Healthy Eating

Enjoy Nebraska Foods!

By Alice Henneman, MS, RD, UNL Extension Educator

The following recipe is a very delicious and versatile cereal. The Triple Play serving suggestions at the bottom take this into many different directions. Though the recipe was created so kids could cook it, it tastes good and is good for people of all ages! Walnuts are high in antioxidants and are the only nut to contain a significant amount of omega-3's.

Triple Play Walnut Crunch

Servings: 12 • Prep Time: 5 minutes

3 cups old-fashioned oats
1-1/2 cups California walnut pieces
1/3 cup brown sugar
3 tablespoons canola oil
3 tablespoons honey
1-1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
1/2 cup shredded sweetened coconut

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Spread oats and walnuts on a baking sheet that has a low rim, or use a roasting pan. Bake 8-10 minutes, stirring after 5 minutes, until the walnuts and oats smell toasted and start to brown. While oats and walnuts are toasting, combine brown sugar, oil, honey and cinnamon in a large bowl. Ask a grown-up to help with this step: Pour hot oats and walnuts from the pan into the sugar mixture. Add coconut. Stir all the ingredients together until evenly coated with the sugar. Mixture will look dry.
(Alice's note: I was out of coconut and left it out—the recipe still tasted great!)

Line the baking pan with a piece of aluminum foil so it extends over the ends of the pan. Spray foil with cooking spray. Spread oat-walnut mixture onto foil. Bake 5 minutes. Remove from oven and stir. Bake additional 5 minutes until toasted and golden brown. Remove from oven and stir again. Cool completely on pan. Break crunch into chunks. Lift edges of foil and pour crunch into an airtight container or plastic bag.
(Alice's note: Check crunch about halfway during the last 5 minutes to assure you don't over-bake it.)

TIP: Measure the honey in the spoon you used for the oil—the honey will slip right off the spoon!

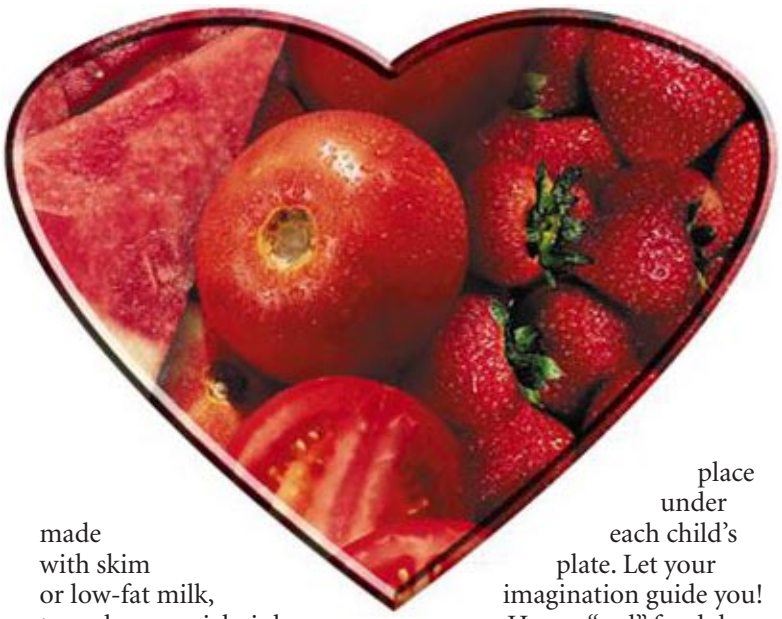
SERVING SUGGESTIONS
Grand Slam Berry Crisp: Put fresh or frozen berries in a small bowl and top with Triple Play Walnut Crunch. Microwave 1 minute or just until warm. Serve with vanilla yogurt or ice cream.
Home Run Breakfast Cereal: Add fresh or dried fruit to a bowlful of Triple Play Walnut Crunch. Top with yogurt or milk.
It's-A-Steal Energy Mix: Combine Triple Play Walnut Crunch with raisins, cranberries and dried apricots (or favorite dried fruits). Pack in a bag for a take-along energy snack.

Nutrition Information (per 1/12 of recipe): Calories: 250; Total Fat: 16 g; Saturated Fat: 2 g; Monounsaturated Fat: 3 g; Polyunsaturated Fat: 10 g; Trans Fat: 0 g; Cholesterol: 0 mg; Sodium: 3 mg; Total Carbohydrate: 24 g; Dietary Fiber: 3.5 g; Protein: 5 g.

Source: Recipe courtesy of Rosemary Mark for the Walnut Marketing Board. Find more great walnut recipes at www.walnuts.org.

Have a Healthy, Happy Valentine's Day with Children!

By Alice Henneman
UNL Extension Educator



How can you celebrate Valentine's Day with children or grandchildren without serving a lot of sugary, high-calorie food? Here are some ideas:

- Cut out sandwiches with a heart-shaped cookie cutter.
- Use heart-shaped pasta for a special meal.
- Make red gelatin in a heart-shaped mold and add the children's favorite fruits.
- To make a muffin look like a heart-shaped treat, fill the muffin cup ½ to ⅔ full and then insert a small ball of tin foil between the muffin pan and liner. Bake as usual.
- Use a heart-shaped cookie cutter to cut individual hearts from pizza dough.
- Add a few drops of red food coloring to vanilla pudding, made with skim or low-fat milk, to make a special pink Valentine's Day dessert.
- Set the table special for Valentine's. Perhaps the children can color their own special placemats for the day. Or, you could cut out red paper hearts from construction paper to place under each child's plate. Let your imagination guide you!
- Have a "red" food day on Valentine's. Plan with the children what you might serve. Perhaps you could serve tomato sauce over pasta, have apples for a snack, have a pink dessert such as frozen strawberry yogurt and so on.

Pack *Power* Lunches

NEP Nutrition Education Program

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

Sarah Pankoke
UNL Extension Assistant

Packing healthy lunches can be a challenge. You want a lunch that is filling, but not leaving you tired or sluggish. Lunches can be loaded with unhealthy trans fats and/or saturated fats from processed snacks, baked goodies and higher fat forms of meats and cheeses. Six tips for power-packed lunches follow:

1 **Pack whole grain versions of your favorite grains**—these have fiber which may help you fill up on less: whole wheat breads and crackers; trail mix made with whole grain cereals. To identify whole grains, look at the ingredient listing. A good choice is any product with the *first flour listed* as whole grain i.e. whole wheat, whole oats, whole corn, whole rice.

2 **Add color and variety with your favorite fruits and veggies.**
- Try a "rabbit bag"—a bag of fresh cut veggies—carrots, celery, cauliflower, broccoli, etc.
- Add lettuce, onion, tomato, radish, cucumber, green pepper, etc. to sandwiches
- Pack a salad as a side or main dish
- Rinse and prepare (cut up) the head of broccoli right away when you get home from the store so it is ready when you are
- No fresh veggies? Transfer a can of vegetables or a portion of frozen vegetables to a microwaveable dish for a quick side to your lunch.

Fruit salad, dried fruit, 100 percent juice and whole pieces of fruit give you the energy you need and are easy to take along—they are naturally sweet too!

3 **Get more calcium with yogurt and low-fat cheese**—8 ounces of yogurt and 2 ounces of sliced cheese have comparable amounts of calcium to 8 ounces of milk. Select lite yogurt to cut back on added sugar and look for low-fat cheese made with 2 percent milk.

4 **Pack protein.** Opt for lean deli meats instead of higher-fat salami, bologna or pastrami. Alternate your protein sources—try a peanut butter and fruit sandwich or a tuna sandwich made with lite mayo. Add cooked dried beans and/or nuts to your salad.

5 **For your sweet tooth, make baked goods with whole grain flour** and/or oatmeal**.** Make your own trail mix with dried fruit, nuts, cereals and something sweet. Enjoy a piece of fruit that is naturally sweet. You can still enjoy treats, just be aware of appropriate portion sizes.

6 **Be sure to keep perishable foods cold** so lunches are safe as well as satisfying.

Example ingredient listing in which the first flour listed is a whole grain.

Ingredients: Whole grain oat flour, sugar, corn flour, whole wheat flour, rice flour, salt, calcium carbonate, disodium phosphate, reduced iron, niacinamide*, zinc oxide, BHT (a preservative), yellow 5, yellow 6, thiamin mononitrate*, pyridoxine hydrochloride*, riboflavin*, folic acid*.
*One of the B vitamins

Candy Placement May Determine How Much You Eat

By Alice Henneman
UNL Extension Educator

As Valentine's candy makes its way into the office and other sites, consider how much you may eat may be determined by where it is located.

When candy is less visible and out of reach, people may engage in less "mindless" eating according to Brian Wansink, Ph.D., professor of marketing, applied economics and nutritional science at Cornell University.

Wansink gave 40 female faculty and staff 30 Hershey Kisses and varied whether they were in clear or opaque containers and whether they were on the women's desks or six feet away. The number eaten was counted daily after the women left at night and the jars were refilled.

Wansink's research team found participants ate less when the candy was invisible and the jars were farther away. They also discovered people were more accurate in recounting how many candies they had eaten when they had to move to get them. Here's how the average number of candies eaten daily changed with the different treatments:

- Clear container on the desk: 7.7 candies
- Opaque container on the desk: 4.6 candies
- Clear container, six feet away: 5.6 candies
- Opaque container, six feet away: 3.1 candies

Wansink's conclusion: It wasn't inconvenience restricting their consumption but rather having to travel six feet to obtain a candy gave them a chance to eat more mindfully and ask themselves if they were really hungry. With easy access to candy, it was much easier to overeat without realizing it.

While this may seem simple, consider that eating just 100 calories more daily than needed, can lead to a weight gain of 10 pounds a year!