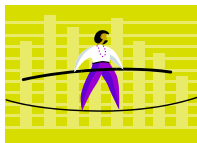
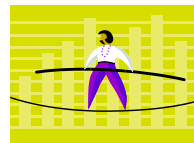


### A Fact About Family Meals

Be sure to bring a clean plate and clean utensils to the grill to collect the food. If you use the same plate that held the raw meat you could be adding some unwanted "secret ingredients" to your meal. Salmonella, E.Coli & other bacteria are unwanted guests at your party and are often spread by cross-contamination.



### Balancing Food, Fun & Fitness



### Summer Meal Planning

Summer brings a whole new set of meal planning challenges. The hot weather, busy schedules and ravenous children that are home all day can make meal planning quite trying. With creative meal planning strategies, summer doesn't have to bust the food budget, toss nutrition to the wind or leave the family chef completely frustrated. Below are some suggestions for simpler, saner, cooler and more nutritious meals.

- Use everything but the oven. Small appliances earn their storage space this time of year. Dust off your slow-cooker, rice cooker, toaster oven, bread machine and microwave. Get out your microwave book and try some of the recipes without heating up the kitchen. A pressure cooker can prepare family favorites in a fraction of the time.
- Enjoy summer's bounty. Make a dinner of locally grown corn, tomatoes and zucchini. Don't forget the fat-free ranch for dipping.
- When you do cook make it count. Firing up the gas grill? Don't stop with just tonight's dinner of barbecued chicken. Add several more pieces of chicken to the grill (hold barbecue sauce). The next night you can shred half the chicken and add it to a chef or cob salad.

#### TO SUBSCRIBE:

It's easy to sign up for Mealttime Solutions. Send an email or call one of the MSU Extension Offices listed at the right side of this page and leave your email address. Feel free to spread the word to your family and friends.



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## SILENCE BUSTERS

Do you have trouble getting more than a “yes” or “no” out of your children at meal time? Here are some conversation starters you can use to get the kids talking.

*What is your favorite summer outdoor activity?*

*If you could go anywhere for summer vacation, where would you go and why?*

*If you could travel with a famous person from the past or present, who would it be and why?*

Keep it on the light side, leaving serious discussion for another time. Turn off the TV, cell phones and iPods and just listen to what each other has to say.

## HALFWAY HOMEMADE

### Creamy Tex-Mex Chicken Spaghetti

Ingredients:

- 1 (16 oz) package spaghetti pasta
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 2 cups chopped cooked chicken
- 1 (16 oz.) jar chunky salsa
- 1 (15 oz.) jar four cheese Alfredo sauce
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 avocados, peeled and chopped (optional)

Bring a large pot of salted water to boil. Cook pasta according to package directions. Combine salsa, onion powder, chicken and Alfredo sauce and bring to a simmer. Drain pasta and add to mixture in skillet. Toss over medium heat for a few minutes. Then serve, sprinkling with Parmesan cheese and topping with avocado.

**Suggestions to this recipe:**

**Change chicken to 2 cups of browned ground beef.**

## QUICK FIXES

### Invent a Salad

Salads are a great side dish for a meal, or great as a meal. Try adding plenty of colors and a variety of food groups to your salads. Not only does it make them tastier, it makes them healthier and it is a great way to use the foods you have on hand.



Choose one or more of the following ingredients from each column. Seasoning and toppings can be added, if desired.

#### *Leafy Vegetables*

Use Plenty:

Artichoke  
Beet greens  
Bok choy  
Brussel sprouts  
Collards  
Cabbage  
Chard  
Dandelion  
Endive  
Escarole  
Garden cress  
Arugula  
Iceberg lettuce  
Kale  
Kohlrabi  
Mustard greens  
Romaine  
Spinach  
Swiss Chard  
Turnip greens  
Watercress

#### *Raw Chopped Vegetables*

As much as you like:

Avocado  
Bell Pepper, (yellow, green or red)  
Bok choy  
Brussels sprout  
Broccoli  
Carrot  
Cauliflower  
Corn  
Cucumber  
Green beans  
Green Onion  
Jicama  
Mushrooms  
Onion  
Olives  
Peas  
Radishes  
Summer squash  
Tomatoes  
Zucchini

#### *Meat/Protein*

1/2 cup

Tuna fish  
Canned Salmon  
Chicken  
Cooked beans  
Hard Cooked Eggs  
Cooked turkey  
Cooked chicken  
Cooked pork  
Canned beans  
Canned meats  
Tofu



#### *Fruit*

1/2 cup

Apple  
Pear  
Mandarin Oranges  
Pineapple  
Strawberries  
Raisins or other dried fruit

#### **TOPPINGS**

(1 to 2 tablespoons)

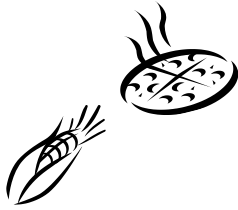
Croutons  
Chinese Noodles  
Sunflower Seeds  
Nuts  
Bacon bits  
Cracker Crumbs  
Cheese, grated, crumbled or cubed

#### **Dressing for Success Tips:**

Once you have your salad, top it with salad dressings that are low calorie, such as vinaigrettes, or use oil & vinegar. Avoid adding too much dressing to your salad by limiting the amount to 2 tablespoons. Or serve the dressing on the side. This keeps the flavors in your salad from being overpowered by the dressing and makes it healthier!



## DOABLE DINNER



Teriyaki Rice Bowl  
 Carrots & Celery Sticks  
 Fresh or Frozen Berries  
 Fat-free or low-fat milk  
 Frozen Yogurt



### Teriyaki Rice Bowl

2 tsp cooking oil	2 cups uncooked quick brown rice
3/4 pound boneless chicken, beef or pork	1— (14-16 oz. ) frozen stir-fry vegetables
1/2 tsp garlic powder	
1/2 cup low-sodium teriyaki or soy sauce	

Heat oil in large non-stick skillet on medium heat. Add your choice of meat and garlic, stir and cook for 5-10 minutes. Add 2 cups water and teriyaki sauce; bring to boil. Stir in rice and return to boil. Reduce heat to low and cover. Simmer for 5 minutes. Stir in frozen vegetables. Heat until vegetables are hot, about 5 minutes. Let stand for 5 minutes. Fluff with fork. You may use leftover cooked meat too.

### Shopping List

- Pork, chicken or beef
- Quick brown rice
- Stir Fry Veggies
- Soy or Teriyaki sauce
- Carrots & celery
- Frozen or fresh berries
- Frozen Yogurt
- Milk

### Suggestions

- This recipe works very well with game meat.
- If brown rice is new to you, you may want to start with a half and half mixture of brown and white rice.
- Try substituting ramen noodles for the rice.
- 1 cup of strawberries has over 100 mg. of vitamin C, almost as much as in a cup of orange juice. They also contain magnesium, potassium and folate—all for only 53 calories.

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