



## Let's Do Lunch!



Growing up, I was always told that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, and it is essential. **But realistically, all of our meals count.** Be sure to eat a nutrient-filled lunch.

Here are a few ways to up your lunch game.

1. **Salad.** I like to make sure my salad has a capital 'S'. That 'S' stands for satisfying. I don't want to eat a salad and still be hungry. Up your salad game by layering your leafy greens with veggies, such as peppers, onions, cucumbers, and tomatoes. To make it more filling, add a protein, such as beans, nuts, seeds, or lean meat. Try chicken, turkey, canned salmon, or tuna. You also can add whole grains like cooked quinoa or brown rice to increase the fiber. Try using spices and herbs to help decrease the amount of salad dressing you use.
2. **Pasta.** Pasta is like a blank canvas and you can mix and match your favorite vegetables, healthy fats, protein, and beans. Try adding a boiled egg, marinara sauce, a simple vinaigrette, or roasted leftover veggies, such as broccoli and sweet potatoes. Add all of these for a complete nutritious meal.
3. **Grain bowls, protein bowls, veggie bowls.** Breakfast, lunch, and dinner bowls have become very popular. Increase protein by using lean ground beef, turkey, or chicken.

**For more nutrition information and easy recipes, visit [extension.msstate.edu](http://extension.msstate.edu) and join the MSU Extension Nutrition and Wellness Facebook Group.**

### Simple Protein Bowl Idea

#### Ingredients:

- 1 cup mixed greens
- 1 hard boiled egg
- 1/2 cup shredded cooked chicken breast
- 1/4 cup cooked red quinoa
- 1/4 large cucumber, sliced
- 3 tablespoons ranch dressing



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# How to Dispose of Household Waste Items

If you have been spring cleaning, you may have come across items you need to donate, recycle, or throw out.

Donating is pretty simple. Most areas have nonprofit organizations that accept all kinds of items in good shape. But recycling and throwing away things you no longer need can

be tricky. Like me, you probably know that some items, such as paint, household cleaners, pesticides, batteries, and electronics, should not be put out with your regular trash.—**But what are you supposed to do with them if we cannot throw them away?**

Most likely, there is a way to recycle or safely dispose of hazardous waste in your area. Some communities offer either a year-round or once a year drop-off location for these kinds of items. Call your municipality or your waste management company to check. You also can check to see if your community has one of these options by searching the Earth 911 database managed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

If a drop-off site is not available in your area, check with local businesses to see if they accept these items. For example, local garages or parts stores may accept used motor oil for recycling.

For expired and unused medications, watch for take-back days at local pharmacies, clinics, or law enforcement agencies. Prescription and over-the-counter medications are accepted.

If these collection programs are not available in your area, the safest way to dispose to medications is to remove medications from their original container, mix them with kitty litter or used coffee grounds, and place them in a sealable bag or container. The sealed bag or container can be placed in your regular trash. If you throw away the prescription container, remove or cover your personal information on label.

**For information about safe disposal of medications, read Extension information sheet 1844, “Safe Disposal of Medicines and Personal Care Products” on the Extension website and visit the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s hazardous waste web page**

<https://www.epa.gov/hw/household-hazardous-waste-hhw>



## Turn your old coffee, soup, or fruit cans into planters!



### How to transform your empty clean cans:

- ◇ Peel the outer label off the metal can.
- ◇ Drill approximately 10 holes in the bottom of can for drainage.
- ◇ Lightly spray paint your entire can a base color of your choosing. (I chose white.)
- ◇ Let the spray paint dry for 20-30 minutes or until spray paint is no longer sticky on can.
- ◇ Decorate your can however you wish! (Add polka dots, stripes, or your initials, etc.)
- ◇ Once your can is decorated, add potting mix or top soil to your can.
- ◇ Plant flowers or small plants into your can.

### REMEMBER:

- ◆ The holes in the bottom of the can are for drainage, so if you do not want water on the table or floor where the can is going, place something under the can to catch water.
- ◆ If you have a larger can, you may need more than 10 holes for drainage.
- ◆ You do not have to decorate it. You could simply spray paint a solid color.



# Tips for Grilling

Warm weather is here and it is finally time to fire up the grill! Barbeques are fun and result in delicious food. Some of my fondest memories growing up were grilling with my family.

Food safety is important to keep in mind when grilling. Always wash your hands before and after handling raw meat or poultry. Cross-contamination can happen if you do not pay close attention to which plate or utensil you are grabbing. Set out new plates and utensils so you do not accidentally use a contaminated plate.

Keep a food thermometer handy to check the level of doneness. Partially cooked meat can encourage bacteria to grow, so it is best to cook meat to the recommended temperatures.

**Hamburgers—160°F**

**Fish—145°F**

**Poultry—165°F**

**Pork—145°F**

**Beef Steak—145°F (medium rare), 160°F (medium), 170°F (well-done)**

## Below are some helpful tips for a frequent griller:

1. Before placing any meat on your grill, turn the heat on and let it sit for about 10-15 minutes to burn off any bacteria and extra build-up on the grate. Just like you preheat an oven, preheating a grill ensures it reached the proper temperature for cooking.
2. Cleaning the grill after use is important to keep it in good shape. Clean off any build-up on the grates before and after grilling. Both aluminum sheets and steel brushes work for cleaning the grates.
3. Speaking of steel brushes, it is important to keep an eye on them as you use them. After a few uses, you will notice the bristles start to rust and get loose. Inspect the brush before using. If you notice it is worn down, it is best to throw it away. The last thing you want is to accidentally consume a bristle in your food.
4. Avoid food-borne illnesses by protecting yourself while grilling. Keep a box of clear plastic gloves on hand to use when handling raw meat and poultry. Most grilling areas do not have a sink or water faucet nearby to wash your hands, so gloves are the next best option. To prevent burning your hand while dealing with flare-ups, consider wearing heavy-duty heat-resistant gloves, such as welding gloves or those specifically designed for grilling.



# Bacon, Pineapple, Chicken Kabobs

## Ingredients

- 2 pounds of boneless skinless chicken breast
- 1 large pineapple, cut into 1 1/2 inch chunks
- 2 large red bell peppers, cut into 1 1/2 inch pieces
- 1 large onion, cut into 1 1/2 inch pieces
- 12 strips of thick cut bacon
- 6 long skewers

## For the Hawaiian Sauce

- 1 1/2 cups pineapple juice
- 1 1/2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

## Directions

1. To make the Hawaiian Sauce: Combine all ingredients in a medium saucepan and stir until the cornstarch is dissolved. Bring the mixture to a boil, reduce the heat to medium and simmer for 2 minutes. Set-aside until ready to use.
2. Thread the skewers. Weave the bacon around each piece of chicken and pineapple, stick the bell pepper and onion together and weave the bacon around both of those. You will need two strips of bacon per skewer if using 4 pieces of chicken and 3 pieces each of pineapple, bell pepper, and onion.
3. Preheat the grill to medium high. Grill kabobs for 10-15 minutes, turning a couple of times until chicken is done (internal temperature of 165°F).
4. Brush the Hawaiian Sauce over the kabobs and serve immediately.



## Mexican Chicken Marinade



## Ingredients

- 4 boneless skinless chicken breasts
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 lime, juiced or 3 tablespoons of lime juice
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup cilantro, chopped
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon cumin, salt, and pepper

## Directions

1. Place the chicken breasts in a large bag. In a small bowl, whisk together the olive oil, lime juice, garlic, cilantro, chili powder, cumin, salt, and pepper.
2. Pour the marinade over the chicken and seal the bag, squeezing out all the air.
3. Move the chicken around in the marinade until chicken is evenly coated.
4. Refrigerate and let it marinate for at least 30 minutes.
5. Preheat grill to medium high heat. Cook until chicken has reached an internal temperature of 165°F.

## Can you find nutritious foods while in the grocery store center aisles?

The center aisles provide a wide variety of nutritious options that are versatile, shelf-stable, and budget-friendly. Here are some grocery store center-aisle favorites:

1. **Canned and dry beans:** Beans are great in soups, chili, tacos, omelets, and as sides.
  - ◇ Why and how to add them to your diet:
    - Beans are high in fiber, protein, vitamins, and minerals.
    - Watching your sodium intake? Choose no salt added or reduced sodium items. Rinse canned beans to remove some of the sodium.
  
2. **Frozen fruits and vegetables:** Frozen produce doesn't spoil nearly as quickly as fresh produce, and it is usually more affordable.
  - ◇ Why and how to add them to your diet:
    - Because they are harvested at peak ripeness and quickly frozen, they are as nutritious as fresh produce.
    - Add frozen fruits to smoothies, oatmeal, or pancakes.
    - Roast a pan of frozen vegetables to eat as a side or use in meal prepping.
  
3. **Canned salmon, tuna, and chicken:** These items are high in lean protein and are shelf-stable.
  - ◇ Why and how to add them to your diet:
    - Salmon and tuna provide heart-healthy omega 3 fatty acids and are great economical seafood choices.
    - Excellent to add to a salad, avocado toast, or a grain bowl.
  
4. **Nuts and nut butters:** Anytime I want to add crunch to my food, chopped nuts are my go-to. I keep peanut butter on hand year-round. Other available options include: almond, mixed nut, and hazelnut. Have a nut allergy? Try seed butter, like sunflower seed butter.
  - ◇ Why and how to add them to your diet:
    - Most nuts and nut butters are high in protein, fiber, and healthy fats. The American Heart Association recommends eating one handful of nuts daily.
    - Try adding nuts to yogurt, salads, oatmeal, and vegetables. Nut butters are great for sandwiches, smoothies, baked products, or eating with fresh fruit, such as bananas and apples.
  
5. **Canned diced tomatoes:** Canned tomatoes are an excellent option to boost flavor and nutrition in many foods, from soups to fish.
  - ◇ Why and how to add them to your diet:
    - Canned tomatoes are low in calories and high in fiber, vitamin C, and the antioxidant Lycopene, which has been shown to help lower the risk of heart disease.
    - Canned tomatoes come in various varieties, such as diced, crushed, fire-roasted, and with seasonings, like garlic, basil and oregano. Low-sodium and no salt added items are also available.



# Veggie Quiche Muffins

## Ingredients

3/4 cup low-fat cheddar chesses, shredded	1 cup baking mix (pancakes or biscuits)
1 cup green onion or 1 medium onion, chopped	1 teaspoon Italian seasoning (or dried leaf basil and oregano)
1 cup broccoli, chopped	
1 cup tomatoes, diced	1/2 teaspoon salt
2 cups nonfat or 1% milk	1/2 teaspoon pepper
4 eggs	

## Directions

1. Heat oven to 375°F. Lightly spray or oil 12 muffin cups.
2. Sprinkle cheese, onions, broccoli, and tomatoes in muffin cups.
3. Place remaining ingredients in a bowl and beat until smooth. Pour egg mixture over other ingredients in muffin cups.
4. Bake until golden brown or until knife inserted in center comes out clean, 35 to 40 minutes. Cool 5 minutes.
5. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

# Chicken Alfredo with a Twist

## Ingredients

2 1/2 cups dry whole-wheat pasta  
 2 cans reduced-fat cream of chicken soup  
 1 1/3 cups fat-free half and half  
 1/4 teaspoon ground pepper  
 1/8 teaspoon garlic powder  
 1/3 cup grated parmesan cheese  
 3 cups (12 ounce) diced, cooked chicken



## Directions

1. In a large pot, bring 2 quarts of water to a boil. Gradually stir in pasta and return to a boil. Cook uncovered for about 8-10 minutes or until tender. Do not overcook. Drain well.
2. Mix soup, half and half, pepper, garlic powder, parmesan cheese, and chicken in a large pot. Cook over medium heat for about 5 minutes, stirring often. Heat to an internal temperature of 165°F or higher.
3. Add cooked pasta to the chicken and sauce mixture. Serve hot.



# Carpenter Bees VS Bumble Bees



**Carpenter Bees**—the most commonly occurring species in Mississippi is the eastern carpenter bee. Both males and females have a smooth, shiny body. But, males of this species have white faces, while females have black faces. Males do not sting, while females can, but usually do not.

Females lead busy lives, building nests, gathering pollen, and laying eggs. Males are often seen flying about and hovering in mid-air to pass the time.

You may see the entrance holes in their nests anywhere on your property where you have wood, such as decks, eaves, fences, and barns.

Nesting galleries can be more than a foot long. Most of the time these galleries are harmless. However, if there are several galleries in one piece of wood, it can weaken that area and put the structure at risk. If you find yourself in this situation, you can learn more about pesticides and methods for treating the galleries in *Extension publication 2331, "Control of Insect Pests In and Around the Home Lawn."*



**Bumble Bees**—These are the bees that are large with hairy bodies. They can be either black and yellow or black and white. They build their nests in the ground like yellow jackets, where dozens of bees can live. They are not aggressive unless their nest is disturbed. But bumble bees have a painful sting, and dozens of bees may attack if they sense the nest is threatened.

They can be very aggressive in this situation.

So, before you mow or do other types of lawn care, you may want to inspect your yard for nests.

Both carpenter bees and bumble bees are important pollinators, and experts recommend only using control methods to prevent structural damage by carpenter bees and to prevent stinging incidents by bumble bees.

If you do disturb a bumble bee nest and get stung, watch for an allergic reaction. These reactions are rare. However, get medical attention right away if you have any of these symptoms: swelling of the mouth, tightness in the throat, difficulty breathing, dizziness, fainting, vomiting, hives, or a rapid heartbeat.

If you would like to attract more beneficial bees or support our bee pollinators, *Extension publications 2976, "Gardening for Beneficial Bees in Mississippi,"* will help you plan a landscape that bees love and that you love to look at.