

# International Cooking

## Chili Peppers Can Help Add Warmth To Life

(NAPSA)—In the grip of blustery winter weather, many Americans crave a taste of the tropics. Fresh, colorful fruits and vegetables from Mexico can provide some warm sunshine on a cool day—in fact, according to the Fresh Produce Association of the Americas, Mexico provides 25 percent of all produce consumed in the United States during the winter.

One way to add variety and warmth to a menu is by adding Mexican chili peppers to soups, sauces and other recipes. Chiles don't just add heat; in fact, there are many different, flavorful varieties of chili peppers. Fat-free, they're packed with beta-carotene and vitamin C, which help to boost the immune system.

From the mild and sweet ancho pepper to the scorching-hot habañero, chiles can add new flavor and zest to any recipe and any style of cooking. While many think of chili peppers strictly in the context of Southwestern, Mexican or Latin American cuisine, chopped chiles folded into a hearty casserole, stir-fry or stew may be just what the doctor ordered to add excitement to any meal.

Chiles can add spice and sunshine to everything from egg dishes at breakfast time; to salad dressings; to dips and appetizers; to rubs for poultry, beef and pork; to vegetable side dishes—and, yes, even to desserts.

Try this chili sauce as a versatile accompaniment to everything from grilled shrimp to beans and rice. When working with the hot-



**Chili peppers can add flavor and zest to just about any dish.**

ter chiles, such as the serrano variety called for here, it's a good idea to wear rubber gloves.

### Sweet, Salty & Spicy Chili Sauce

- 1 cup Asian sweet chili sauce
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lime juice
- 1 Tbsp. Asian fish sauce or soy sauce
- 1 tsp. minced garlic
- 1 tsp. packed light brown sugar
- 1 tsp. peeled and grated fresh ginger
- 1 tsp. finely chopped fresh cilantro (optional)
- ¼ tsp. finely chopped fresh hot chili, such as serrano, including seeds

**Stir together all ingredients. Cover and refrigerate until ready to use; flavors will develop nicely over the course of three or four days. Makes about 1¼ cups.**