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Wise Notes for Consumers

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September is Family Meal Time Month

September is a special month for AgriLife Extension as we “Celebrate Family Mealttime”. It seems like everyone is so busy with work and afterschool activities, plus technology always having us “plugged in”, that often times we miss face-to-face connections with our family. Family meals provide a great opportunity for family members to connect because everyone has to eat! Throughout the month of September we encourage everyone to have meals as a family. Source: Texas A&M AgriLife Extension’s Dinner Tonight, (dinnertonight.tamu.edu).

To get started, commit to having your family sit down at least three times a week to eat together, and use this as a time to:

- share family stories,
- learn about everyone’s day,
- set family goals, and
- make plans for future activities.

Remember, meals do not have to be fancy or gourmet to make mealttime special, the focus can be more on getting everyone together. The following recipe could easily be incorporated into our family’s dinner tonight and is a great way to sneak in some vegetables.

Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national orientation. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

Slow Cooker Sloppy Joes

Ingredients:

- 2 cups carrots grated
- 1 medium yellow squash grated
- 1 medium zucchini grated
- 1 medium yellow pepper finely chopped
- 2 medium tomatoes seeded and chopped
- 1/2 cup red onion finely chopped
- 1/2 cup ketchup low sodium
- 3 teaspoons dried basil
- 3 tablespoons molasses
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 2 garlic cloves minced
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- 2 pounds ground beef extra lean
- 10 whole-wheat hamburger buns

Directions:

Clean your preparation area and wash your hands. Wash your fresh vegetables and prepare as directed. In a 5 quart slow cooker, combine all ingredients except ground beef. In a large skillet, cook ground beef over medium heat 8-10 minutes or until browned. Drain, transfer into slow cooker. Stir ingredients to combine. Cook on low 5-6 hours. Using a slotted spoon, serve beef mixture on buns.

Nutrients per serving: Calories 350, Total Fat 9g, Saturated Fat 3g, Trans Fat 0g, Cholesterol 55mg, Sodium 55mg, Total Carbohydrate 40g, Dietary Fiber 2g, Sugars 14g(4 gm added sugars), Protein 27g.

Serves 10

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