

March 2024

Non-Metro New Mexico Area Agency on Aging
Nutrition Corner



The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics has chosen “[Beyond the Table](#)” as this year’s theme to inform people of the farm-to-fork aspect of food production and the distribution process to grocery stores and farmers’ markets. The theme also helps us to recognize the various situations in which we eat food: around the family dinner table, in schools, in restaurants, at events and games, etc. In addition, it hopes to bring awareness for the need to decrease food waste at school, work, home, and beyond.

New Mexico Grown Highlight

Full Circle Mushrooms is based in La Mesa, New Mexico, and make it easy to have a **farm-to-table** experience. Mushrooms have many nutritional benefits and can be added to many of the recipes you already prepare.

Please visit their website for cooking ideas and/or ordering information.

[Full Circle Mushrooms](#)

To subscribe to their newsletter, go to:

<https://subscribepage.io/NHcsl7>

For more information on New Mexico Grown and how to participate, visit their website at:

[NEW MEXICO GROWN](#)

No More Waste!

Billions of pounds of food are thrown away each year in our homes. But wait there’s more! Grocery stores and restaurants are also throwing away food. And what happens when there are crops left in the fields? It becomes more waste. Here are some tips to help prevent waste in your senior center:

- ⇒ Take inventory before purchasing and don’t over buy
- ⇒ Plan and stick to the menu and serving sizes
- ⇒ Make sure to rotate the food items (“first-in-first-out” concept)
- ⇒ Be creative with leftovers
- ⇒ Freeze food to be used at a later date (repurposing extra food)
- ⇒ Donate bulk food to shelters or food pantries
- ⇒ Consider starting a compost pile at your facility (and a garden!)
- ⇒ Start a recycling program
- ⇒ Be aware of what your seniors are throwing away and use that information for menu planning



<https://seniordining.org/home/f/4-ways-to-curb-food-waste-in-your-communities-and-your-own-homes?blogcategory=Blog>

Lentil Sloppy Joes

- 1 1/2 cup brown lentils, rinsed and picked over
- 1 yellow onion, diced (about 2 1/2 cups)
- 1c chopped green chile
- 1 green or red bell pepper, diced (about 1 1/2 cups)
- 1 1/2 tablespoon chili powder
- 2 teaspoons sweet paprika
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 (6.0-ounce) can no-salt-added tomato paste
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 (15.0-ounce) can no-salt-added crushed tomatoes
- 8 hamburger buns



Benefits of Lentils

- Lentils are made of more than 25% protein. This makes them a great meat substitute.
- 1 cup of lentils provide 15.6 grams of fiber
- Excellent source of iron, zinc, B vitamins, magnesium, and potassium
- Are rich in polyphenols which have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects.
- Are heart-healthy by helping to improve cholesterol and blood pressure levels
- Gluten-free legumes
- Low-fat
- Great in salads, soups, burgers, casseroles, tacos, etc.
- Budget friendly

Directions

- Place lentils in a small pot and cover with 2 inches of water. Cover and bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer. Cook until lentils are tender, about 30 minutes.
- Meanwhile, heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add onion, green chile and bell pepper. Cook, stirring frequently until onion is golden brown, about 8 minutes.
- Add chili powder, paprika, cumin, cayenne and tomato paste and cook, stirring constantly, until spices and tomato paste are fragrant, about 2 minutes.
- Add vinegar and then use a wooden spoon to scrape up any bits from the bottom of the pan. Add 2 cups water, garlic, and crushed tomatoes.
- Reduce heat to medium-low and let sauce simmer until it thickens, at least 30 minutes.
- When lentils are cooked, drain off any excess cooking liquid and add to the pan with sauce; stir well to combine.
- Mash some or all of the lentils using a wooden spoon or potato masher. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed with more pepper.
- Toast hamburger buns in the oven, if desired. Ladle 1 cup of the lentil mixture on each toasted bun and serve.
- Find the adjusted servings recipe on our website: [Non-Metro New Mexico Area Agency on Aging](#)