

## Find Time to Cook Healthful Meals



With the start of fall, everything begins fresh.

Excitement is in the air as schools open and activities begin.

Whether or not you have children at home, you may face the same dilemma as many families.

With work and activities, you may have little time to prepare food.

Sometimes stepping back and thinking about the situation helps. Which of these statements are true of you? Mark with an "X."

- I plan menus and write grocery lists, so I have meal ideas and the food I need.
- I sometimes prepare portions of a meal in advance.
- I sometimes use leftovers as the basis for another meal.
- Other people in my household help with meal preparation and cleanup.
- I focus preparation efforts on one portion of the meal. For example, if the main course is time-consuming, I fix a simple vegetable or salad.
- I assemble equipment, cooking utensils and ingredients before I begin meal preparation.

Think about the items you marked and the ones you did not mark. These are time-saving strategies and some may work for you.

### Plan for Busy Times

Meal planning and advance food preparation can save you time and money. Find a block of time when you can make a few recipes at once and then freeze them for a later date.

### An Example of Planned-overs

Make extra chili on Monday for "planned-over" lunch or dinner on Tuesday or Wednesday. Use the rest of the chili in a different way:

- Top baked potatoes with planned-over chili, grated cheese and low-fat sour cream for an easy meal.
- Make an easy casserole by combining cooked pasta shells with planned-over chili. Add a side salad and you have a meal in minutes.
- Make a quick and easy taco salad by topping lettuce with planned-over chili, diced tomatoes and shredded cheese.

Visit [www.ag.ndsu.edu/foodwise](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/foodwise) for more information.

This program is funded in part by USDA's Food Stamp Program. The Food Stamp Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more contact your county Social Services office or call 1-800-755-2716.

In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, political beliefs or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave. S.W., Washington, DC 20250 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Question: I don't understand what the dates on packages mean. Will I get sick if I eat the food after the "sell by" date?

Food product dates can be confusing. No one can afford to throw away food that is still safe and tasty, so consider the meanings of the dates.

### Sell-by date

Stores should pull items from the shelves if they are not sold by this date. The food is still good for a while if stored properly at home.

### Use-by date

Food is guaranteed to be at high quality until this date. Although the foods are still safe to consume after the date, these items may have lower quality.

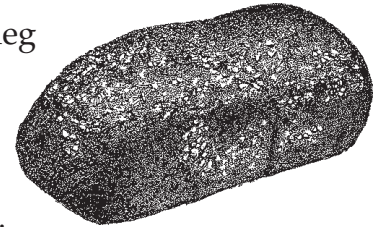
### Expiration date

Consume food or beverage by this date or throw it.

**Note:** Be sure to write the date of purchase on the foods you buy and arrange your cupboards "first in, first out." In other words, place the "oldest" foods in the front so you use them first.

# favorite PUMPKIN BREAD

- 3½ c. flour
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 1½ tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 2 c. brown sugar
- 1 c. canola oil
- 4 eggs
- 2 c. canned pumpkin



1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Spray two loaf pans (9- by 5-inch) with canola baking spray.
2. In a large mixing bowl, combine all ingredients until just blended.
3. Pour batter into pans and bake for about one hour and 15 minutes. Cool on wire racks.

*Makes 24 servings. Each serving has 220 calories, 10 grams (g) fat, 31 g carbohydrate and 4 g protein.*

Source: Recipe courtesy of Sheri Coleman, Northern Canola Growers, [www.northerncanola.com](http://www.northerncanola.com)

## Seasonal Produce Guide for Fall

These fruits and veggies are in season in the fall. "In season" fruits and vegetables usually are at best quality and price.

- |             |                |
|-------------|----------------|
| Apples      | Oranges        |
| Beets       | Pears          |
| Broccoli    | Pumpkin        |
| Carrots     | Sweet potatoes |
| Cauliflower | Winter squash  |
| Grapefruit  |                |



Julie Garden-Robinson, Food and Nutrition Specialist

Contact the local office of the  
NDSU Extension Service  
for more information  
on food and nutrition or  
managing your food dollar.

