



Focus on Nutrition:

Creating a Meal in a Dish

"Meal in a dish" casseroles are great for today's busy homemakers. They can usually be made in one pan using any tasty combination of canned, fresh or left-over foods that you have on hand.

There are no exact "rules" for creating these one dish meals but there are some guides and tips that will help you get started. You can add foods or leave them out as you please. Here are some suggestions.

HOW MUCH TO MAKE

You may know from experience how full you must fill your cooking pot or casserole dish to have enough to feed your family but if you have extra people for dinner or want to plan extras for a second meal, here is a guide to help you.

- * One cup is considered an average size serving of a one-dish meal. However, you may have a hard-working husband or a growing teenage boy who may need two or three servings. A serving for a small child may be 1/2 cup.
- * Figure how many servings you want to make.
- * Estimate how full your cooking pot or casserole dish must be by measuring water into it. For example: if you want to make 9 servings, measure 9 cups of water into the pot or casserole. You now know how full the cooking container must be in order for you to have enough food. If you are feeding many people, you may need to use two pots or casseroles.
- * Pour out the water and you are ready to begin.

FOODS TO USE

Choose one or a combination of two or more from each group. Foods may be fresh, canned or left-over. Foods from the Abundant Food Program may also be used.

I. BEGIN WITH A PROTEIN RICH FOOD:

This is the part around which the meal-in-a-dish is built.

- * Meat
- * Poultry
- * Fish or other sea food
- * Cheese or cottage cheese
- * Eggs
- * Dried peas, beans or lentils

II. ADD THE EXTENDER: This is the part that helps you stretch the protein rich food.

It is often a cereal product.

- * Rice, bulgur, corn meal
- * Rolled wheat or rolled oats
- * Macaroni, spaghetti, noodles
- * Bread, biscuits, pie crust
- * Potatoes

III. ADD VEGETABLES: These are for color, texture, flavor and added nutrition. Let your imagination go—

- * Tomatoes, peas, beans, corn, carrots
- * Onions, cabbage, green peppers
- * Spinach, celery (leaves too), zucchini, okra
- * Potatoes, turnips

Fruits might be used too, such as:

- * Pineapple, raisins, or apples.

IV. **STIR IN THE SAUCE:** This holds it all together, blends the flavors, and adds moisture. Plan for about 1/4 to 1/2 cup sauce per 1 cup serving, or enough to suit your personal taste.

- * Canned soups
- * Gravy
- * Milk or white sauce
- * Juices from vegetables
- * Meat stock or bouillon made with bouillon cubes
- * Tomato sauce, tomato juice or tomato paste

V. **ADD SEASONINGS:** To bring out the flavor, choose to suit your taste—and then taste to suit your pleasure.

- * Salt and pepper
- * Worcestershire sauce
- * Chili powder
- * Garlic powder
- * Parsley, dried or fresh
- * Bay leaf, basil, rosemary
- * Poultry seasoning
- * Sage

VI. **COOK IN A WAY MOST CONVENIENT FOR YOU:**

If you wish to cook the meal on top of the range, start with the food that takes the longest to prepare and then add the other foods to it. If you use an uncooked food like dried beans, rice, bulgur, etc. you will need to plan for enough additional liquid to cook to the tender stage first. Usually 2-3 cups of water per cup of dried food will do it. When you cook on top of the stove, use a low heat and stir rather often.

If you want to cook the meal in the oven, best results are had if all of the ingredients are pre-cooked, then mixed together and poured into the casserole dish. Casseroles made of precooked foods need to be baked about 1/2 hour at 350° to heat through and blend flavors. For busy days this sort of one-dish meal can be prepared ahead and refrigerated. Allow 45 minutes to an hour for cold casseroles to become piping hot. Bread or cracker crumbs, pie crust or corn meal topping add color and crunch to the final dish.

PUTTING THE PLAN TO WORK

Just for fun, let's try creating a meal-in-a-dish and plan to cook it on top of the range.

The protein food will be canned chopped meat or poultry. Hamburger would work also.

To extend the meat we will use a combination of rice and bulgur.

Vegetables for color and flavor will be onions and green beans.

The sauce will be bouillon made from bouillon cubes and canned mushroom soup.

Seasonings: Let's try salt, pepper, Worcestershire sauce and some garlic powder.

LET'S PUT IT ALL TOGETHER

1. **MELT** in a large pot or skillet with a lid:
2 Tbsp. fat
2. **ADD** and **BROWN**
1 pound chopped meat or poultry
3. **ADD:**
2 cups hot water
2 beef bouillon cubes
1/2 cup bulgur
1/2 cup rice
1 chopped onion
4. **COOK** covered for 20 minutes or until rice and bulgur are tender. **LIFT** lid and **STIR** every so often. **ADD** more water if needed.
5. **ADD** and **HEAT** through:
1 can green beans with liquid
1 can mushroom soup
2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce
2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. pepper
1/2 tsp. garlic powder
1/2 tsp. parsley flakes
6. **TASTE** the creation. If it needs "something" try adding different spices or seasonings. "**TASTE AND ADD**" until you think it's just right!

This dish makes 6 generous servings. (Remember, rice and bulgur swell when cooked.)

DON'T FORGET TO NAME IT! Let's call this one "**ONE DISH DANDY.**"

SERVE "One Dish Dandy" with hot rolls, milk and a fruit dessert.

HOW TO ROUND OUT A SQUARE MEAL

Each one of the following recipes for one dish meals is truly a meal in a dish. However, to add color and extra nutrients, complete the meal with a salad or vegetable, milk and dessert. Serve bread or rolls too if you like. Try these menus and recipes and make up some of your own using the basic guide. It's fun and easy! Abundant Foods can be used to prepare many of these dishes.

MENU

La Sagna Sandwich Tossed Green Salad

Milk

Oatmeal Bar

LA SAGNA SANDWICH

1. In a fry pan **FRY**
4 slices of bacon until crisp
2. **REMOVE, DRAIN and CRUMBLE** bacon
3. **COOK** in bacon drippings until tender
1/2 cup chopped onion
4. **ADD and SIMMER** together for 10 minutes
1 cup water
1/2 cup tomato paste
2 Tbsp. catsup
1/2 tsp. garlic salt
few grains of pepper
1/2 tsp. of oregano
1/2 tsp. salt
crumbled bacon
5. **PLACE** in a greased 8 inch square pan
4 slices of buttered bread
6. **COVER** with
1 cup of cottage cheese
4 slices of cheese
1/2 of the tomato sauce mixture
7. **PLACE** on top of mixture.
4 more slices of buttered bread
8. **SPREAD** with
1 cup of cottage cheese
The rest of the tomato sauce
9. **BAKE** at 350° F for 30-40 minutes or until mixture is bubbly.
10. **SERVE** hot. Makes 4 "sandwiches."

MENU

Dutch Chicken Chowder Apple Raisin Salad

Hot Biscuits

Milk

DUTCH CHICKEN CHOWDER

1. **BRING TO A BOIL**
4 chicken bouillon cubes in 4 cups of water.
2. **ADD and SIMMER** until all are tender.
1/2 cup chopped onion
1/2 cup chopped celery and leaves
1 cup of whole kernel corn
1 cup of uncooked noodles or macaroni
3. **ADD and HEAT** gently
4 hard cooked eggs, chopped
1 cup chopped chicken or turkey (canned or cooked)
1 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. pepper
1 tsp. chopped parsley
4. **SERVE** in bowls. Makes four servings.



MENU

Bean Pie

Carrot and Celery Sticks

Milk

Fresh or Canned Fruit

BEAN PIE

1. BRING TO A BOIL

2 cups of dry beans (red, navy, lima, kidney, pinto, etc.)
5 cups water

2. SIMMER for two minutes.

3. **REMOVE** from heat, **COVER** and **SOAK** in cooking water for 1/2 hour.

4. **RETURN** to heat. **BRING BACK TO A BOIL** and **SIMMER** 45 minutes.

5. ADD

1 onion chopped
1/2 green pepper chopped
2 tsp. salt
1 Tbsp. chili powder
1/2 tsp. garlic powder
1 can whole kernel corn including liquid
1 cup canned tomatoes

6. **SIMMER** 30-45 minutes until beans are tender. **ADD** extra water if mixture becomes too thick. When beans are tender, if you wish, you may **ADD** any left over cooked meat, chicken, frankfurters or cheese cut into 1/2 inch chunks.

7. **POUR** into large (3 quart) greased casserole dish or baking pan and **TOP** with corn bread.

8. MAKE cornbread by **SIFTING** together

1 cup flour
1 cup cornmeal
1 tsp. salt
1 Tbsp. baking powder
2 tsp. sugar

9. **COMBINE** in a separate bowl

1 cup milk
1/4 cup oil or melted shortening
1 egg or 1/4 cup dried egg mix and 1/4 cup water

10. **POUR** liquid all at once into flour mixture and **STIR** only until barely mixed.

11. **SPOON** corn bread batter on top of hot bean mixture in baking pan.

12. **BAKE** in 400° oven for 20-25 minutes or until corn bread is golden brown. Makes 8-10 generous servings.

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Using the general directions and the meal-in-a-dish examples as a guide, take a look into your cupboard and refrigerator to see what tasty treats you can prepare for your family. You will enjoy a feeling of accomplishment from creating your own "house specialty."



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