

Lincoln County Homemakers' News and Clues

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The Joy of Soy



Soybean production has traditionally been one of the largest agricultural enterprises in Arkansas. In fact, Arkansas ranks eighth nationally in soybean production. Soybeans are harvested annually from 3.2 million acres in Arkansas. In 2006, over 100 million bushels of soybeans were harvested, with a value of \$698,425,000!

Beginning 15 years ago, the scientific community began actively investigating the role of soy in preventing and treating chronic diseases. In addition to their potential benefits, soyfoods can be a nutritious addition to a healthy diet, providing high quality protein, omega-3 fatty acids, B vitamins, and more.

Since 1513 when Ponce de León first introduced to North America the contagious concept of the “fountain of youth,” people have sought a solution to aging. Even though soyfoods will in no way turn back the hands of time, research does indicate that soyfoods have many positive effects on a variety of health concerns that develop as we age.

Coronary heart disease is the leading cause of death in Arkansas. While there are many risks for heart disease, high LDL-cholesterol is a major factor. New research is showing that eating more soy protein and less animal protein can help lower high cholesterol. The evidence is so strong that the FDA allows health claims about soy protein reducing the risk for coronary heart disease on low-fat soyfoods containing at least 6.25 grams of soy protein per serving. As little as 25 grams of soy protein a day, which is 2 – 3 servings of soyfoods, may be enough to lower cholesterol levels.

Several benefits of soy protein exist for the management of diabetes. Many soyfoods have a lower glycemic index. Foods with a low glycemic index help keep blood sugar levels more stable, making diabetes much easier to control. Additionally, many soyfoods are high in dietary fiber and fiber also helps stabilize blood sugar levels.

Research also looks promising that eating soyfoods may reduce the risk of prostate and breast cancers, may help prevent bone loss, and might help relieve some symptoms of menopause. New studies even indicate that eating soyfoods show promise for boosting mental ability.

Soybeans are cholesterol-free and are good sources of several vitamins, minerals and fiber. Soy contains natural substances called phytochemicals which may help protect against chronic disease. Soy protein contains essential amino acids. Whether you are interested in becoming more heart healthy, want to lose weight, or you are seeking healthful food selections, soyfoods can fit into any lifestyle!

The Joy of Cooking Soybeans

Soybeans can be purchased in grocery and natural food stores as dry, canned, fresh, frozen, or in the pod.

Soybeans should not be eaten raw. They must be cooked to increase the digestibility of the proteins.



To cook dry soybeans, soak soybeans in 4 cups of water for each 1 cup of beans for 8 hours or overnight in the refrigerator. Drain and rinse the beans, then add 4 cups of fresh water for each 1 cup of beans you started with.

Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and skim off the excess foam. Simmer about 3 hours, adding more water as needed, until beans are tender. They will remain somewhat firm compared to cooked navy beans. One cup dry beans will equal 2 – 3 cups of cooked beans.

Dry soybeans may also be cooked in a pressure cooker. Place pre-soaked, drained, and rinsed beans in your pressure cooker. Add 4 cups of water plus 2 tablespoons of cooking oil for the first cup of beans, and 3 cups of water and 2 tablespoons of soy oil for each additional cup of beans. The oil will help control foaming. Do not fill the cooker above the halfway mark.

Cook with fifteen pounds of pressure for 9 – 12 minutes. Quickly release pressure by placing cooker under cold running water. Drain immediately.

Salt or acidic ingredients, such as tomatoes, lemon juice, or vinegar, should not be added to yellow soybeans until they are thoroughly cooked. Acidic products delay the softening process. However, you may add these when cooking black soybeans to help them retain their shape.

One 15-ounce can of white or black soybeans is equal to 1 ½ cups of cooked soybeans. Canned soybeans can be used in any recipe that calls for beans. Cooked green soybeans can be used in recipes that call for green peas or beans.

The Joy of Eating Soyfoods

From little soybeans an astonishing variety of soy products are now available. Soy oil can be used for cooking; soy flour for baking; and soy nut butter for spreading.

For persons with milk allergies or lactose intolerance, soymilk, soy cheese, and soy yogurt offer delicious ways to include essential nutrients, such as calcium, vitamin A, and vitamin D for a healthy diet. When you want a quick snack, crunch on guilt-free flavorful soy chips or soy bars as a simple healthy component to your weight loss program.



More ideas for putting soy into your diet include:

- use whole soybeans like other beans and peas in your favorite recipes.
- use tofu in dressings, dips, desserts, stir-frys and salads.
- substitute soy milk for cow's milk in soups, sauces, puddings, and beverages.
- replace one-fourth of a recipe's total flour with soy flour.
- choose soy-based vegetable burgers, soy sausage, hot dogs, breakfast strips, and pepperoni some of the time.



The Joy of Tofu

Tofu, a soft, cheese-like food, is made by curdling fresh, hot soymilk with a coagulant. Tofu is probably the most versatile soyfood to use in cooking because it acts like a sponge and has the miraculous ability to soak up any flavor that is added to it.



Water-Packed tofu—either Extra-Firm or Firm—is dense and solid. This type of tofu holds up well in stir-fry dishes, soups, or on the grill—any recipe that you want the tofu to maintain its shape.

The water must be squeezed out before using. To reduce the amount of water, place the block of tofu on a pie plate or a shallow dish. Stack another plate on top of the tofu. Add weight to the plate using canned goods and wait 15 – 20 minutes. Then pour off the excess water.

Silken tofu—either Extra-Firm, Firm, Soft, or Reduced Fat—is made by a slightly different process that results in a creamy, custard-like product. Silken tofu works well in puréed or blended dishes.

Tofu is commonly sold in water-filled tubs, vacuum packs, or in aseptic brick packages. Unless it is aseptically packaged, tofu should be kept cold. As with any perishable food, check the expiration date on the package.

Once the tofu package is open, leftover tofu should be rinsed and covered with fresh water for storage. Change the water daily to keep it fresh. Use the tofu within a week.



Tofu can also be frozen up to five months. The texture will be spongy, chewy, and more meatlike. After thawing tofu in the refrigerator, squeeze out the excess water.

Mock Egg Salad

- Ingredients: Yield: 4 servings
- 8 ounce tofu, crumbled or
 - 1 pkg (12 ounce) silken tofu
 - 1 Tablespoon prepared mustard
 - 1 Tablespoon honey
 - 2 teaspoon vinegar
 - 1/2 teaspoon turmeric
 - 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
 - 1/2 teaspoon celery seed
 - 1/8 teaspoon pepper
 - 1/4 cup minced celery
 - 1/4 cup minced green pepper
 - 2 Tablespoon minced pickles (optional)

Directions:
Crumble tofu in a medium mixing bowl.

Combine mustard, honey, vinegar, turmeric, onion powder, celery seed and pepper in a small dish.

Pour over the tofu and mash together well. Add celery, green pepper and pickles and mix well again.

May serve immediately, but letting it chill for a few hours allows the flavors to blend better.

Nutritional content per 1/3 cup serving:

84 calories	4 grams total fat
	0.6 grams saturated fat
7 grams protein	7 grams carbohydrate
67 mg sodium	0 mg cholesterol

(Recipe from Soyfoods.com)

Enjoy the Joy of Soy!

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April is Soyfoods Month!

In this issue discover the Joy of Soy!


Soyfoods Once a Day!
for Life!