



By Alice Henneman, RD, UNL Extension Educator

## Easy-Does-It Mango Sauce

Did you know one cup of sliced mango has just 107 calories and provides 25 percent of the Daily Value for vitamin A?

Is a mango fairly mangled by the time you peel it? How about making mango sauce?

For a quick dessert, pour mango sauce generously over a scoop of lowfat ice cream or frozen yogurt. Simply pop the mango pieces into a food processor or blender and process until desired consistency. A mini food processor (see picture) works great when processing a small amount of mango.

For more information and pictures on peeling and slicing a mango: <http://lancaster.unl.edu/food/ciq-mango.htm>

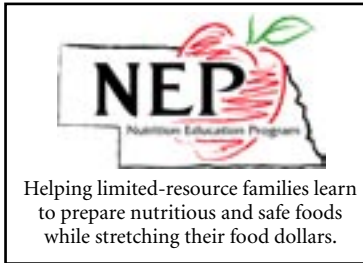


## Contacting Food-Related Companies for More Information

The Internet has made it easy to contact food companies for more information about using their products. While you used to have to write a company, an answer is now often just a click or a call away. Most major food companies feature a "contact us" section on their Web site, where they offer a phone number and/or e-mail information.

Before contacting the company, check if there is a FAQ (frequently asked questions) section. If a company offers several products, you may need to zero in on one product line on the Web site to find the information for that product. For more information and links, visit our Web site at: <http://lancaster.unl.edu/food/ciq-contacts.htm>

## \$tretch Your Food Dollar with Canned Foods



Helping limited-resource families learn to prepare nutritious and safe foods while stretching their food dollars.

By Dana Willeford  
UNL Extension Assistant

Health and good nutrition are a top priority, but let's face it, so is family time and food that tastes good. Even though canned foods have been around for a long time, they have many benefits that make them a hot item for a pantry! These benefits include convenience, cost effectiveness, year-round availability and versatility. According to studies by the University of Massachusetts, canned ingredients are similar in nutrition to frozen or fresh in recipes. In addition, using canned food reduces the preparation and cooking time, therefore, less time in the kitchen and more time with the family!

### Frequently Asked Questions About Canned Foods

(Adapted from Canned Food Alliance at <http://www.mealtime.org>)

**Q. Does canned food have expiration dates?**

A. Canned products have a "for best quality use by" date

stamped on the bottom of the can. "Expiration" dates are rarely found on canned food.

**Q. How long does canned food remain edible and retain its nutritional content?**

A. Canned food has a shelf life of at least two years from the date of processing. Its safety and nutritional value may go well beyond two years, but it may have a change in quality, like change of color or texture.

**Q. How long is it between the date of processing and the date of purchase?**

A. In a well-run grocery store, foods on the shelf will be rotated on a regular basis with continuous turnover. However,

if you want to find the date a particular product has, some food companies use a series of numbers or letters that may contain a date. To break the code, call the toll-free number or write to the address on the product.

**Q. Are canned foods high in sodium?**

A. Canned food is packed and heat-sealed into the can at the peak of flavor. In some canned food, salt might be added to enhance the food's taste. However, canned food has a variety of options. For consumers who are sensitive to sodium, many canned foods are available in low-salt and no-salt alternatives.

## Six Can Chicken Tortilla Soup

6 servings

- 1 (15 ounce) can whole kernel corn, drained
- 2 (14.5 ounce) cans chicken broth (add an extra can for a more brothy soup)
- 1 (10 ounce) can chunk chicken
- 1 (15 ounce) can black beans
- 1 (10 ounce) can diced tomatoes with green chile peppers, drained
- Tortilla chips
- Low-fat shredded cheddar cheese

Combine all canned products in a large saucepan or stock pot. Simmer over medium heat until heated through. Serve over tortilla chips and top with shredded cheddar cheese.

Source: Nebraska Nutrition Education Program 2006 Calendar

## Vary Your Veggies: Tips for Using MyPyramid

Alice Henneman, MS, RD  
UNL Extension Educator

"Vegetables are a must on a diet. I suggest carrot cake, zucchini bread and pumpkin pie."

— Cartoon character, Garfield the Cat

The new MyPyramid guidelines recommend eating 2½ cups daily of a variety of vegetables at the 2,000 calorie level. Garfield's advice might be fun-to-follow until you went up a clothing size or two! While it's OK to eat *some* of your vegetables as part of your dessert, here are some additional lower-calorie options from <http://www.mypyramid.gov>.

### In General

- Stock up on frozen vegetables for quick and easy cooking in the microwave.
- Buy vegetables that are easy to prepare. Pick up pre-washed bags of salad greens and add baby carrots or grape tomatoes for a salad in minutes. Buy pack-



ages of baby carrots or celery sticks for quick snacks.

- Use a microwave to quickly "zap" vegetables. White or sweet potatoes can be baked quickly this way.



### For the Best Nutritional Value

- Select vegetables with more potassium often, such as sweet potatoes, white potatoes, white beans, tomato products (paste, sauce and juice), beet greens, soybeans, lima beans, winter squash, spinach, lentils, kidney beans and split peas.
- Sauces or seasonings can add calories, fat and sodium to vegetables. Use the Nutrition Facts label to compare the calories and % Daily Value for fat and sodium in plain and seasoned vegetables.
- Prepare more foods from fresh ingredients to lower sodium intake. Most sodium in the food supply comes from packaged or processed foods.



- Buy canned vegetables labeled "no salt added." If you want to add a little salt it will likely be less than the amount in the regular canned product.

### At Meals

- Try a main dish salad for lunch. Go light on the salad dressing.
- Include a green salad with your dinner every night.
- Shred carrots or zucchini into meatloaf, casseroles, quick breads and muffins.
- Include chopped vegetables in pasta sauce or lasagna.
- Order a veggie pizza with toppings like mushrooms, green peppers and onions, and ask for extra veggies.
- Use pureed, cooked vegetables such as potatoes to thicken stews, soups and gravies. These add flavor, nutrients and texture.



### Make Vegetables More Appealing

- Many vegetables taste great with a dip or dressing. Try a low-fat salad dressing with raw broccoli, red and green peppers, celery sticks or cauliflower.
- Add color to salads by adding

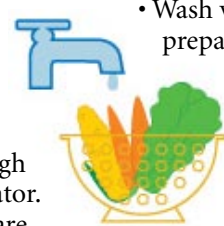
baby carrots, shredded red cabbage or spinach leaves. Include in-season vegetables for variety through the year.

- Include cooked, dry beans or peas in flavorful mixed dishes, such as chili or minestrone soup.
- Decorate plates or serving dishes with vegetable slices.

- Keep a bowl of cut-up vegetables in a see-through container in the refrigerator. Carrot and celery sticks are traditional, but consider broccoli florettes, cucumber slices or red or green pepper strips.

### Vegetable Tips for Children

- Set a good example for children by eating vegetables with meals and as snacks.
- Let children decide on the dinner vegetables or what goes into salads.
- Depending on their age, children can help shop for, clean, peel or cut up vegetables.
- Allow children to pick a new vegetable to try



- while shopping.
- Use cut-up vegetables as part of afternoon snacks.
- Children often prefer foods served separately. So,

rather than mixed vegetables try serving two vegetables separately.

### Keep it Safe

- Wash vegetables before preparing or eating them. Under clean, running water, rub vegetables briskly with your hands to remove dirt and surface microorganisms. Dry after washing.
- Keep vegetables separate from raw meat, poultry and seafood while shopping, preparing or storing.

