

Nutrition Notables

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Special points of interest:

- Learn how to preserve your seasonal produce to enjoy year round!
- Try a new sweetener for a flavor change!
- Prepare a minimal cook salad that's quick, cancer fighting and tastes great!
- Learn about the legal loophole for trans-fat labeling!

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Preserving Fruits and Vegetables

Enjoying your farmers' markets or fresh produce section finds? If you're like me, you're also wishing that the season would last longer. Fruits and vegetables always seem better in season and are cheaper too. The great thing is that you can enjoy them year round and save money too.

People have been preserving food for hundreds of years and long before refrigerators were invented. There are several methods for preserving foods. Canning, freezing, drying, pickling, and vacuum sealing are just a few.

Each has its good points and bad points. Some work better for one food, and another for a different food. For instance, making jam works well for fruits, but not

for vegetables. And some methods might not be appropriate for you, if you have a medical condition. For instance, you shouldn't pickle foods with salt if you have high blood pressure.

Please consider carefully before trying out one of the preservation methods.

If you are interested in trying to preserve your own food check out

www.pickyourown.org. Scroll down their main page and toward the bottom you will find tips and instructions on how to preserve nearly any fruit or vegetable. They also have a list of farms where you can pick your own fruits and vegetables.

You can also pick up the book **Jam It, Pickle It, Cure**



Preserving can save seasonal produce and money too!

It: And Other Cooking Projects by Karen Solomon.

Preserving your own food will take some time, but it's a wonderful way to stretch the budget and be healthy.

Sweetener Scoop

Wondering about the various sweetener options available? Here's the scoop on a few:

Maple Syrup—Look for Grade B instead of Grade A. It has a stronger flavor so you'll use less and it contains trace minerals, like zinc and magnesium.

Agave Nectar—This

sweetener ranks low on the glycemic index scale, which means it will not cause blood sugars to rise as fast as refined or table sugar. 2/3 cup Agave nectar equals 1 cup of sugar.

Blackstrap Molasses—Contains 20% of your daily calcium, iron and potassium. If you have kidney failure,

you need to avoid this one.

Honey—Has B vitamins and prebiotics (helps good bacteria grow in your bowels). Don't give to children under the age of 12 months or pregnant women.

Stevia—This is a natural sweetener that is being marketed under several names including Sweet Leaf, Truvia,



Recipe Box—Southwestern Black Bean Salad

1 1/4 cups water
 1/3 cup pearl barley
 1 can (15 oz.) black beans, rinsed and drained
 1 small yellow bell pepper, chopped
 1 small tomato, seeded and chopped
 1 small zucchini, chopped
 1 cup diced jicama (optional)
 3 oz. pepper or plain Monterey Jack cheese, cut into 3/8-inch cubes
 1 medium scallion (green and white part), chopped
 1/2 tsp. dried oregano
 Juice of 1/2 lime (1 tsp.)
 Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

In medium saucepan, bring water to a boil. Add barley. Reduce heat; cover and simmer until barley is tender, about 20 minutes. Drain well.

In large bowl, combine barley, beans, bell pepper, tomato, zucchini, jicama, if desired, cheese, scallion, oregano and lime juice. Stir with fork. Season with pepper, if desired.

Makes 4 servings.

Per serving: 217 calories, 7 g total fat (4g saturated fat), 32g carbohydrate, 12 g protein, 9 g fiber, 556 mg sodium.

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www.aicr.org

Sweetener Scoop—Continued



PureVia and Sun Crystals; just to name a few. Most do not provide calories and therefore are an alternative to sugar for diabetics.

Evaporated Cane Juice—Is the juice that is used to

make refined or table sugar. Since it still contains some of the molasses, it provides calcium, iron and potassium. People with kidney failure should not use this product.

Rice syrup—Made from

fermented brown rice. May contain gluten, so anyone with a gluten allergy should read the label carefully.

Each will add a different flavor to your cooking so try them out!

Truly Trans-Fat Free?



**Is that food
 your eating
 really trans-fat
 free?**

There's been a lot of press about trans-fats since the new FDA labeling law went into affect. Trans-fats come in two forms, natural which is found in meat and dairy products and man-made from hydrogenated oils.

The naturally occurring trans-fats are thought to have little affect on health. However, the man-made version can have a negative impact. Man-made trans-fats increase your “bad” LDL cholesterol, decrease your “good” HDL cholesterol, and contribute to strokes, heart disease and diabetes.

The American Heart Association recommends that trans-fat intake be less than 2gm per day. Sounds pretty easy with so many foods now being labeled as 0 gm trans-fats or trans-fat free, right?

Unfortunately it's not. There's a little loophole that manufacturers like to use. The FDA allows food with 0.49gm of trans-fats or less per serving to be labeled as 0gm trans-fats.

So how do you know if a manufacturer has used this loophole? You'll need to

check the ingredient list. If you see “partially hydrogenated oil” or “shortening” in the list, the product will contain trans-fats. Also if you see “hydrogenated oil”, it will likely contain trans-fats. However, if it says “fully hydrogenated oil”, this is not a trans-fat and is safe.

Several companies that have truly trans-fat free products and some consumer action groups are fighting back and requesting that the loophole be closed. But until then consumers will just have to be careful and look at the ingredient list.

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