

BUDGET STRETCHING FOOD IDEAS

Back To Basics: Cooking With Affordable Food Already In Your Pantry

(NAPSA)—Cutting back on grocery bills—without sacrificing nutrition or flavor—can be as easy as preparing the foods that most families already keep stocked in their kitchen pantries.

“A return to basic whole foods can be a healthful change in the way families shop,” said registered dietitian and seafood blogger Jennifer McGuire. “In addition to canned fruits and vegetables and whole grains like rice and pasta, I always keep plenty of canned seafood like tuna on hand.”

According to a recent National Fisheries Institute (NFI) survey, more than four out of five (86 percent) U.S. adults usually keep canned or other packaged tuna in the house at any one time. With tuna already stocked on so many household shelves, families have a versatile, lean protein ingredient ready to include in a variety of modern-day dishes.

While tuna is well known for being rich in healthful omega-3s, many Americans may not realize how many other important nutrients are found naturally in tuna. According to the NFI survey, 45 percent of adults said that to them omega-3 fatty acids are the most important nutrient found in tuna. However, only 14 percent of adults mentioned lean protein. Other key nutrients such as B vitamins, potassium and magnesium were mentioned by relatively few as the most important nutrient found in tuna to them.

“Seafood such as tuna is one of the healthiest yet most undercon-



Tuna is known for being a healthy, lean source of protein and omega-3 fatty acids. Most Americans always keep it on hand.

sumed sources of lean protein,” said McGuire. “In fact, according to a University of Delaware survey, 75 percent of U.S. adults do not consume seafood the recommended twice per week.”

Since according to the NFI survey almost half of Americans (47 percent) make a tuna sandwich at least once a month, McGuire offers some creative mix-in ideas to add a modern twist to your sandwich. For a creamy blend, add avocado, hummus, cottage cheese or cream cheese. The NFI survey also found that one of the most popular ways to eat tuna is with a “crunch.” For a crunchy mixture, add diced apples, carrots or green pepper.

You can also think beyond the sandwich with this convenient and versatile cupboard staple. Add tuna to your favorite picnic pasta salad, skip the chicken and include tuna in your quesadilla, or pass on the fattening pepperoni and top your next pizza with tuna.

To help you start, here’s a healthy, inexpensive recipe for Pizza Neptune that may soon become a family favorite:

Pizza Neptune

Ingredients:

- 2 cans or pouches (5 oz.) Bumble Bee® Tuna, drained and flaked**
- 2 (12”) prebaked Italian pizza crusts**
- ½ cup herbed spreadable cheese**
- 2 Roma tomatoes, thinly sliced**
- 1 medium red onion, thinly sliced**
- 1 avocado, sliced**
- 8 ounces grated provolone cheese**
- ½ cup shredded Parmesan cheese**

Directions:

Preheat oven to 450° F. Spread herbed cream cheese over each pizza crust. Divide and arrange tomato, onion, avocado, tuna and cheeses over the 2 crusts. Optional: Sprinkle with red pepper flakes and bacon bits. Bake in 450° F oven on cookie sheets for 8-10 minutes or until heated and cheese is melted. (Makes 2 pizzas)

Recipe Courtesy of Bumble Bee® Tuna

For a variety of innovative and creative recipes, along with other information related to tuna, visit www.healthytuna.com.

Note to Editors: About the Study: This Tuna Fish survey was conducted by Harris Interactive on behalf of the National Fisheries Institute. All data collection was done online within the United States between December 19 and December 23, 2008 among 2,144 adults ages 18+, of whom 2,036 have ever eaten a tuna fish sandwich. This online survey is not based on a probability sample and therefore no estimate of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.