Lentil-Beef Soup (Freezer Meal)

INGREDIENTS:
- 2 c. dry lentils (cook according to package directions)*
- 1 quart water
- 4 carrots, finely diced
- 3 ribs celery, diced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 quart tomato juice (low sodium)
- 1/2 Tbsp. dried marjoram
- 1 Tbsp. brown sugar
- 1 pound lean ground beef, browned
- 1/2 c. onion, chopped
- Salt (optional)

*Nutritious:
- Makes 12 (1-cup) servings.
- Each serving has 200 calories, 2.5 grams (g) fat, 18 g protein, 27 g carbohydrate, 6 g fiber and 410 milligrams sodium.

DIRECTIONS:

To freeze:
Label a 1-gallon freezer bag with recipe name, cooking and serving directions. Prepare vegetables as indicated. Brown the beef and onion in a skillet; drain. Let meat-onion mixture cool completely before adding to bag. Place all ingredients in the bag. Press as much air out of the bag as you can before freezing it. Lay flat in the freezer on a tray for easier storage.

To cook:
Place the freezer meal in refrigerator overnight to thaw. Pour contents into a slow cooker along with 1 quart broth or stock. Season with salt to taste. Cook on low eight to 10 hours.