

A BALANCED DIET



To stay healthy, we should all try to eat a balanced diet. It's a means of getting the essential nutrients we need to be healthy and to grow.

To achieve a balanced diet, it's important to consume foods from each of the four food groups identified in *Canada's Food Guide*. The groups are vegetables and fruit, grain products, milk and alternatives, and meat and alternatives.

A balanced lunch box can help students meet this goal. But before they can prepare such a thing, they need to learn which foods belong in each food group.

Curriculum links

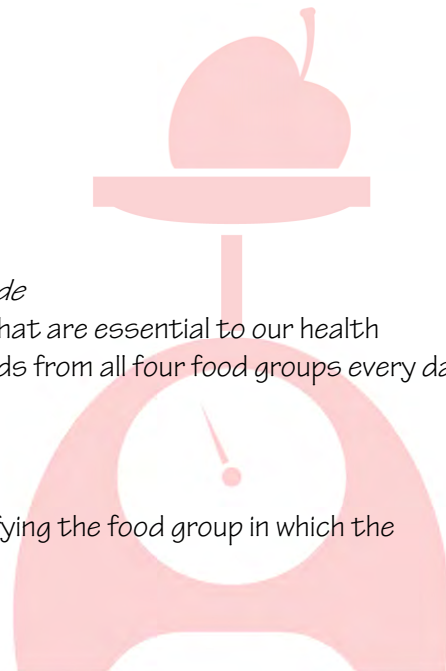
- Health and Physical Education: Healthy Living
- Arts: Visual Arts

Learning objectives

- learn about the four food groups in *Canada's Food Guide*
- understand that each food group is rich in nutrients that are essential to our health
- discover that having a balanced diet means eating foods from all four food groups every day

Learning methods

- associating objects with certain nutrients, and identifying the food group in which the nutrients are found
- making a poster illustrating the four food groups



CANADA AGRICULTURE
AND FOOD MUSEUM

A FASCINATING WORLD



Canada

Materials

- *Canada's Food Guide*
- Lego or Mega blocks
- empty multivitamin and/or multimineral containers
- batteries
- image of a skeleton, or something else that represents bones or teeth (e.g., Halloween decorations, dental accessories, oral care products)
- large sheets of construction paper
- crayons or markers
- scissors
- glue
- grocery store flyers

Pre-activity: prepare craft stations

Before beginning the activity, assemble the supplies needed to make the posters. Set up each craft station with crayons, scissors, glue and grocery store flyers.

Instructions

Introduction: *Canada's Food Guide*

1. Present *Canada's Food Guide* to students. Explain that the guide is a tool that can help us make healthy food choices and eat a balanced diet.
2. Ask students about *Canada's Food Guide*. How many food groups are there? What are they called? Go around the class, naming one food group at a time and asking students, in turn, to identify a food from that group:
 - Vegetables and Fruit
 - Grain Products
 - Milk and Alternatives
 - Meat and Alternatives
3. Why are foods divided into four groups? Explain that foods are divided into groups to help us eat a balanced diet. Each food group is rich in certain nutrients. When we eat foods from all four food groups every day, we're helping our bodies get the important nutrients we need to be healthy and to grow.



CANADA AGRICULTURE
AND FOOD MUSEUM



Canada

4. Set out the objects that illustrate various nutrients (the blocks, empty multivitamin and/or multimineral containers, batteries and skeleton or other image) where students can see them clearly. Explain that each object represents a nutrient or a group of nutrients. Ask students to identify which object matches which nutrient.
 - **Lego or Mega blocks:** These represent protein. Our bodies use protein to build and repair muscles.
 - **Empty multivitamin and/or multimineral containers:** These represent vitamins and minerals. Some vitamins, such as Vitamin A, are essential to the health of our eyes. Vitamin C helps our bodies fight sickness. Some minerals, such as iron, are essential in making red blood cells (these are the cells that transport oxygen from our lungs to all different parts of our bodies). Magnesium is important for heart health. (Note: Although empty multivitamin and multimineral containers are a good way to represent nutrients, we should try to get these nutrients from food, rather than supplements.)
 - **Image of a skeleton or something else that represents bones or teeth:** These image represent calcium. Calcium is a very important mineral. Our bodies use it to build, maintain and repair our bones and teeth.
 - **Batteries:** These represent energy. The energy that cars need comes from fuel and the energy some toys need comes from batteries. Our bodies also need energy. Most of the energy we need comes from carbohydrates. Carbohydrates are sugars that give our bodies lots of energy.
5. Ask students to match the objects with the four food groups.
 - **Lego or Mega blocks:** meat and alternatives are rich in protein.
 - **Empty multivitamin and/or multimineral containers:** vegetables and fruit are rich in vitamins and minerals.
 - **Image of a skeleton or something else that represents bones or teeth:** milk and alternatives are rich in calcium.
 - **Batteries:** grain products are rich in carbohydrates (or sugar).
6. Why is it important to remember which foods belong in each food group? To have a balanced diet, *Canada's Food Guide* recommends that we eat a certain amount of food from each food group every day. To do so, we need to know which foods belong in each food group.

Food group poster activity

1. Now that students are familiar with the four food groups, explain that the next activity will be to make their own posters illustrating the four food groups.
2. If you haven't already done so, have students sit down at the craft stations. Give each student a sheet of construction paper.



CANADA AGRICULTURE
AND FOOD MUSEUM



Canada

3. Students divide the sheet into four sections and write the name of one food group in each section.
4. Students then cut out pictures of food from the grocery store flyers and glue them onto the appropriate sections of their posters.
5. Put the posters on display around the school or have students take them home, where they can be used for reference in preparing healthy lunches.

Balanced lunch box challenge

1. Once the posters have been made, explain to students that they now have a reference tool to use when preparing a balanced lunch box. What do they think a balanced lunch box looks like? It should include foods from each of the four food groups. Why is this important? A balanced lunch box gives us a varied diet that provides the nutrients our bodies need to be healthy and to grow.
2. Ask students, as a group, to set themselves a challenge for the next four weeks. Here's a sample challenge for this theme:
 - On [day of the week], I will include at least one food from each of the four food groups in my lunch box.



CANADA AGRICULTURE
AND FOOD MUSEUM



Canada



A BALANCED MEAL



To have a balanced diet, we should consume foods from each of the four food groups every day. Your students may be too young to plan their own meals, but it's never too early to teach them the importance of diversity in the foods they eat.

Curriculum links

- Health and Physical Education: Healthy Living
- Arts: Visual Arts

Learning objectives

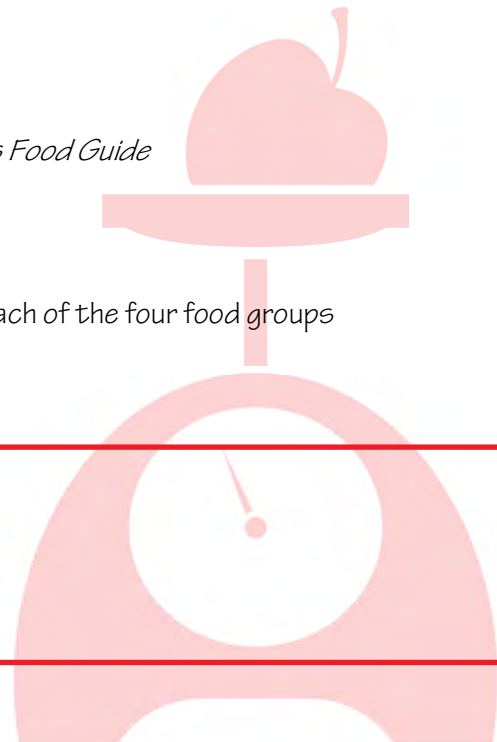
- become familiar with the four food groups in *Canada's Food Guide*

Learning method

- planning a balanced meal by choosing one food from each of the four food groups

Materials

- 1 paper plate for each student
- grocery store flyers
- scissors
- glue
- crayons or markers



Pre-activity: prepare craft stations

Before beginning the activity, assemble the supplies needed to create a balanced meal. Set up each craft station with paper plates, crayons, scissors, glue and grocery store flyers.

Instructions

1. Present *Canada's Food Guide* to students. Explain that the guide is a tool that can help us make healthy food choices and plan balanced meals.
2. Ask students about *Canada's Food Guide*. How many food groups are there? What are they called? Go around the class, naming one food group at a time and asking students, in turn, to identify a food from that group:
 - Vegetables and Fruit
 - Grain Products
 - Milk and Alternatives
 - Meat and Alternatives
3. Ask students why they think we need to eat foods from each of the four food groups every day. When we eat foods from each of the four food groups, we're helping our bodies get the important (essential) nutrients we need to be healthy and to grow. To have a balanced diet, we need to eat foods from all four food groups every day.
4. What do students think a balanced meal includes? It should include foods from each of the four food groups. A balanced meal provides the nutrients our bodies need to be healthy and to grow, and to stay alert, concentrate and have the energy to run around and play.
5. Explain that the next activity will be to plan a balanced meal, using craft supplies. Have students sit down at the craft stations. Give each student a paper plate. Students can draw and colour the foods in their meal on the plate or they can cut out foods from the grocery store flyers and glue them onto the plate.
6. Remind students that, to create a balanced meal, they need to choose food from each of the four food groups. Help them choose foods if necessary; grade 1 students may have difficulty identifying which foods belong in which group.
7. Put the plates on display in the classroom. They can be used for reference when students assess the contents of their lunches boxes on Balanced Lunch Box day.



CANADA AGRICULTURE
AND FOOD MUSEUM



Canada



A BALANCED RELAY RACE



This fun game helps students determine which foods belong in each of the four food groups.

Curriculum links

- Health and Physical Education: Active Living
- Health and Physical Education: Healthy Living

Learning objectives

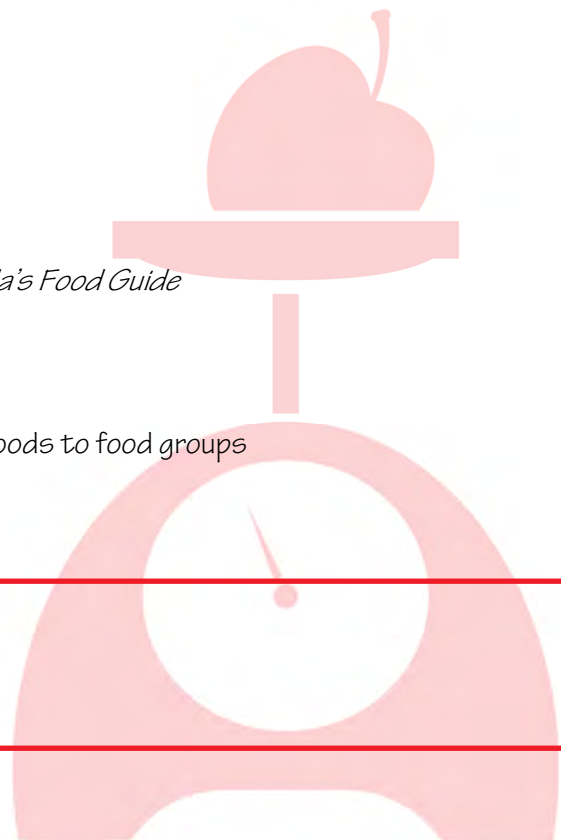
- become familiar with the four food groups in *Canada's Food Guide*

Learning method

- taking part in a relay race that involves matching foods to food groups

Materials

- 2 copies of the food cards below (1 for each team)
- 2 large sheets of stiff paper
- marker
- masking tape



CANADA AGRICULTURE
AND FOOD MUSEUM

A FASCINATING WORLD



Canada

Pre-activity: prepare supplies

1. If you haven't already done so, print out two sets of the food cards and glue them onto stiff paper.
2. To make the food "carpets," turn the large sheets of paper sideways. Divide each sheet into four columns and use the marker to write the name of a food group in each column.

Vegetables and Fruit	Grain Products	Milk and Alternatives	Meat and Alternatives

3. Prepare the area for the relay race. Lay down the two carpets at one end of the classroom, approximately 2 metres apart. Use the masking tape to mark two starting lines on the floor, opposite but at least 3 metres away from each carpet.
4. Shuffle the food cards. Set each pile, face down, near the starting line.

Instructions

1. Present *Canada's Food Guide* to students. Explain that the guide is a tool that can help us make healthy food choices and have a balanced diet.
2. Ask students about *Canada's Food Guide*. How many food groups are there? What are they called? Go around the class, naming one food group at a time and asking students, in turn, to identify a food from that group:
 - Vegetables and Fruit
 - Grain Products
 - Milk and Alternatives
 - Meat and Alternatives
3. Explain to students that the game they are going to play will help them remember which foods are found in each of the four food groups.
4. Divide the class into two teams of equal size. If one team has one less member than the other, choose one student who will play twice.



CANADA AGRICULTURE
AND FOOD MUSEUM



Canada

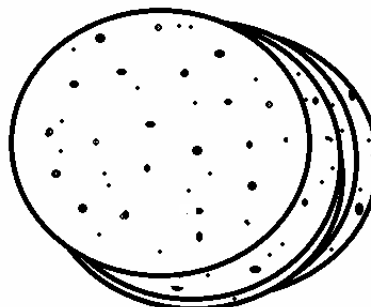
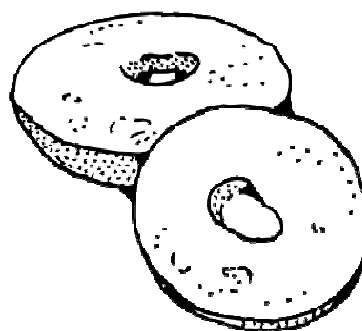
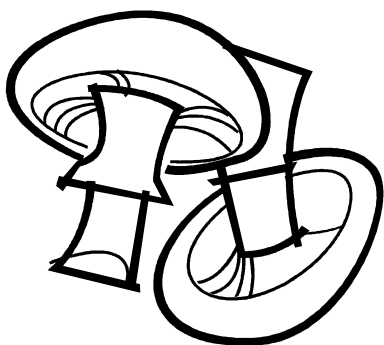
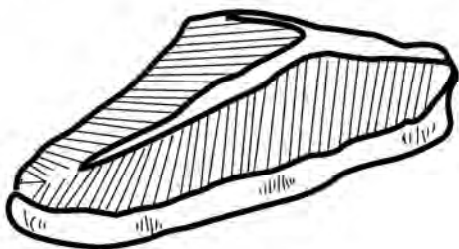
5. Choose a captain for each team. Ask captains to stand behind the starting lines, facing the carpets. Ask the remaining team members to stand in a straight line behind their captains, facing the same way.
6. Explain the rules of the game and then start the relay race.
 - a. On each team, the student at the starting line (student no. 1) picks a food card from the pile on the floor.
 - b. Next, the student walks quickly to the carpet, decides which food group the food shown on the card belongs in, and puts the card in the appropriate group.
 - c. Then, the student goes to the back of the line and mimes (staying silent) his or her favourite sport (dancing, running, soccer, hockey).
 - d. Now it's the second student's turn to pick a food card. The game goes on until each team member has taken a turn.
 - e. When all members of both teams have had a turn, review the food cards on the carpets. Are all the food cards in the correct group? Take any food cards that have been placed in the wrong group and make two additional piles outside the carpets.
 - f. Count the food cards that have been put in the correct group. The team that put the most food cards in the correct group wins the game.
 - g. Give each team the food cards they put in the wrong group. Help the teams to put these cards in the correct group.
 - h. If you wish, shuffle the food cards and begin the race again.
7. Once the race is over, have students sit down and ask them why they think it's important to remember which foods belong in each food group? Each food group is rich in certain nutrients. We need to eat a variety of foods from each of the four food groups every day to get the nutrients our bodies need to be healthy and to grow.

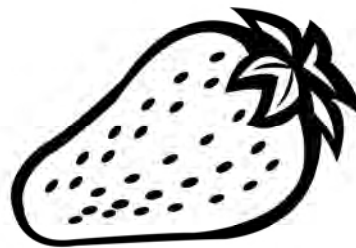
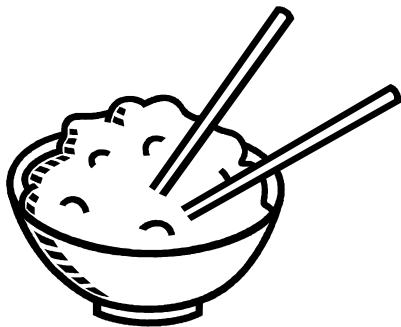
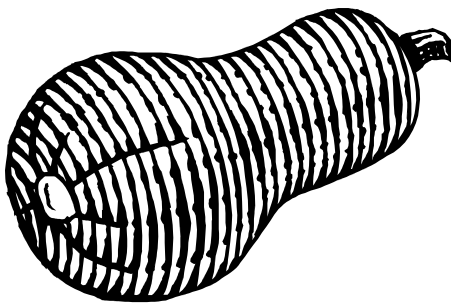
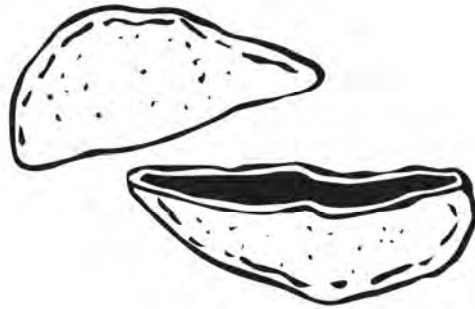
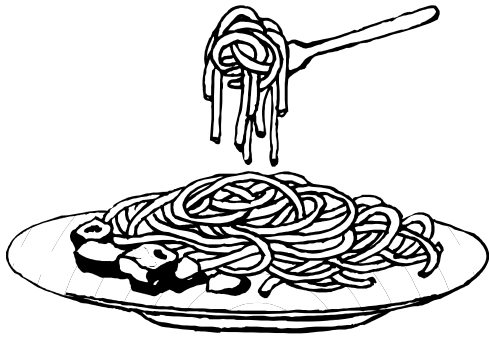


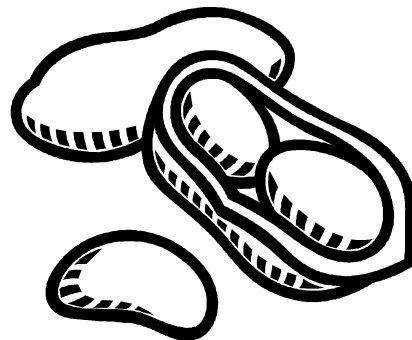
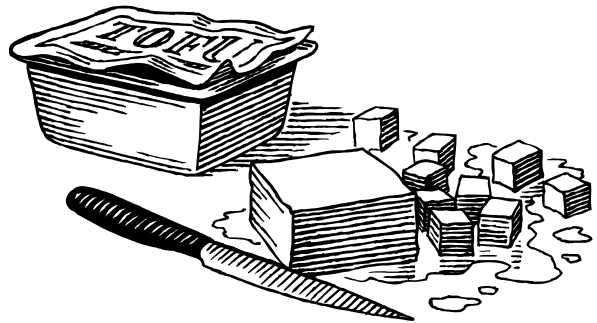
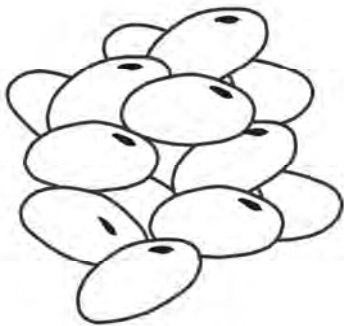
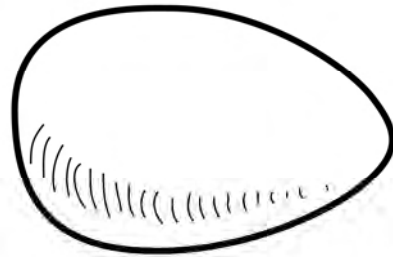
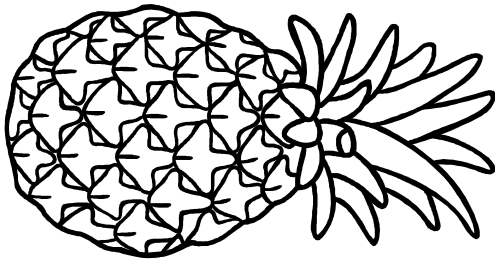
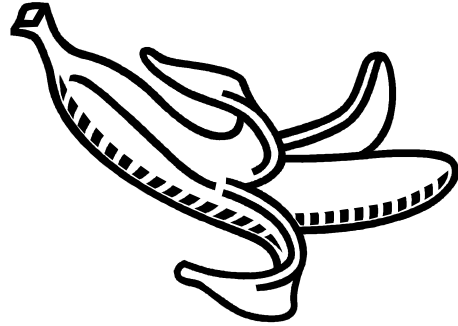
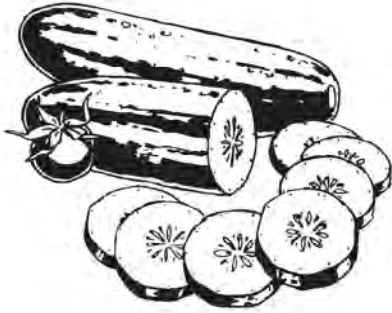
CANADA AGRICULTURE
AND FOOD MUSEUM

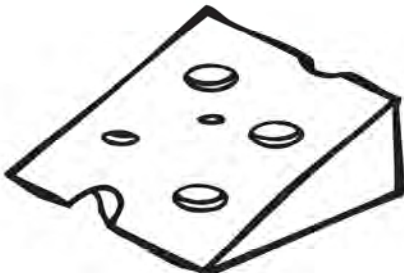
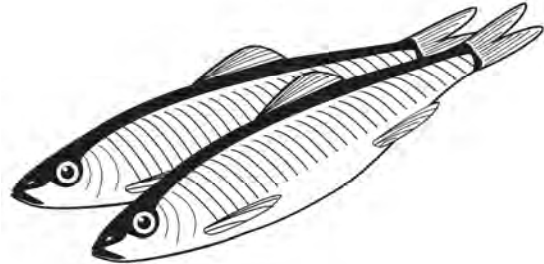
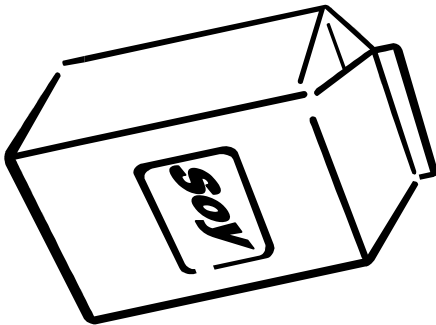
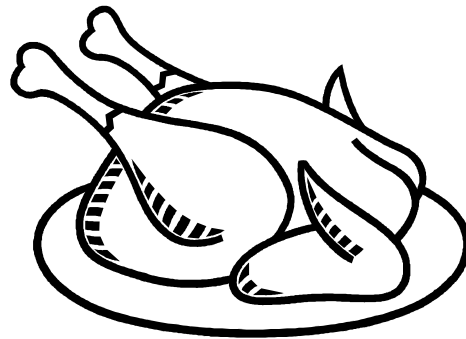
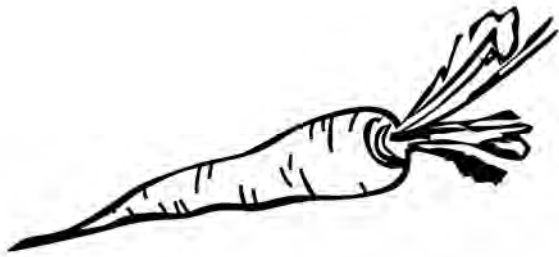


Canada











BALANCED LUNCH BOX

To stay healthy, we should all try to eat a balanced diet. It's a means of getting the essential nutrients we need to be healthy and to grow.

To achieve a balanced diet, it's important to consume foods from each of the four food groups identified in *Canada's Food Guide*. The groups are vegetables and fruit, grain products, milk and alternatives, and meat and alternatives. Providing a balanced lunch box is one way of encouraging your child to eat foods from all four food groups.

Lunch box tips

When you prepare your child's lunch box, try to include at least one food from each of the four food groups. Keep in mind that snacks made with food from two food groups can provide more nutrients and help your child maintain energy and stay focused in class. Here are some ideas for snacks that incorporate two food groups.

- Raw vegetables and humus (chickpeas) or yogurt dip
- Multigrain crackers and cheese slices
- Yogurt and apple slices
- A serving of milk and a serving of fruit
- A hard-boiled egg and whole grain crackers
- Banana bread, carrot bread or zucchini bread*
- Carrot, blueberry, cranberry or pumpkin muffins*

*Note: home baking can allow you to control sugar and salt levels

Canada's Food Guide's Recommended Number of Servings per Day

Age of Child	Vegetables and Fruit	Grain Products	Milk and Alternatives	Meat and Alternatives
4–8 years	5	4	2	1
9–13 years	6	6	3–4	1–2

For information on portion sizes, please consult the *Canada Food Guide* at <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php>.



CANADA AGRICULTURE
AND FOOD MUSEUM



Canada



BLACK BEAN AND WHOLE GRAIN SALAD

This quick, colourful salad can be prepared ahead of time and refrigerated for a few days. Add green or other peppers, celery or other vegetables, as desired.

Ingredients

	2 (254 ml) cans low-salt black beans	
500 ml	cooked whole grains such as quinoa, whole wheat orzo pasta or bulgur	2 cups
75 ml	olive oil	⅓ cup
50 ml	Lemon juice	¼ cup
5 ml	garlic, minced	1 tsp
50 ml	fresh parsley, chopped	3 tbsp
	or	
10 ml	dried parsley	2 tsp
5 ml	dried oregano	1 tsp
1 ml	pepper	¼ tsp
	1 English cucumber, diced	
125 ml	cherry tomatoes, halved, without seeds	½ cup
	¼ red onion, thinly sliced (optional)	
200 ml	feta cheese, cubed	¾ cup

Instructions

1. Open the cans and rinse the black beans.
2. In a large bowl, combine the black beans and the whole grains.
3. In a small bowl, prepare the dressing by combining the olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, parsley, oregano and pepper. Add to the beans and whole grains, and mix well.
4. Add the cucumber, cherry tomatoes, onion and feta cheese. Mix and serve.

Yield: 1.5 L (6 cups)

Nutrition Facts per serving (250 ml or 1 cup each)		Calories 300
Fat 15 g	Fibre 7 g	Vitamin C 15% DV
Sodium 150 mg	Protein 11 g	Calcium 10% DV
Carbohydrate 30 g	Vitamin A 8% DV	Iron 15% DV



CANADA AGRICULTURE
AND FOOD MUSEUM



Canada



HERBY AVOCADO HUMMUS

Ingredients

	1 clove garlic	
	½ jalapeno pepper	
2 ml	salt	½ tsp
250 ml	fresh coriander	1 cup
50 ml + 30 ml	olive oil	¼ cup + 2 tbsp
	juice of 2 limes	
	pinch of cumin	
2 ml	ground coriander	½ tsp
414 ml	1 can chickpeas	14 oz
	1 avocado	
	herbs for garnish	
	whole grain pita bread, vegetables or	
	multi-grain crackers for dipping	

Instructions

1. Place the garlic, jalapeno pepper, and salt in a blender and pulse until finely chopped. Add the fresh coriander and pulse until blended.
2. Add 50 ml (¼ cup) of the olive oil, the juice of 1 lime, the cumin and the ground coriander and continue to blend. Reserve a few spoonfuls of this sauce for a garnish.
3. Place the chickpeas and the avocado in the blender and pulse until creamy. Add the rest of the olive oil and the juice of the other lime.
4. Place in bowls; garnish with the reserved sauce and a few sprigs of herbs. Serve with whole grain pita bread, vegetables or multi-grain crackers.

Recipe adapted from <http://www.biggirlssmallkitchen.com/2012/07/herby-avocado-hummus.html>

Yield: 500 ml (2 cups)

Nutrition Facts per serving (20 ml or 4 tsp)		Calories 60
Fat 5 g	Fibre 1 g	Vitamin C 8% DV
Sodium 85 mg	Protein 1 g	Calcium 0% DV
Carbohydrate 3 g	Vitamin A 4% DV	Iron 2% DV



CANADA AGRICULTURE
AND FOOD MUSEUM



Canada