

# Low Sodium Recipes

## Shaking Up School Lunches

Creative recipes to enhance flavors and reduce sodium



For Vermont School Nutrition Professionals

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# Reducing Sodium in School Meals

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If you're looking for school-approved recipes that are made from healthy ingredients, look no further! This booklet features a collection of 15 recipes for school food service professionals to use in the cafeteria and at school events. These healthy recipes are low sodium and will help you meet the School Nutrition Standards for sodium in school meals. The recipes were developed by Vermont Chef Patsy Jamieson and funded through the State Public Health Actions to Prevent and Control Diabetes, Heart Disease, Obesity and Associated Risk Factors and Promote School Health (DP13-1305).

About 9 in 10 U.S. children eat more sodium than recommended. A high sodium diet can lead to high blood pressure, which is a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke. About 1 in 6 children ages 8-17 years has raised blood pressure. Lowering sodium in children's diets today can help prevent heart disease tomorrow, especially for those who are overweight.<sup>1</sup>

The school environment can have a major impact on the diet of school-aged children in Vermont. Research shows that improved nutrition in schools leads to increased focus and attention, improved test scores and better classroom behavior.<sup>2</sup>

Nutritious school food:

- Helps students develop lifelong healthy eating habits.
- Contributes to a culture of wellness at school.
- Reinforces nutrition education messages from teachers.
- Increases school connectedness and reinforces to children, families and communities that students' health and well-being are valued.

<sup>1</sup><http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/children-sodium/>

<sup>2</sup>[https://www.healthiergeneration.org/about\\_childhood\\_obesity/wellness\\_stories/healthy\\_kids\\_learn\\_better/](https://www.healthiergeneration.org/about_childhood_obesity/wellness_stories/healthy_kids_learn_better/)

# Sodium Reduction Tips for Schools



- ⇒ Check the Nutrition Facts labels and ingredient lists
  - Foods that are low in sodium contain less than 140 milligrams (mg) per serving, or 5% or less of % Daily Value
- ⇒ Serve more fresh foods and cook from scratch
  - Most fresh fruits and vegetables are naturally low in sodium.
- ⇒ Limit the use of high sodium foods such as:
  - Salty, smoked or cured meat such as bologna, hot dogs, ham, luncheon meats and sausage
  - Salty snack items such as chips and pretzels
  - Ready to eat canned foods such as soups, chili and ravioli
  - Food prepared in brine such as pickles, olives and sauerkraut
  - Food items made with cheese
  - Condiments: when possible, limit the portion size of condiments such as ketchup, mustard, barbecue sauce and salad dressing
- ⇒ Introduce low-sodium items **gradually**
  - For example, start by serving a 50/50 mixture of regular ketchup and low-sodium ketchup. Gradually adjust the ratio, using more low-sodium ketchup, until people have adjusted their palates to the taste of less salty ketchup.
- ⇒ Boost Flavors with herbs and spices instead of adding salt, *check out the fun shakes on pages 5-9*
- ⇒ Ensure that goals for sodium reduction in your [School Wellness Policy](#):
  - Meet or exceed the USDA's Nutrition Standards for National School Lunch and Breakfast.
  - Implement food purchasing policies and standards that reduce sodium in foods.
  - Replace high-sodium foods with lower sodium options, including fruits and vegetables.

Check the package for nutrient claims:

Salt/Sodium-Free	Less than 5 mg of sodium per serving
Very Low Sodium	35 mg of sodium or less per serving
Low Sodium	140 mg of sodium or less per serving
Reduced Sodium	At least 25% less sodium than the regular product
No-Salt-Added/Unsalted	No salt is added during processing, but these products may not be salt/sodium-free unless stated

# Veggie Seasoning Shake

*This shake makes a great all-purpose seasoning. The dehydrated vegetables contribute both sweet and savory flavors. This shake perks up starchy dishes, as well as vegetables and eggs. Do not expose this to high heat (for example: coating chicken before roasting), because it can burn.*

*YIELD: Approximately 1 cup plus 3 tablespoons.*

## Instructions

1. Grind dehydrated vegetables to a fine powder in a blender, stopping to redistribute ingredients several times. Transfer to a bowl.
2. Add parsley, salt, and lemon pepper to ground dehydrated vegetables; mix well.

Transfer to shaker jar (use a funnel if needed).

The shake will keep covered at room temperature for up to 1 month.

## Notes

Ingredient Note:

Dried vegetables are simply vegetables that have been dried for long-term storage. You can find them in the bulk section of natural foods stores and online at sites. Sometimes the mixture is called dried soup vegetables. If you use this type of mixture, be sure it does not contain pasta or beans. Sodium occurs naturally in vegetables and this is concentrated during dehydration. However, it is a small amount and it is accompanied by vitamins, minerals and fiber. The Veggie Seasoning Shake is also good for seasoning vegetable soups and sauces.



## Ingredients

2 cups

dehydrated mixed vegetables  
(carrots, onions, corn, celery,  
green beans, leeks, bell peppers)

1/3 cup

dried parsley

1 1/4 tsp

kosher salt, coarse

1 1/4 tsp

lemon pepper

### Nutritional Information

Serving Size: 1/4 teaspoon

Sodium 15 mg (1% daily value)

It is not a significant source of calories, fat, cholesterol, carbohydrate, fiber, sugars or protein.

# Sesame Seasoning Shake

*Sesame seeds are packed with nutrients and flavor. Toasting them intensifies the flavor and grinding them into a coarse powder turns them into a shake, which stretches a small quantity of salt. This shake makes a great low-sodium finish for stir-fries and steamed vegetables.*

*YIELD: Approximately 1 ½ cups.*

## Instructions

1. Toast sesame seeds in large, dry skillet (not nonstick) over medium heat, stirring constantly, until light golden-brown, 1 to 3 minutes. Transfer to bowl; let cool.
2. Place sesame seeds in blender. Pulse until coarsely ground. Transfer to bowl.
3. Stir in salt and paprika.

Transfer to shaker jar (use a funnel if needed).

Store in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

## Notes



## Ingredients

1 1/4 cups

sesame Seeds

1 1/4 teaspoons

kosher salt, coarse

1 1/4 teaspoons

paprika

### Nutritional Information

Serving Size: 1/4 teaspoon

Calories 5

Total Fat 0.5 grams

Saturated Fat 0 grams

Sodium 10 milligrams  
(0% daily value)

It is not a significant source of cholesterol, sodium, carbohydrate, fiber, sugars or protein.

# Herbal Seasoning Shake

*In this all-purpose shake, the tart flavor from citric acid, along with dried dill weed and garlic powder, rounds out the flavors. You will be amazed to see how it perks up a simple plate of steamed vegetables!*

*YIELD: Approximately 1 ½ cups.*

## Instructions

1: Combine all ingredients in bowl; mix well.

Transfer to shaker jar (use a funnel if needed).

The shake will keep covered at room temperature for up to 1 month.

## Notes

### Ingredient Note:

**Nutritional yeast** contributes umami (a pleasant, savory taste, known as the 5<sup>th</sup> taste). It is a type of deactivated yeast that is grown in a medium of sugarcane and beet molasses. The yeast is then deactivated through a heat process. The flavor is often described as cheesy and it is used as a vegan substitute for Parmesan cheese.

### Ingredient Note:

**Citric acid** bumps up acidity and brings out flavors of the foods you are seasoning. It is widely used in commercial food production. It is sometimes sold as “sour salt”.



## Ingredients

1 1/4 cups

nutritional yeast, coarse

see *Ingredient Note*

5 tablespoons

dried dill weed or freeze-dried dill

5 teaspoons

garlic powder (*not* garlic salt)

2 1/2 teaspoons

citric acid (optional)

see *Ingredient Note*

2 1/2 teaspoons

kosher salt, coarse (optional)

### Nutritional Information

Serving Size: 1/4 teaspoon

*With Salt:*

Sodium 15 mg (1% daily value)

It is not a significant source of calories, fat, cholesterol, carbohydrate, fiber, sugars or protein.

# Chili Seasoning Shake



*Chili powder is a familiar seasoning that boosts flavors in a variety of dishes, such as vegetables, potatoes, meat and egg dishes. Here we have rounded out the flavors of store bought chili powder with cumin, oregano and garlic powder. Try this shake with sweet potato oven fries.*

*YIELD: Approximately 1 ½ cups.*

## Instructions

1: Combine all ingredients in bowl; mix well.

Transfer to shaker jar (use a funnel if needed).

The shake will keep covered at room temperature for up to 1 month.

## Notes

### Fun Fact:

Dried herbs and spices share space on the spice racks, but do you know the difference between an herb and a spice?

“Herb” refers to a plant from which the leafy parts are used for culinary, cosmetic and medicinal purposes. Herbs can be used in fresh or dried.

“Spices” come from the seeds, roots and barks of plants. Most spices (but not all) come from tropical regions. Spices are generally used in dried form.

## Ingredients

1 1/4 cups

Chili powder

1/3 cup

Ground cumin

3 tablespoons plus one teaspoon

Dried oregano

1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons

Garlic powder (*not* garlic salt)

2 1/2 teaspoons

Kosher salt, coarse (optional)

### Nutritional Information

Serving Size: 1/4 teaspoon

Sodium 15 mg (1% daily value)

It is not a significant source of calories, fat, cholesterol, carbohydrate, fiber, sugars or protein

# Savory Celery Seasoning Shake

*Celery flakes, which are dried celery leaves and stalks, have a surprisingly salty flavor. When ground and mixed with additional seasonings, they make an excellent alternative to salt. This shake is useful for seasoning dishes such as low-sodium tomato sauce. It is also particularly helpful for boosting flavor in starchy dishes like mashed potatoes and pasta, which can taste bland when made with less salt.*

*YIELD: Approximately 1/2 cup.*

## Instructions

- 1: Grind celery flakes to a coarse powder in a blender. Transfer to a bowl.
- 2: Stir in paprika, garlic powder, lemon pepper and salt; mix well.

Transfer to shaker jar (use a funnel if needed).

The shake will keep covered at room temperature for up to 1 month.

## Notes



## Ingredients

1 cup

celery fakes

2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons

paprika

2 teaspoons

garlic powder

2 teaspoons

lemon pepper

1 teaspoon

kosher salt, coarse

### Nutritional Information

Serving Size: 1/4 teaspoon

Sodium 30 mg (1% daily value)

It is not a significant source of calories, fat, cholesterol, carbohydrate, fiber, sugars or protein.

# Avocado Ranch Dressing or Dip



Avocado replaces store bought mayonnaise. It gives this easy homemade version of the popular ranch dressing a thick texture and rich taste. With less than a third of the sodium of the store bought variety, this recipe shows how making dishes from scratch, rather than store bought products, is a good way to reduce sodium without taking away from flavor. The tart flavor in the buttermilk and vinegar keeps the lovely pale green color of the avocado.

**YIELD:** Approximately 6 3/4 cups or 50 (2-tablespoon) servings.

## Instructions

1. Place buttermilk in large bowl.
2. Wash avocados; halve and remove pits. Scoop flesh into buttermilk in the bowl. Use an immersion blender to puree avocado-buttermilk mixture until very smooth.
3. Add vinegar, garlic powder, onion powder, sugar, salt, and pepper. Blend until incorporated and smooth. Add chives and parsley and mix by hand.

Dressing will keep, covered, in the refrigerator for up to 2 days.

## Notes

**Slash the Sodium!** Our homemade ranch dressing has less than a third of the sodium of commercial varieties.

Tip: If the avocados you purchase are not ripe, you can speed up the process as follows: Place the avocado in a brown paper bag with an apple or banana for two to three days until they are ripe.

## Ingredients

- 3 3/4 cups buttermilk, cultured, low-fat (well shaken)
- 5 each Avocado
- 2/3 cup vinegar (distilled white or cider)
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 tablespoon + 2 teaspoons sugar, granulated
- 1 1/4 teaspoons salt, table
- 1 1/4 teaspoons pepper
- 2/3 cup each chives, fresh, chopped, or frozen parsley, fresh, chopped, or dried

### Nutritional Information

Serving Size: 2 tablespoons

Calories	45
Total Fat	3g
Saturated Fat	0.5g
Cholesterol	0mg
Sodium	80 (3% DV)
Carbohydrate	3g
Fiber	1g
Sugars	1g
Protein	1g

# French Dressing



Tomato paste, which is low in sodium, makes an excellent substitution for the ketchup that is typically used in French dressings. It gives this flavorful dressing body so that it coats the salad greens. This homemade version has less than one-third of the sodium than a serving of store bought French dressing!

*YIELD: Approximately 3 cups, 24 (2-tablespoon) servings.*

## Instructions

*To make with an immersion blender:*

1. Place vinegar, tomato paste, mustard, sugar, garlic powder, salt, pepper, oil and ½ cup water in large bowl.
2. Blend with an immersion blender until thickened and creamy. Stir in tarragon (or dill weed) by hand.

*To make in a food processor:*

1. Place vinegar, tomato paste, mustard, sugar, garlic powder, salt and pepper in food processor; pulse to blend.
2. Gradually add oil and water through the feed tube, processing until the mixture is smooth and creamy. Transfer to storage container and stir in tarragon (or dill weed) by hand.

The dressing will keep in an airtight container or squeeze bottle in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

## Notes

## Ingredients

3/4 cup  
apple cider vinegar

1/3 cup  
tomato paste

2 tablespoons  
dijon mustard

1 1/2 teaspoons  
sugar

1 teaspoon  
garlic powder

1/2 teaspoon  
table salt

1/2 teaspoon  
black pepper

1 1/2 cups  
vegetable oil

1/2 cup  
water

### Nutritional Information

Serving Size: 2 teaspoons

Calories	130
Total Fat	14g
Saturated Fat	2g
Cholesterol	0mg
Sodium	80mg (3% DV)
Carbohydrate	1g
Fiber	0g
Sugars	1g
Protein	0g

# Black Bean Hummus



*Hummus has become very popular in recent years and it is easy to make it from scratch. Traditional hummus is made with chickpeas (garbanzo beans), but you can also make a tasty and nutritious spread with a different types of beans. Either canned black beans or red kidney beans can be used in this recipe, which gets a boost of flavor from cumin and lime juice. Serve as a dip for vegetables, baked chips or as a sandwich spread.*

*Yield : Approximately 8 ½ cups, 68 (2-tablespoon) servings.*

## Instructions

1. Mince garlic with cumin and salt in food processor or on cutting board with chef's knife. Transfer to a large bowl.
2. In batches, puree beans in food processor, adding enough of the measured oil to make a creamy purée and scraping down sides of work bowl from time to time.
3. Transfer each batch to bowl with the garlic. Stir in any remaining measured oil, lime juice, hot sauce, pepper and cilantro or parsley; mix well with a rubber spatula.

The spread will keep, covered, in the refrigerator for up to 4 days or in the freezer for up to 4 months

## Notes

**Slash the Sodium!** If you do not have access to low-sodium canned beans, use regular canned beans, but rinse them thoroughly. Most of the sodium is in the brine, rinsing reduces the sodium by 40%.

## Ingredients

- 6 each  
garlic cloves, peeled, crushed
- 2 tablespoons  
ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon  
table salt
- 1 (#10) can (13 cups drained beans)  
canned black beans or red beans,  
drained and rinsed thoroughly
- 1/2 cup  
vegetable oil
- 3/4 cup  
lime juice
- 1-2 1/2 teaspoons  
hot sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon  
black pepper
- 1/2 cup  
fresh cilantro or parsley, chopped

### Nutritional Information

Serving Size: 2 Tablespoons

Calories	60
Total Fat	2g
Saturated Fat	0g
Cholesterol	0mg
Sodium	80mg
Carbohydrate	8g
Fiber	3g
Sugars	0g
Protein	3g

# Multicolor Black Bean and Barley Salad



*This colorful salad makes a tasty, nutritious and budget friendly addition to the salad bar. Barley is a great source of fiber and its chewy texture teams up beautifully with tender black beans and crunchy vegetables. The citrus dressing gets lots of flavor from cumin, oregano and orange juice, so it tastes great with minimum of added salt. If you have fresh cilantro or parsley on hand, feel free to toss it in. Diced avocado or toasted pumpkin seeds would make appealing garnishes.*

*Yield : Approximately 8 1/2 quarts, 46 (3/4-cup) servings.*

## Instructions

1. Combine barley and water in heavy 4-to 6-quart pot. Cover and bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to low. Simmer, covered, until barley is tender and most of the liquid has been absorbed, 40 to 45 minutes. Spread barley on a half sheet pan, fluff with a fork and let cool.
2. Combine orange juice, vinegar, cumin, oregano and garlic in bowl. Gradually whisk in oil; set aside.
3. If using frozen corn, cook it according to package directions. Drain and refresh under cold running water. If using canned corn, drain and rinse well.
4. Combine barley, corn, beans, bell pepper and scallions in large bowl. Add orange juice dressing; toss to coat well. Season with hot sauce to taste and salt.

Salad will keep, covered, in the refrigerator for up to 2 days

## Ingredients

- 3 cups  
pearl barley
- 2 quarts  
water
- 2 1/2 cups  
orange juice
- 2 1/3 cups  
apple cider vinegar
- 1 3/4 cups  
vegetable oil
- 3 tablespoons + 1 1/2 teaspoons  
cumin, ground
- 2 tablespoons + 1 teaspoon  
oregano, dried
- 6 each or 2 tablespoons, minced  
garlic cloves, minced
- 7 cups  
corn niblets, frozen or canned
- 1 (#10) can (13 cups drained beans)  
canned black beans or red beans,  
drained and rinsed thoroughly
- 7 each/8 cups  
bell peppers, chopped
- 3 1/2 cups (4 bunches)  
scallion, chopped
- 2-3 teaspoons  
hot sauce

### Nutritional Information

#### Serving Size: 3/4 Cup

Calories	60	Total Fat	2g
Saturated Fat	0g	Cholesterol	0mg
Sodium	80mg	Carbohydrate	8g
Fiber	3g	Sugars	0g
Protein	3g		

# Vegetarian Chili with Sweet Potatoes



A hearty chili is an excellent candidate for a low-sodium vegetarian main dish because the beans provide both protein and fiber, while the spice blend contributes a flavor without relying on salt. Sweet potatoes give this dish sweetness and bright color; substitute cubed butternut squash if more convenient. You can add diced cooked chicken (2 ounces per serving) to a portion or all of the chili. Serve with a whole grain, such as brown rice, barley or quinoa. This is also great as a topping for baked potatoes.

*Yield: Approximately 15 quarts, 60 (1-cup) servings.*

## Instructions

1. Heat oil in large heavy soup pot over medium-high heat. Add onion and bell pepper; cook, stirring often, until softened, 15 to 20 minutes. Add garlic, chili powder, cumin and oregano; cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add 2  $\frac{3}{4}$  quarts water. Cover and return to a simmer. Add sweet potatoes and cook, covered, for 10 minutes.
2. Add black beans, kidney beans, tomatoes and green chiles; return to a simmer. Reduce heat to low. Simmer, covered, until sweet potatoes are tender and flavors have blended, 15 to 20 minutes.
3. Mix cornmeal with  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup water in medium bowl. Add cornmeal mixture to the chili; cook, stirring, until the chili has thickened, 2 to 3 minutes. If using frozen corn, rinse it under cold water to thaw. Add corn to the chili; heat through.

Serve with reduced fat cheese or non-fat plain Greek yogurt or with your choice of garnishes.

### Nutritional Information

**Serving Size:** 1 cup + 2 tbsp. Cheddar Cheese

Calories	220	Total Fat	4.5g
Saturated Fat	2g	Cholesterol	10mg
Sodium	260mg	Carbohydrate	32g
Fiber	9g	Sugars	6g
Protein	13g		

## Ingredients

- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 6 medium/2 quarts onion, chopped
- 6 medium/2 quarts green or red bell pepper diced
- 18 each/6 tablespoons garlic, minced
- 3/4 cup chili powder
- 2  $\frac{3}{4}$  quarts + 3/4 cup water
- 6 each/2  $\frac{1}{2}$  quarts diced sweet potato, peeled, cut  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch cubes
- 1 (#10) can each (26 cups drained beans) canned low sodium black and red kidney beans, drained and rinsed thoroughly
- 1 (#10) can (12 cups) canned no-salt added diced tomatoes
- 1 27 ounce can canned chopped mild green chilies
- 3/4 cup cornmeal
- 6 cups corn niblets, frozen or canned, drained and rinsed
- 7.5 cups reduced-fat cheddar cheese

# Berry Good Blueberry Muffins



Here's a healthful and delicious spin on a classic blueberry muffin. In addition to blueberries, this recipe features whole-grain rolled oats and whole-wheat flour. The sweetening comes from maple syrup.

Yield : 48 muffins.

## Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees (375 degrees if using convection). Coat 48 standard-size (2 ¾ x 1 ¼-inches) muffin cups with cooking spray or line with paper liners.
2. Whisk whole-wheat flour, all-purpose flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and cinnamon in large mixing bowl. Stir in 4 cups (12 ounces) rolled oats.
3. Whisk eggs and maple syrup in bowl until smooth. Add buttermilk, oil, orange zest, orange juice and vanilla; whisk until blended. Add egg mixture to flour mixture; mix with rubber spatula just until dry ingredients are moistened. Fold in blueberries.
4. Portion batter into prepared muffin cups using a 2-ounce (1/4-cup) scoop, filling them almost to the top. Sprinkle remaining 1/2 cup (1.7 oz.) rolled oats over muffin tops.
5. Bake muffins until lightly browned and tops spring back when touched lightly, 18 to 22 minutes (about 25 minutes, if using frozen blueberries). Loosen edges and turn muffins onto a wire rack to cool.

### Nutritional Information

#### Serving Size: 1 muffin

Calories	190	Total Fat	6g
Saturated Fat	1g	Cholesterol	30mg
Sodium	190mg	Carbohydrate	8g
Fiber	3g	Sugars	0g
Protein	3g		

## Ingredients

- 3 1/2 cups whole-wheat flour
- 3 cups All-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons baking powder
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon Salt, fine
- 4 teaspoons cinnamon, ground
- 4 1/2 cups, divided rolled oats, old fashioned
- 8 each eggs, large
- 2 cups maple Syrup
- 2 cups buttermilk, well shaken
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 4 teaspoons orange zest
- 1/4 cup orange juice
- 4 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 6 cups blueberries, fresh or frozen, unsweetened

# Red Devil Muffins

No one will ever guess that the secret ingredient is actually a vegetable pureed beets. The beets, which replace some of the fat in a traditional muffin recipe, tastes great with chocolate. Lisa Sprague from Vergennes Union Elementary School shared this recipe, which had been created and shared by a parent.



## Instructions

1. Heat oven to 350 degrees (325 degrees if using convection). Coat 50 standard-size (2 3/4 inch diameter) muffin cups with cooking spray or line with paper liners.
2. In batches, if necessary, purée beets in food processor, stopping to scrape down sides of work bowl several times. Transfer to a large measuring cup. Add enough of the reserved beet liquid (or apple juice) to measure 6 1/3 cups.
3. Whisk flour and baking soda in large mixing bowl. Sift in cocoa; whisk to blend.
4. Whisk eggs, sugar, oil, applesauce, vanilla and the reserved beet purée in another large bowl until blended. Add egg mixture to flour mixture; mix with rubber spatula just until dry ingredients are moistened. Do not over mix.
5. Portion batter into prepared muffin cups using a 2-ounce (1/4-cup) scoop. Bake muffins until lightly browned and tops spring back when touched lightly, 25 to 30 minutes. Loosen edges and turn muffins out onto wire racks to cool.

## Nutritional Information

### Serving Size: 1 muffin

Calories	150	Total Fat	6g
Saturated Fat	1g	Cholesterol	35mg
Sodium	200mg	Carbohydrate	23g
Fiber	4g	Sugars	10g
Protein	4g		

## Ingredients

6 1/4 cups or 5 (15-ounce) cans  
Canned sliced beets, drained and rinsed,  
or cooked fresh

1 1/4 cups  
Canned beet liquid or apple juice

5 cups  
White whole-wheat Flour

1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons  
Baking soda

2 1/2 cups  
Cocoa powder, unsweetened

10 Each  
Large eggs

2 1/2 cups  
Granulated sugar

1 cup  
Vegetable oil

3/4 cup  
Applesauce, unsweetened

2 1/2 tablespoons  
Vanilla extract

Approximately 1 1/2 teaspoons  
Confectioners' sugar

# Oatmeal Breakfast Bars with Oranges and Dates



Canned beans are a secret ingredient in these wholesome bars! The beans provide protein and fiber. As there is no flour in this recipe, as long as you use rolled oats labeled gluten-free this is a gluten-free treat. Rolled oats are by nature gluten free, but they are often processed in a facility that also processes wheat.

## Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees (325 degrees, if using convection). Line half-sheet pan (s) with foil or parchment paper, leaving a 2-inch overhang along the 2 long sides.
2. Place dates and orange juice in a medium microwave-safe bowl, stir to moisten dates. Cover with a plate or vented plastic wrap. Microwave at High 2 minutes. Set aside to plump. Alternatively, bring to a simmer in a saucepan. Remove from heat and let stand, covered, to plump.
3. If using pumpkin seeds, toast them in dry, medium skillet (not nonstick) over medium heat, stirring constantly, until starting to crackle, 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer to bowl. Let cool. Don't worry about toasting sunflower seeds.
4. Place beans in food processor; process until coarsely pureed. Add eggs, honey, sugar, oil, butter, vanilla and baking soda to pureed beans; process until smooth, stopping to scrape down sides of work bowl once.
5. Combine oats and orange zest in large bowl. Add the bean mixture, along with plumped dates and toasted pumpkin seeds; mix with a rubber spatula
6. Scrape batter into prepared pan, spreading evenly. Bake 25 to 35 minutes, or until top springs back when touched lightly. Let cool completely in pan on rack.

Cut each sheet into 48 bars.

### Nutritional Information: Serving Size: 1 bar

Calories	110	Total Fat	2.5g
Saturated Fat	1g	Cholesterol	20mg
Sodium	45mg	Carbohydrate	2g
Fiber	2g	Sugars	12g
Protein	3g		

## Ingredients

2 1/2 Cups/ 1 pound

Dates, chopped and pitted

1/2 Cup

Orange juice

3/4 Cup or 4 ounces

Unsalted pumpkin seeds or  
unsalted sunflower seeds

2 Cups drained and rinsed

Canned low-sodium red kidney beans,  
drained and rinsed

4 Each

Eggs, large

1 Cup

Honey

2 Tablespoons

Brown sugar

1/2 Cup

Vegetable oil

1/4 Cup

Butter

1 Teaspoon

Baking soda

4 Teaspoons

Vanilla extract

4 Cups

Rolled oats

2 Teaspoons

Orange zest, grated

# No-Bake Breakfast Bars

Puffed rice cereal, which is sodium-free, gives these super simple bars a great texture. If peanut and nut allergies are not an issue, you can substitute peanut butter for the sunflower butter, and almonds and peanuts for the pumpkin seeds and sunflower seeds.

Yield : 54 (2 1/4x2-inch bars).

## Instructions

1. Line half-sheet pan(s) with foil or parchment paper, leaving a 2-inch overhang along the 2 long sides. If using foil, coat lightly with cooking spray.
2. Toast pumpkin seeds in dry, medium skillet (not nonstick) over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until starting to crackle, 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer to bowl. Let cool.
3. Mix rolled oats, rice cereal, dried cranberries, sunflower seeds and toasted pumpkin seeds in large bowl.
4. Combine sunflower butter and honey in saucepan; stir over low heat until blended and smooth. Stir in vanilla. Add to oat mixture; mix well.
5. Transfer mixture to prepared sheet pan (s); press firmly into an even layer. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 2 hours or overnight.
6. Use foil or parchment overhang to lift bars and transfer to a cutting board. Cut each sheet into 54 bars (Make 9 cuts along long side and 6 cuts along short side.)

The bars will keep covered in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.



## Ingredients

1 1/2 Cups/ 8 ounces  
Pumpkin seeds, unsalted, shelled

3 Cups  
Rolled oats, old-fashioned

3 Cups  
Whole-grain puffed rice cereal,  
no added sugar

3 Cups  
Dried Cranberries

1 1/2 Cups/8 ounces  
Sunflower seeds, unsalted shelled

2 1/4 Cups  
Sunflower butter

1 1/2 Cups  
Honey

2 Tablespoons  
Vanilla extract

### Nutritional Information

#### Serving Size: 1 bar

Calories	150	Total Fat	10g
Saturated Fat	1g	Cholesterol	0mg
Sodium	35mg	Carbohydrate	21g
Fiber	2g	Sugars	13g
Protein	4g		

# Sodium Reduction Resources

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**USDA: Tools for Schools: Reducing Sodium**

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-sodium>

**Under Pressure: Strategies for Sodium Reduction in the School Environment**

[http://www.cdc.gov/salt/pdfs/sodium\\_reduction\\_in\\_schools.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/salt/pdfs/sodium_reduction_in_schools.pdf)

**USDA Team Nutrition:**

<https://healthymeals.fns.usda.gov/whatsshaking>

**Vermont Department of Health – Schools Nutrition/Physical Activity**

<http://healthvermont.gov/wellness/physical-activity-nutrition/school-and-early-child-care>

**Vermont Agency of Education – Child Nutrition Program**

<http://education.vermont.gov/student-support/nutrition>

**School Nutrition Association of Vermont**

<http://snvt.org/>

**Vermont Agency of Agriculture Food & Markets:**

<http://agriculture.vermont.gov/>

**Vermont Farm to School Network**

<http://vermontfarmtoschool.org/>



Available for download:

<http://healthvermont.gov/wellness/physical-activity-nutrition/school-and-early-child-care>

January 2017