

P ntry News

March 2021 Issue # 2

We hope you are enjoying *Pantry News*. A newsletter designed with you in mind! You will have the opportunity to try out new recipes using food items that you receive in your bag.

This month we have included **dried blueberries, lentils, and cooked chicken**. Below you'll find some helpful hints on using them and even a few tasty recipes.

This wholesome dinner features hearty lentils, marinara sauce, and spaghetti or any pasta of your choice. It is an easy-to-make well-balanced and fiber rich dinner that is also delicious.

Hearty Spaghetti with Lentils & Marinara

Ingredients:

½ Cup dry lentils, or 1 ½ Cups cooked lentils

1 large garlic clove, peeled but left whole

¼ tsp salt

2 Cups vegetable broth or water

2 Cups marinara/spaghetti sauce

8 ounces pasta

Optional garnishes: grated Parmesan cheese and/or chopped fresh basil



Instructions:

1. To cook the lentils, first pick through the lentils for debris (I once bit into a tiny rock) and then rinse them in a fine-mesh colander. In a small saucepan, combine the lentils, garlic, salt and broth.
2. Bring the mixture to a simmer over medium-high heat, then reduce heat to maintain a gentle simmer. Simmer until the lentils are cooked through and tender, 20 to 35 minutes. Drain the lentils, discard the garlic, and set the pot aside, uncovered.
3. Meanwhile, bring a large pot of salted water to boil. Cook the pasta until al dente, according to the package directions. Drain, then return the pasta to the pot and set it aside.
4. Stir the marinara into the lentils and warm them together over medium heat. Serve pasta topped with warm marinara and lentils, and garnish with Parmesan and/or chopped fresh basil, if you'd like. Serve warm. Leftovers will keep well, covered and refrigerated, for up to 4 days.

Dried Blueberries make an excellent snack and can be used for many of your daily **cooking** and **baking** purposes. Tip: When using dried blueberries for **cooking** or **baking**, soak, covered in hot **water** for 5-10 minutes to rehydrate them. Keep in mind when rehydrating blueberries for a recipe, you'll have to adjust your quantity as a cup of dried berries will rehydrate to about 1 1/3- 1 1/2 cups. **Blueberries** are a great choice since they're high in antioxidants and other nutrients. Dried blueberries can be made into jellies, rehydrated, and used in most recipes. They can be mixed into trail mixes and hot cereals like oatmeal or farina, and can also be added to most baked goods.

Dried figs can simply be eaten, used in a recipe as is, or simmered for several minutes in water or fruit juice to make them plumper and juicier. They can be used as a topping on ice cream, yoghurt or desserts. **Dried figs** can be used interchangeably with prunes, **dried** apricots, and dates in most recipes.

Ziti Chicken Casserole

Ingredients

- 2 cups ziti pasta or any dried pasta of your choice
- 10-12 oz pouch or can chunk chicken (drained if necessary)
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 10 oz can condensed cream of chicken soup
- 1 soup can of water
- Dash of pepper
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese



Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 350 F.
2. In a large pot, cook ziti as directed on package and drain well.
3. Combine all ingredients except Parmesan cheese and spoon into a greased 2-quart casserole dish.
4. Top with Parmesan cheese.
5. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until hot and bubbly.

****For added flavor & nutrition- add in canned, fresh, or frozen vegetables of your choice before baking casserole.***

Wayne County Strong