein, iron, B vitamins, and energy. Many brands of peanut butter contain added sugar and oils that are not healthy for us, although some more healthy brands are made simply from peanuts.
16. George Washington Carver was an American man, born in Missouri, who taught people excellent ways to use healthful foods such as peanuts, sweet potatoes, soybeans, and pecans.
17. Some favorite and nutritious foods in the Southern United States are sweet potatoes, corn, collard greens, and black eyed peas. A meal made with these foods provides vitamins, iron, calcium, and protein.
18. Eating the greens that are used in southern cooking is a good way for us to get the calcium that makes our bones strong. Collard greens, turnip greens, mustard greens, kale, and okra, are excellent calcium sources; plus they provide many vitamins.
19. A nori roll is a Japanese sandwich that is easy to eat and very tasty. Specially prepared rice that sticks together is rolled together with strips of tofu and vegetables such as carrot, avocado, radish, and wrapped up with a thin sheet of dried nori, which is a vegetable from the ocean. Sometimes this is also called sushi. Most people think of sushi as raw fish, but actually sushi means vinegared rice. Sushi can be made with short grain brown rice and vegetables, and have no fish at all!
20. A favorite sandwich from the Middle East and Israel is the falafel. Tasty, little patties made from fava beans or chickpeas, chopped vegetables such as lettuce, and sauces made from sesame seeds or tomatoes are placed in a pita bread pocket. Usually falafels are deep fried, which is not healthy, but falafels can be baked and are just as delicious. Falafels give us protein, B vitamins, and iron.
21. In Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, and Eastern Europe, people eat bread that is dark, is much heavier than white bread and is made from rye and wheat flours. The young people grow healthy and strong because of the protein, iron, and B vitamins in this bread. Next time you go to the store, ask about rye or pumpnickel ("PUM-pernikel.") bread.
22. Indian food is one of the healthiest and tastiest cuisines in the world. They use special mixtures of spices, such as curry, that not only are delicious but can help protect us from getting sick. In Indian cooking, excellent protein sources are chickpeas, mung beans, and lentils. Often these are cooked with onions and curry to make a thick soup called dahl ("DOLL").

This information and more can be found at www.healthylunches.org.



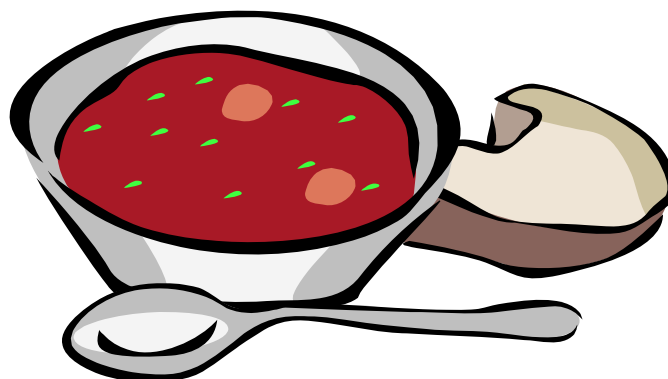
Recipe of the Month

Black Bean Soup

Black beans are favorites in Mexico, Central and South America, and Spain, and are used to make wonderful salads, stews and soups. Vegetable stock can be made from stock cubes or powder or purchased ready-made. Water can be used instead of stock, though your soup will be less flavorful. If you use a little less liquid, this recipe makes a fine stew. Lime juice, added just before serving, gives a bright note.

You will need:

- 1 cup diced carrot
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1/2 onion, diced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp olive oil or other vegetable oil
- 3 cups cooked or canned black beans
- 4 cups vegetable stock or water
- 1/4 cup tomato paste
- 1-1/2 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 2 tsp lime juice
- salt and pepper to taste



What to do:

In a large pot, sauté carrot, celery, onion, and garlic in oil over medium heat for 5 minutes. Stir in beans, stock, tomato paste, cumin, oregano and thyme. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes or until vegetables are cooked. Just before serving, stir in lime juice. Add salt and pepper and adjust the seasoning. (Editor's note: you can also blend the soup using a hand blender so that it is partially or fully pureed.)

Makes 6 cups (4 servings)

Recipe from *The New Becoming Vegetarian* by Vesanto Melina and Brenda Davis (The Book Publishing Company).