

Cook Wise

FOR FAMILIES

A Selection of Recipes and Tips
to Help You to Cook Wise

INTRODUCTION

This edition of Cook Wise has been created to support The Families Right 2 Healthy Food Project, a collaboration between several organisations in Plymouth (Food Plymouth, Transforming Plymouth Together, Provide Devon and Food is Fun CIC) to offer families support with food over the winter period. Christmas can be a time of huge financial pressure for families, and this year Covid19 has made matters worse.

The alliance has received a grant from the 'Food Power for Generation Covid' (funded by Soccer Aid for UNICEF UK and delivered by Sustain the alliance for better food and farming and Church Action on Poverty) to ensure children and families have access to food during the pandemic crisis.

The aim of this book is to give families a helping hand to cook wisely and to produce meals which are easy, affordable and nutritious for the whole family. All the recipes serve four people unless otherwise stated.

Each recipe has notes below and many of the ingredients can be swapped for what you may have in your cupboard.

Most recipes will need olive oil, or vegetable oil, and salt and pepper to season.

Nutritional information is provided for each recipe.

If you have a long-term health condition, you may have been advised to follow a certain diet as part of your treatment plan. For example, if you have diabetes, irritable bowel syndrome, inflammatory bowel disease, malnutrition, kidney disease, cancer, cystic fibrosis, another chronic lung condition or other medical condition. It is important that you continue to follow the dietary advice you have been given by your medical professional as best as you can in order to keep as healthy as possible.



SHOPPING TIPS

WHAT'S INSIDE? Get to know everything you already have in your cupboards. Try to get into the routine of using the oldest dates first. Stock up on a few herbs and spices, tinned pulses and a variety of stock cubes..

PLAN YOUR MEALS. Invite the family to have an input so everyone has a chance to offer a meal suggestion. Encourage young children to try new foods by introducing reward charts.

WRITE A SHOPPING LIST. Check before you write your list to ensure you don't double or triple up on larger goods.

EAT FIRST! Never go shopping on an empty stomach or you'll be tempted to buy food you don't need.

SAVVY SHOPPING. Don't be tempted with BOGOF offers unless it's on the list. It's only cheaper if you were planning on buying two of the items in the first place! Remember to check the sell-by dates though.

TRY SHOP'S OWN BRAND. Switch from branded foods e.g. Kellogg's, Heinz etc. to shop's own brands. Don't tell the family and see if they notice the difference.

DITCH THE PACKAGING AND SAVE MONEY. Buy fruit and vegetables sold by weight, in smaller quantities. This means you'll have fresher produce and less waste.

TRY FROZEN FRUIT AND VEGETABLES. They come ready to use and are just as good for you as non-frozen food. Frozen peas, for example, are available all year round and are only beaten on taste by freshly picked ones.

BUY SEASONAL PRODUCE. Seasonal fruit and vegetables are usually much cheaper and chances are it's local too, which not only saves you money, but reduces food miles and supports local producers.

BUY CHEAPER CUTS OF MEAT. Ask the butcher for advice on cheaper cuts. These may take a little longer to cook, but the taste and tenderness of the meat is worth the wait. Buy a whole chicken and cut it into regular portions and freeze. Check the price per kilo as sometimes the larger ones work out cheaper.



EASY TOMATO SAUCE

METHOD

- 1 Heat a small amount of olive oil in a pan and add the onion, cook until soft.
- 2 Add the tomatoes, garlic, oregano, vinegar and sugar.
- 3 Season to taste.
- 4 Bring to nearly boiling then turn to a simmer for 10 minutes stirring occasionally.
- 5 Serve on a bed of pasta.

NUTRITION

- Adding any other veg to this only adds to the **vitamins** and **minerals** in this sauce, however chopped tomatoes and onions alone are great sources of **vitamin C**.
- The part of the tomato that gives it its red colour is **lycopene**, which is an **antioxidant** that protects our cells from damage.
- This sauce with 'hidden' goodness is great to ensure even the fussiest eaters get their essential **vitamins**.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tin of chopped tomatoes
- 1 small onion peeled and chopped finely
- 1 tsp Oregano
- 1 tsp sugar
- Splash of balsamic vinegar, optional
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Clove of garlic peeled and crushed or finely chopped

NOTES

- You can add any other veg after cooking the onions, such as peppers, courgette or sweetcorn.
- Use as a sauce for homemade pizzas or add meat/Quorn for a quick bolognese.



QUICK KEDGEREE

METHOD

1 Heat a little oil in the pan and add the haddock and the bay leaves. Cook for 8-10 minutes until it is just done and flakes easily. Remove the fish and set aside.

2 Add the onion to the pan and cook gently until well softened. Add the curry powder and cook for 3 minutes, stirring constantly. Add the rice, peas, parsley and a few twists of ground black pepper. Cook gently until rice is hot, then add the cream.

3 Flake the fish into chunky pieces, check for bones. Add these and the lemon juice to the pan. Cook for 1-2 minutes. Cut the eggs into quarters and place them on the rice. Cover the pan with a lid and heat through for 2-3 minutes or until the eggs are warm, then serve.

NUTRITION

- It is advised that we eat 2 portions of fish per week for its **omega 3**, which can help to keep your heart healthy.
- Haddock is a white fish and so a lower saturated fat choice.
- Eggs are a great source of **protein** and **vitamin D**, which keeps bones, teeth and muscles strong.

INGREDIENTS

- 300g smoked haddock fillet, cut in half
- 2 bay leaves
- 200g cooked basmati rice
- 4 hard-boiled eggs, peeled
- 100g frozen or tinned peas
- 40g butter
- 1 tbsp oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 heaped tbsp medium curry powder
- 3 tbsp double cream
- 3 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
- ½ lemon, juiced

NOTES

- You can swap the haddock for any tinned fish. If so, add it with the cream.
- You can use milk if you don't have cream.
- Long grain rice can be used, but the end result will be stickier.



BEANY TORTILLAS

METHOD

- 1 Pre-heat oven to 190°C / 170°C Fan / Gas mark 5
- 2 Heat a splash of oil in a pan, add peppers and fry gently on low heat for 5 minutes.
- 3 Add tomatoes, beans, sweetcorn, chilli and most of herbs. Bring to boil and then simmer uncovered for 8-10 minutes. The mixture will thicken.
- 4 Place one tortilla on a baking tray. Divide bean mixture into 2 portions, and also the grated cheese. Put one portion onto the tortilla, spread around the tortilla leaving 1cm clear on all edges, sprinkle some of the cheese onto the bean mixture, place on the next tortilla and repeat the process. The final layer should just have the remaining cheese and herbs. Bake in the pre-heated oven for approx. 15minutes. Cut the tortillas and serve as you would with a pie.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 red or yellow pepper - deseeded and chopped
- 1 tin chopped tomatoes
- 1 tin kidney beans
- Tinned sweetcorn (200g)
- ½ tsp chilli powder (or paprika for a milder flavour)
- 3 tortillas
- Grated cheese
- Chopped coriander

NOTES

- Any tin of beans will work i.e. mixed beans or butter beans.
- Chopped coriander can be changed to parsley, chives, fresh or dried.
- Peas can be used instead of sweetcorn.

NUTRITION

- Peppers, beans and chopped tomatoes all count towards your **5-a-day**.
- All contain a variety of **vitamins**, **minerals** and **antioxidants** to protect our cells from damage.
- Beans are a meat free alternative that still provide us with **protein** but are lower in saturated fat.



MONDAY'S CURRY

METHOD

- 1 Gently fry the onion in a splash of oil until soft.
- 2 Add ginger, garlic, curry paste and flour. Cook for a few minutes, stirring often.
- 3 Add stock, sultanas and tomatoes and mix.
- 4 Add the other vegetables. Bring the mixture to a boil and then reduce the heat. Allow the curry to simmer gently for 10 minutes, stirring it occasionally. If it starts to look a little dry, add a little hot water.
- 3 Add the yoghurt, or cream and heat gently but do not allow to boil.

NUTRITION

- Cauliflower is full of nearly all the **vitamins** and **minerals** the body needs, including **fibre** and **antioxidants** to help to prevent any cell damage.
- Adding chickpeas will give you an extra source of **protein** that is low in saturated fat and counts towards your **5-a-day**.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 onion - chopped
- Clove of garlic - crushed or finely chopped
- ½ tsp each of dried ginger and cinnamon
- 1 tbsp of tikka masala curry paste or curry powder
- 1 tbsp flour
- Cold carrots, cauliflower, broccoli or any other veg
- 1 x a tin of chopped tomatoes
- Half a tin of stock
- A few raisins or sultanas (optional)
- 2 tbsp natural yoghurt, cream, or creme fraiche

NOTES

- Add a spoonful of pickle or chutney, or 1/2 a tin of peaches for a sweeter flavour.
- You can add any cold meat or a tin of chickpeas at step 4.



CHEESE POTATO PIE

METHOD

- 1** Grease a deepish dish - size depends on your need.
- 2** Mash potatoes with a little milk. Add cheese - keeping back a small amount for sprinkling over the top.
- 3** Cream together, adding egg if using.
- 4** Add pepper to taste.
- 5** Put into dish, forking the top roughly. Sprinkle remaining cheese over top.
- 6** Bake in hot oven for 15 - 20 mins until cheese is bubbling. You could grill it if easier.

NOTES

- Keeping the skin on the potato means less waste.
- There are no set quantities, as it will depend on what you have available.
- Cheddar is best - the stronger the better. More flavour and less cheese.

INGREDIENTS

Potatoes - scrubbed - cut into smallish pieces - boiled until just soft.

Cheese, grated.

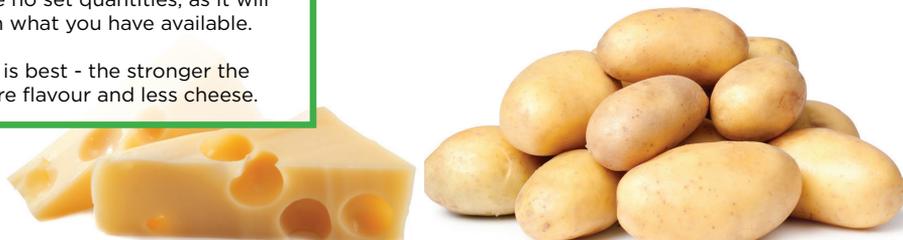
Milk

Egg - optional

Pepper - Black, white, cayenne - whatever you have.

NUTRITION

- Keeping the skin on the potato also means more **fibre** to keep our digestive system healthy.
- Potatoes are high in **vitamin C**, which has a whole host of roles in the body, from protecting cells from damage to maintaining healthy skin.
- Also, a good source of **potassium**, which can help to reduce blood pressure.
- Dairy products, such as cheese and milk are great sources of **protein** and **calcium**, keeping our muscles and bones strong.



CANNELLINI BEAN PATE ON TOAST

METHOD

1 Pour the beans into a food processor with the oil and process into a chunky paste, or if no food processor, use the end of a rolling pin to mash the beans in a bowl.

2 Transfer the mashed beans to a separate bowl and add the grated cheese and mix well with the chopped parsley. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

3 Spoon some of the pate onto some buttered toast and enjoy!

NUTRITION

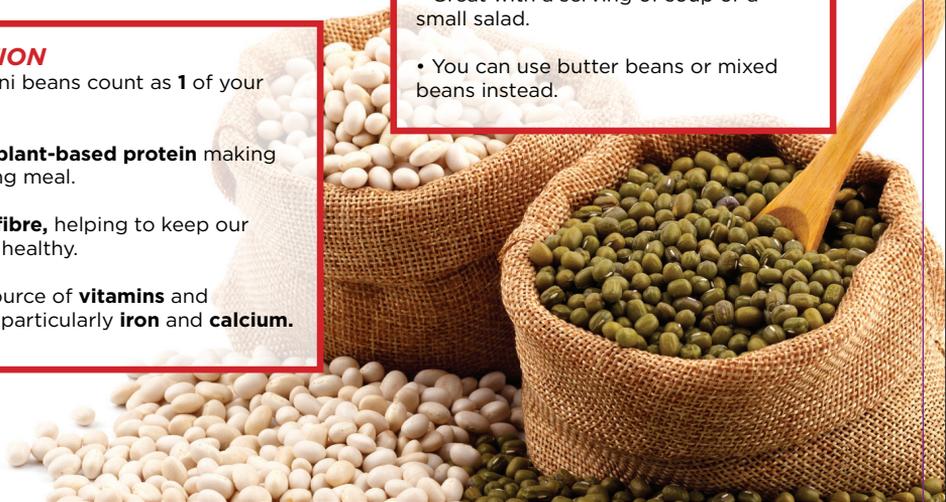
- Cannellini beans count as **1** of your **5-a-day**.
- High in **plant-based protein** making this a filling meal.
- High in **fibre**, helping to keep our digestion healthy.
- Good source of **vitamins** and **minerals**, particularly **iron** and **calcium**.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tins (400g) of cannellini beans, drained & rinsed
- 50g cheese, finely grated
- A handful of chopped fresh parsley
- 45ml olive oil
- Salt and pepper

NOTES

- For one person/serving use one tin of beans and halve the remaining ingredients.
- Great with a serving of soup or a small salad.
- You can use butter beans or mixed beans instead.



NO BAKE QUICK SHAKSHUKA

METHOD

1 In a pan heat a splash of oil and cook the onion until translucent. Add the garlic, peppers, half the chilli, cumin and paprika.

2 Pour in the tomatoes along with the stock. Allow to simmer for 20 minutes.

3 Drain the butterbeans and add to pan, cook for another 10 minutes

4 Season to taste.

5 Add a fried egg and a spoonful of yogurt for extra goodness.

NUTRITION

- Peppers, butter beans, onions and chopped tomatoes all count towards your **5-a-day**.

- All contain a variety of **vitamins, minerals** and **antioxidants** to protect our cells from damage.

- Beans are a meat free alternative that still provide us with **protein** but are lower in saturated fat.

- Eggs also contain **protein** and **vitamin D**, which keeps bones, teeth and muscles strong.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 red bell peppers, chopped into small pieces
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 1 red chilli
- 4 eggs
- 2 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 2 tsp each of cumin and paprika
- 200ml hot vegetable stock
- 1 tin of butter beans
- 1 tin of chopped tomatoes

NOTES

- Put the remaining half of chilli into the freezer and you can grate it from frozen when you need one.
- Any tinned beans can be used.



LEEK AND MUSHROOM RISOTTO

INGREDIENTS

About 600ml hot vegetable stock (may need more if using more veg)

8-10 mushrooms, sliced

1 leek, sliced

handful of peas

4 handfuls arborio rice

1 handful parmesan cheese

½ tsp dried thyme

METHOD

1 Heat 1 tbsp of oil in a large pan. Add mushrooms. Season with salt and pepper and cook until slightly browned - stirring frequently.

2 Remove the mushrooms and set aside. Add remaining oil, leek and garlic, and cook for 2-3 minutes until softened.

3 Add the rice and cook for 1 minute, stirring occasionally.

4 Add thyme and a ladleful of stock at a time, stirring regularly, giving the risotto little breaks to come back to a simmer. Do not boil.

5 Continue this process until the rice is 'al dente' - cooked through but still has a slight bite. This should only take 15-20 minutes.

6 Once the rice is cooked, remove from heat and add the parmesan cheese, and the cooked mushrooms. Mix gently.

NOTES

- You can use cheddar cheese instead of parmesan.
- You can use an onion instead of a leek.

NUTRITION

- Mushrooms are one of a few dietary sources of **vitamin D**, that we usually get mainly from sunlight to help keep our bones healthy.
- Peas contain just about every **vitamin** and **mineral** our body needs, plus being high in **fibre** to keep our digestive systems healthy.



EASY BEEF CASSEROLE

METHOD

1 Heat oven to 160°C/140°C fan Gas mark 3. Put the kettle on.

2 Heat a splash of oil in a casserole dish that can also go into the oven. Add the celery, onion, carrots, parsnips or swede, bay leaves and thyme. Soften for 10 mins, then stir in the flour until it doesn't look dusty anymore, followed by the tomato purée, Worcestershire sauce and beef stock cubes.

3 Gradually stir in 600ml hot water, tip in the beef and bring to a simmer.

4 Cover and put in the oven for 2hrs 30 mins, then uncover and cook for 30mins – 1hr more until the meat is really tender and the sauce is thickened.

NUTRITION

- Tomato puree is a concentrated source of **antioxidants**, guarding our cells from damage.
- Celery is surprisingly full of **vitamins** and **minerals**, including **vitamin C**, **beta carotene** and **vitamin K**.
- Using a variety of vegetables in a single dish means you are getting a mix of **micronutrients**, whilst also making up your **5-a-day**.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 celery sticks, chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 carrots, diced
- 2 parsnips or 1 small swede, cut into small pieces
- 2 bay leaves
- 3 sprigs thyme or 1 tsp dried thyme
- 2 tbsp plain flour
- 2 tbsp tomato purée
- 2 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 2 beef stock cubes, crumbled
- 500g stewing steak or casserole beef

NOTES

- Add a small handful of lentils or pearl barley at the same time as the beef to bulk it out. You may need to add a little more water.



BROWN BETTY

METHOD

1 Pre-heat oven to 190°C/ 170°C fan / Gas mark 5. Grease an ovenproof dish.

2 Mix together breadcrumbs, sugar and orange rind.

3 Layer alternately rhubarb and breadcrumb mix. finish with breadcrumbs Pour mixture of melted butter and orange juice across top.

4 Bake in moderate oven 40-45 mins until crisp and golden.

NUTRITION

- Rhubarb is high in **fibre** due to its fibrous texture, helping to keep our digestion healthy.
- Rhubarb is a good source of **vitamin K**, which we need for wound healing.
- Having a combination of fruits or having less-common fruits from time to time can ensure we are getting a wide range of **vitamins** and **minerals** in our diet.

INGREDIENTS

- 450g Rhubarb stalks - washed and cut into 2.5cm lengths
- 100g caster sugar
- 100g breadcrumbs
- Finely grated rind of 1 orange and then squeeze juice into a bowl
- 75g butter, melted

NOTES

- Any fruit can be used or combination of fruits. If using apples, then half a teaspoon of cinnamon could be added.
- Pears may be a little dry so a splash of fruit juice or squash will help.
- Plums will need chopping into quite small bits or slices.
- Ginger (powder or fresh) would give it a bit of a kick. Don't overdo it!
- Good served with custard or cream.



BANANA CAKE

METHOD

- 1** Pre-heat the oven to 170°C / 150°C Fan / Gas mark 3 and grease a loaf tin or use a liner.
- 2** Put all the ingredients into a bowl, apart from the bananas and whisk thoroughly for 3-4 minutes until well blended.
- 3** Add the bananas and stir in gently. Transfer into the loaf tin.
- 4** Cook for 45 minutes or until a skewer poked into the centre comes out clean.

NUTRITION

- Bananas contain **fibre** that not only keep our guts healthy, but also moderate the rise in our blood sugar after we eat a meal.
- Bananas are a good source of **potassium** that helps to lower blood pressure.

INGREDIENTS

- 175g self-raising flour
- 125g butter or soft margarine
- 75g caster sugar (granulated will be fine)
- 2 eggs
- 75g sultanas soaked in boiling water for 10 minutes
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- 2 very ripe bananas, sliced

NOTES

- Swap the banana for pears/apples/plums.
- Swap the dried fruit for chocolate chips for a change.



COOKING TIPS

TRY TO COOK FROM SCRATCH. Avoiding processed ready cooked meals can save you a fortune, and they're packed with salt and sugar.

USE A SLOW COOKER. It's worth investing in a slow cooker. You can pick one up for as little as £15 and they are great in the winter for stews and for joints of meat, saving both time spent in the kitchen, and saving money on electricity. They're great for cooking cheaper cuts of meat which would otherwise not be so tender if cooked quicker.

DON'T THROW ANYTHING AWAY. By planning meals and ingredients (including fresh herbs) you will have less leftover food. You can freeze unwanted food and herbs but DO make sure you label and date everything.

EAT YOUR LEFTOVERS. Some of the tastiest and quickest dishes can be from leftover foods. Don't be afraid to put odds and ends of leftover cooked vegetables into a pan with some olive oil and any herbs you may have and stir fry them. Serve with a poached egg for some added protein. With practice, you'll design your own favourite combinations!

HAVE MEAT-FREE DAYS. Even if you are not a vegetarian, having days in the week without meat or fish is a great way to save money.

DISCOVER PULSES. Pulses such as beans, lentils and peas are healthy and packed with protein, fibre, vitamins and minerals. Use them to bulk out soups and stews.

FREEZE YOUR BREAD. Bread is the most wasted household food. If you know you'll end up throwing some away either freeze half or buy a smaller loaf. You can toast it from frozen or remove it from the freezer the night before.

WORK TO A RECIPE. Consider the price of ingredients when making your recipes. Build a collection of budget foods that you enjoy cooking and eating.

THINK ABOUT PORTION CONTROL. Using smaller plates can help to ensure you don't eat more than you need to. Any leftovers can be saved for lunch.

THINK AHEAD. If you're cooking pasta in tomato sauce for dinner, why not cook some extra to use the following day for packed lunches as an alternative to sandwiches?

COOK FOR YOUR TODDLER. Get your child used to eating the same healthy food that you eat. Chop up or puree their portion to suit their age and freeze extra child-sized portions for later to save both time and money from using jarred foods.

USE-BY AND BEST-BEFORE DATES. Fruit and veg is usually fine for a couple of days past it's best before date. Meat and fish should be eaten before their use-by dates. Use your nose with milk - you'll smell if it's gone off.



SUPPORT GROUPS AND HELPFUL WEBSITES

Food Plymouth: foodplymouth.org

Food Access Guide: foodplymouth.org/1983-2/

Citizens Advice Bureau: citizensadviceplymouth.org.uk

Transforming Plymouth Together Feast of Fun:
transformingplymouthtogether.org.uk/initiatives/feast-of-fun

Transforming Plymouth Together COVID Cash Recovery:
transformingplymouthtogether.org.uk/initiatives/covid-cash-course

Plymouth Online Directory: plymouthonlinedirectory.com

Money Advice Plymouth: moneyadviceplymouth.org.uk

Food Buddies South West: facebook.com/groups/2900272496729153

Food is Fun CIC: foodisfun.org.uk or facebook.com/foodisfun



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