



SIMPLY GOOD FOOD

Butter Beans (Large Lima)

Background: Because of their distinctive flavor, limas are often called Butter Beans. The U.S., the large lima or "butter beans" is grown commercially only in Madagascar and the cooler portions of the California Valley where there are cool nights, day time sunshine and dry. They are harvested in Summer and Fall. The lima bean originated high in the Andes. This large, flat, buttery bean works well with pork and spicy seasonings. It is especially good in casseroles and with smoked meats. They can be used in any white bean recipe. Do not substitute cooked dried limas for fresh or frozen ones, because the taste and texture are considerably different.

Availability: Dry large and baby limas are white while green ones are available canned or frozen.

Nutrition: Beans, when eaten with small amounts of meat, dairy products, or grains (rice, corn, tortillas, etc.) supply all essential amino acids (protein components). Recent studies show that besides being cholesterol free, beans contain soluble fiber, and have the ability to lower one's cholesterol level. One half cup per day can lower levels by 5 to 20 percent.

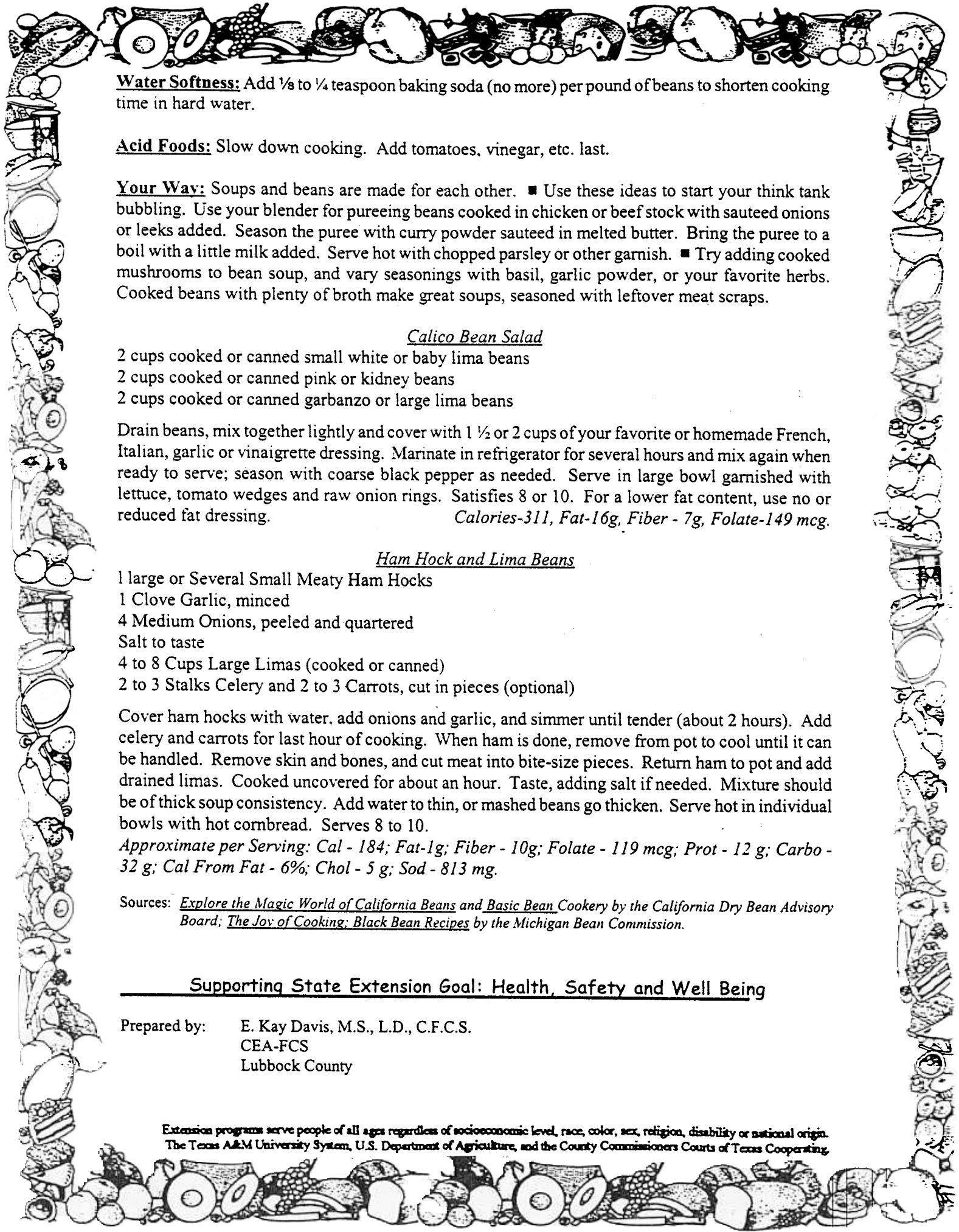
Beans are an energy food. Their carbohydrates digest slowly, satisfy hunger longer while still being low in calories. Dry beans are a rich source of B-vitamins that help turn food into energy and keep digestive and nervous systems healthy. They are the best vegetable source of Folate or Folic acid, the B-vitamin that can help prevent some birth defects, as well as cancer and heart attacks. Beans provide iron for building red blood (1 cup supplies half of the RDA for average adults), calcium (2-10% and phosphorus 26-40% of the RDA for the average adult). Beans are high in fiber, cholesterol free and low in sodium if unsalted during cooking. Dry beans have long been at the top of the USDA's list of foods with the lowest cost per gram of protein.

Bean Math: A 1 pound package of dry beans equals 2 cups dry or 5-6 cups cooked beans. One 16-ounce can drained equals 1 $\frac{2}{3}$ cups.

Preparation: Use in recipes calling for slow, all day cooking. Soaking is not essential, but will shorten cooking time. The boil-soak method improves taste, texture, appearance and digestibility of beans, especially when the soak water is discarded. No important amounts of nutrients are lost. Cooking time depends on use, variety, storage conditions, altitude, water softness, and if cooked with acids. Firm beans are best for salads. Cook longer for use in casseroles, soups or stews. Cook til soft to puree or mash beans.

Storage: Dry beans stored at high temperatures and humidity for long periods are difficult to cook. Store dry or canned beans in a cool dry place.

Altitude: At high altitudes, water boils at a lower temperature so beans take longer to cook.



Water Softness: Add $\frac{1}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon baking soda (no more) per pound of beans to shorten cooking time in hard water.

Acid Foods: Slow down cooking. Add tomatoes, vinegar, etc. last.

Your Way: Soups and beans are made for each other. ■ Use these ideas to start your think tank bubbling. Use your blender for pureeing beans cooked in chicken or beef stock with sauteed onions or leeks added. Season the puree with curry powder sauteed in melted butter. Bring the puree to a boil with a little milk added. Serve hot with chopped parsley or other garnish. ■ Try adding cooked mushrooms to bean soup, and vary seasonings with basil, garlic powder, or your favorite herbs. Cooked beans with plenty of broth make great soups, seasoned with leftover meat scraps.

Calico Bean Salad

2 cups cooked or canned small white or baby lima beans
2 cups cooked or canned pink or kidney beans
2 cups cooked or canned garbanzo or large lima beans

Drain beans, mix together lightly and cover with $1\frac{1}{2}$ or 2 cups of your favorite or homemade French, Italian, garlic or vinaigrette dressing. Marinate in refrigerator for several hours and mix again when ready to serve; season with coarse black pepper as needed. Serve in large bowl garnished with lettuce, tomato wedges and raw onion rings. Satisfies 8 or 10. For a lower fat content, use no or reduced fat dressing.

Calories-311, Fat-16g, Fiber - 7g, Folate-149 mcg.

Ham Hock and Lima Beans

1 large or Several Small Meaty Ham Hocks
1 Clove Garlic, minced
4 Medium Onions, peeled and quartered
Salt to taste
4 to 8 Cups Large Limas (cooked or canned)
2 to 3 Stalks Celery and 2 to 3 Carrots, cut in pieces (optional)

Cover ham hocks with water, add onions and garlic, and simmer until tender (about 2 hours). Add celery and carrots for last hour of cooking. When ham is done, remove from pot to cool until it can be handled. Remove skin and bones, and cut meat into bite-size pieces. Return ham to pot and add drained limas. Cooked uncovered for about an hour. Taste, adding salt if needed. Mixture should be of thick soup consistency. Add water to thin, or mashed beans go thicken. Serve hot in individual bowls with hot cornbread. Serves 8 to 10.

Approximate per Serving: Cal - 184; Fat-1g; Fiber - 10g; Folate - 119 mcg; Prot - 12 g; Carbo - 32 g; Cal From Fat - 6%; Chol - 5 g; Sod - 813 mg.

Sources: Explore the Magic World of California Beans and Basic Bean Cookery by the California Dry Bean Advisory Board; The Joy of Cooking: Black Bean Recipes by the Michigan Bean Commission.

Supporting State Extension Goal: Health, Safety and Well Being

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