



MICHIGAN SOYBEAN PROMOTION COMMITTEE

a new release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 24, 2008

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Fitting Family Meals Into Busy Schedules

For many people, September means back to school and an even busier calendar. As you're juggling multiple schedules, time for a family meal may easily slip away. But that family meal is more important than you may realize.

Research shows that kids who sit down to family meals eat more fruits and vegetables, eat less fat and have higher intakes of calcium, iron, fiber and several vitamins. Family meals encourage communication and bonding. They're a time for adults to model healthy behaviors and families to create positive memories. School-aged children perform better in school and teens engage in less substance abuse when they have more frequent family meals.

"If you're looking to get started with a family mealtime routine, start slow. Try adding one meal a week, and it doesn't have to be dinner. If everyone sits down together with limited distractions, breakfast, lunch or a snack counts, too," says Gretchen Hofing, Michigan State University Extension (MSUE) soyfoods health educator and a registered dietitian based in Lenawee County. "The kind of food doesn't matter -- sandwiches and soup work as well as Sunday dinner fare. Try a meal that is quick to prepare so you have more time together enjoying the food and the company.

"Consider making soyfoods a part of your family meal," she suggests. "Many are quick to prepare or easy to add to a dish. And they have health benefits for everyone, regardless of age. There is a wide variety of soyfoods available, and trying something new could add to the fun and conversation at your meal table."

Soy-based veggie burger crumbles are one of the products that will save you time. This ground meat alternative can go right from the refrigerator or freezer into your recipe without browning or draining of fat. Soy veggie crumbles are cholesterol-free and a good source of high quality, heart-healthy protein.

Try the following recipe, "Soy Veggie Chili," for your next family meal. Have the family work together opening cans or chopping to make the preparation another opportunity to be together. All of the ingredients can be prepped the day ahead and then heated when ready to eat. Look for frozen or already chopped produce for even more time savings. Consider making a double batch and freezing half for a future quick and healthy meal. For another new twist on chili, use black or yellow soybeans for the beans in this recipe.

Purchasing and consuming soyfoods is a great way to support your health and Michigan agriculture. The Michigan Soybean Promotion Committee represents the soybean producers in the state and funds soybean research and educational efforts. For more information on the Michigan Soybean Promotion Committee, visit <http://www.michigansoybean.org>. For information on MSU Extension's nutrition programs, visit <http://www.msue.msu.edu/fcs> and click on "Nutrition."

Look for more soyfood recipes at www.soyfoods.com.

Soy Veggie Chili

- 1 yellow or white onion, coarsely chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, sliced
- 1 teaspoon oil
- 1 15-oz. can of beans (soybeans, red kidney, pink, garbanzo, black or white beans)
- 28 oz. canned crushed tomatoes
- 1 cup water
- 1 green pepper, coarsely chopped
- 3 large carrots, cleaned and sliced
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 2 bay leaves
- 8 oz. canned corn
- 1 bag (12 oz.) frozen veggie burger crumbles
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper (optional)
- 1 teaspoon Tabasco sauce (optional)

Brown onions and garlic in oil (be careful not to overcook the garlic).

Add the remaining ingredients and bring to a boil.

Reduce the heat and simmer for 30 to 40 minutes or until vegetables are done to your liking.

Remove bay leaves before serving.

Makes 6 1½- cup servings.

Source: Adapted from recipe on www.soyconnection.com

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