



# Nutrition in the Pantry:

Registered Dietitian Toolkit

To learn more about the Canned Food Alliance, visit our website at [www.Mealtime.org](http://www.Mealtime.org) or contact the CFA's Communications Manager, Katie Calligaro, at 412.458.5823 or via email at [katie@mealtime.org](mailto:katie@mealtime.org).

We know you put a lot of thought and passion into the work you do, from addressing nutrition questions to offering easy recipes and healthy sampling. Here are some resources to make it easier for you to help consumers healthfully navigate the nutrition decisions they make every day.

## How to Use the Toolkit

Organized by themes, this toolkit curates a host of resources, including talking points about the benefits of canned foods, ideas for tweets, plus tips and recipes which may provide inspiration for blog content or media interviews.



### Talking Points

Each theme kicks off with three talking points. These messages could also be useful for media interviews or writing a blog post.



### Tweetable Tip

Keep your followers engaged on Twitter with actionable tips included within.



### Educational Materials

Looking for additional resources? Each theme includes a related infographic from [Mealtime.org](http://Mealtime.org) - home to numerous materials about canned foods' many benefits.



### Recipe

You'll also find ideas for quick and flavorful meals made with canned ingredients. These and many other recipes can be found on [Mealtime.org](http://Mealtime.org).

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# Top 5 Reasons to Recommend Canned Food

1. When it comes to nutrition, all forms count. Canned, fresh, frozen, dried beans and seafood/meats and 100% juice all can provide essential nutrients that make up a healthy diet. Many canned foods are as nutritious, and sometimes even more nutritious, than their fresh or frozen counterparts.
2. Picked at peak ripeness and canned within hours of harvest, canned fruits and vegetables are always in season and offer consistent quality and nutrition year-round.
3. Canned foods, like beans, chicken, tuna, fruits, vegetables and low sodium soups and broth, cut down on the prep time necessary for creating delicious, nutritious meals – perfect for busy weeknights.
4. Canned foods are often more affordable than fresh or frozen and contain only a few simple ingredients (no preservatives required), making good nutrition accessible for everyone, regardless of budget.
5. Canned food is packed in the most recycled food container – the steel can – and helps minimize food and packaging waste.

# Theme 1: Stocking a Healthy Pantry



## Talking Points

1. Shop the center aisles of your grocery store for healthy options like canned beans, fruits, vegetables, meats/seafood and low-sodium soups and broth.
2. People who eat diets rich in vegetables, fruits, legumes, and seafood tend to have a healthier weight and decreased risk of chronic diseases due to the nutrients they consume. Vegetables, legumes and fruits contain fiber, vitamins and minerals and other beneficial compounds. Seafood contains protein and omega-3 fatty acids, thought to be beneficial for heart health.
3. With canned food in your pantry, a healthy meal is minutes away. Rely on them alone, or combine with fresh or frozen foods for a tasty snack or meal anytime. With no cleaning, chopping, seeding, peeling, cooking or soaking required, canned foods provide the ultimate convenience.



## Tweetable Tip

Top 5 canned foods to keep on hand for a healthy, helpful pantry. <http://bit.ly/1AwjrPG>



## Educational Materials

Pantry Heroes: 5 Canned Foods to Always Keep on Hand, available on [Mealtime.org](http://Mealtime.org), shines the spotlight on 5 versatile pantry favorites, providing nutrition, cost/convenience facts and reci-tips for each.

**PANTRY HEROES**  
5 CANNED FOODS TO ALWAYS KEEP ON HAND



# Recipe

## Open-Face Chicken Bruschetta On Garlic Bread

*Serves 4*

### Ingredients

1 can (10 oz) chicken packed in water, drained  
1 can (15 oz) diced tomatoes, drained  
1/2 cup fresh basil, chopped  
1 green onion, chopped  
4 TBS olive oil, divided  
2 TBS balsamic vinaigrette  
Pepper, to taste  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
4 medium slices crusty Italian bread  
1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese  
Basil leaves for garnish

### Preparation

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a medium bowl combine chicken, tomatoes, basil, green onion, 2 tablespoons olive oil, vinaigrette and pepper. Combine 2 tablespoons olive oil with garlic. Brush olive oil-garlic mixture on both sides of bread. On a baking sheet, toast bread in the oven, about 8 to 10 minutes, until lightly browned and crisp. To serve, spread chicken mixture over toasted garlic bread. Top with feta cheese and basil leaves.



# Theme 2: Taking the Stress Out Of Meal Planning



## Talking Points

1. Canned ingredients take the stress out of meal time and help prepare nourishing, flavorful meals quickly.
2. Be sure to keep your pantry stocked with canned foods to add convenience to everyday meals.
3. Canned lean meats, seafood and beans give a quick protein boost to salads, soups or casseroles. No need to soak beans overnight or to cook for hours; canned beans are already cooked! Open, heat and serve!



## Tweetable Tip

What's for dinner? Add one canned ingredient to recipe to cut prep time & boost nutrition. [bit.ly/1DaJYpV](https://bit.ly/1DaJYpV)



## Educational Materials

Just Add One Fact Sheet, available on [Mealtime.org](http://Mealtime.org), provides suggestions on how to add just one canned ingredient to recipes to boost nutrition or save you time or money.





# Recipe

## Vegetarian Brown Rice Casserole

*Serves 4*

### Ingredients

- 1 can (19 oz) ready-to-serve lower sodium lentil soup
- 1 package (9 oz) ready-to-serve brown rice
- 1 can (7.75 oz) unsalted mixed vegetables, drained
- 1 large or 2 small canned roasted red peppers, diced
- 1/2 cup shredded sharp cheddar cheese, divided

### Preparation

Combine soup, rice, drained mixed vegetables, peppers and 6 tablespoons of the cheddar cheese in a 2-quart, microwave-safe casserole or baking dish. Season with salt and pepper to taste, and level the top of the mixture. Sprinkle with remaining 2 tablespoons cheese. Cover and cook in microwave at full power until heated through and the cheese on top melts, about 5 minutes. Uncover and cool for 1 minute before serving.



# Theme 3: Helping Kids Eat Better



## Talking Points

1. Canned fruits and vegetables can play a key role in improving children's overall diet quality.
2. Research shows that kids who eat canned fruits and vegetables tend to have higher total fruit and vegetable intake and a better overall diet.<sup>1</sup>
3. Serve canned fruit as a nutritious snack or dessert, or incorporate canned ingredients into baked goods to give them a nutritional boost.

1. [Freedman et al. 2014](#)



## Tweetable Tip

Can you guess what the secret ingredients are in this carrot spice cake? Hint, they add moisture and nutrition!  
<http://bit.ly/1Cdtkcc>



## Educational Materials

Canned Food = Better Nutrition for America's Kids Fact Sheet, available on [Meatime.org](#), summarizes new research on the benefits canned fruits and vegetables and kids' nutrition.

**Kids who eat canned fruits and vegetables eat more fruits and vegetables overall.**





## Ingredients

Non-stick baking spray  
1 can (14.5 oz) no-salt-added sliced carrots, not drained  
1/4 cup canned no-salt-added tomato paste  
1/4 cup 2% milk  
1 box (18.25 oz) spice cake mix  
3/4 TSP ground cinnamon, divided

1 cup raisins  
3 large eggs  
2 cans (15 oz each) apricot halves in juice or extra-light syrup, not drained  
1/4 cup cornstarch  
1 TBS reduced-fat cream cheese, softened  
1 TBS unsalted butter  
1 TSP vanilla extract

## Preparation

Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray a 10-inch Bundt pan with baking spray. Purée carrots with their liquid, tomato paste and milk in a blender. Mix cake mix, 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon and raisins in the large bowl of an electric mixer. Add puréed carrot mixture and eggs; beat on low for 30 seconds and on high for 2 minutes, until the batter is thick and smooth. Pour batter into prepared pan. Bake for 45 minutes. Cool on rack for 30 minutes. Remove cake from pan and cool on rack until room temperature. For Sauce: Drain 1 can of apricots. Purée the drained and undrained apricots and cornstarch until smooth. Cook on stove over medium heat, stirring constantly, until boiling and thick, about 5 minutes. Stir in cream cheese, butter, vanilla and remaining cinnamon; cool completely. Cut cake into 12 wedges; serve with sauce.

# Recipe

## Carrot Spice Cake

*Serves 12*



# Theme 4: Healthy Eating On a Budget



## Talking Points

1. Canned foods are often more affordable than frozen or fresh and provide essential nutrients our bodies need.
2. At a lower total cost-per-nutrient than fresh, frozen or dried, canned foods, like fruits, vegetables, seafood and beans, help bring nutritious meals to the table quickly and easily.
3. Eating a variety of nutrient-rich foods, such as fruits, vegetables, beans and seafood, is a solution to better nutrition. Canned foods should be a part of that solution, where “all forms” are included. Buy fresh in season and canned year-round to maximize your grocery dollar.



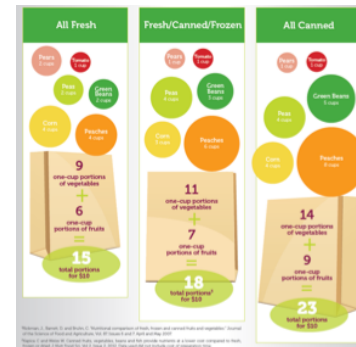
## Tweetable Tip

Save time and money while stocking up on nutrition in the canned food aisle of your fave market!  
<http://bit.ly/1xkQwOo>



## Educational Materials

How Much Produce Can You Buy for \$10? an infographic, available on [Meatime.org](http://Meatime.org), demonstrates how easy and affordable it is to stock up on nutritious foods when including canned options.





# Recipe

## Tuna and Black Bean Salad Lettuce Wraps

*Serves 6*

### Ingredients

- 1 can (15 oz) black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 can (11 oz) tuna in olive oil, drained
- 3/4 cup fresh tomatoes, peeled, seeded and chopped
- 1/3 cup finely chopped red onion
- 1 T minced Serrano peppers
- 1/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 TBS fresh lime juice
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- 1/4 cup chopped cilantro
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 6 large butter lettuce leaves

### Preparation

In large bowl, combine beans, tuna, tomatoes, onion, peppers, oil and lime juice. Toss gently, being careful to keep tuna in bite-size pieces. Cover and refrigerate at least one hour. Add parsley and cilantro; season with salt and pepper. Spoon tuna salad into lettuce leaves. Fold up lettuce leaves and eat taco style.



# Theme 5: Go Green in the Kitchen



## Talking Points

1. Recycling your steel food cans saves energy and natural resources.
2. Waste from product packaging makes up a third or more of the trash people throw out.
3. Canned food is packed in the most recycled food container – the steel can. More than 70 percent of steel cans get recycled.



## Tweetable Tip

To shop #green, buy food packed in steel cans – the most recycled package. There's less waste with canned food!  
<http://bit.ly/1EHJzyp>



## Educational Materials

[Save Green and Go Green](#) in the Essential Kitchen Toolkit available on [Mealtime.org](http://Mealtime.org) provides tips to help lower your environmental footprint in the kitchen, from recycling steel cans to using appliances more efficiently and more!

## Save Green and Go Green in the Kitchen\*

*From switching to energy-efficient light bulbs to using green products, being environmentally friendly in your home can go a long way to protecting the earth. There are plenty of simple ways you can do your part to reduce your impact on the environment – and your pocketbook – in your kitchen.*

### Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.

*Waste from product packaging makes up a third or more of the trash people create. It uses up resources, such as fuel used to transport trash, and takes up space in landfills. These easy tips can help you reduce waste!#.*

### Conserve Energy, Food and Water

*Conservation not only allows you to do your part to protect the environment, it can also help you save money on your utility bills. Follow these simple guidelines to conserve energy, food and water in your kitchen.*



Steel Recycling Institute



## Ingredients

2 cans (16 oz each) apricots, peaches, pears, pineapple  
or fruit cocktail in any combination, packed in water or 100% juice  
2 TBS fresh lemon juice  
1 pint frozen yogurt

## Preparation

Purée fruit with juice from the can and lemon juice in a blender. Add frozen yogurt in small chunks, blending until smooth. Serve immediately in tall glasses with straws.

# Recipe

## Fruit Smoothie

*Serves 4*



# Theme 6: Canned Foods Fill MyPlate



## Talking Points

1. MyPlate brings to life the recommendations of the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans with an emphasis on fruits and vegetables, which should fill half your plate.
2. When it comes to nutrition “all forms” count (canned, fresh, frozen and dried), including canned fruits, vegetables, beans and seafood/proteins.
3. Canned foods help you make healthy food choices from all five food groups including fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods and dairy to get the nutrients you need.



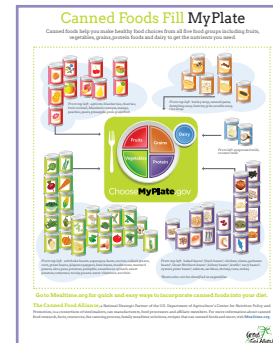
## Tweetable Tip

Try these on-trend recipes with canned ingredients to pull together a MyPlate Win any time of day.  
<http://bit.ly/223CO2T>



## Educational Materials

**MyPlate Fact Sheet**, available on [Meatime.org](http://Meatime.org), provides tips for how to incorporate more fruits and vegetables into the diet.





# Recipe

## Maple Chipotle Chickpeas

*Serves 6-8*

### Ingredients

- 2 cans (14.5 oz each) chickpeas/garbanzo beans
- 1 canned chipotle pepper packed in adobo
- 2 TBS quality maple syrup
- 2 TBS sesame seeds
- 1 ½ TBS olive oil
- 1 TSP black pepper
- 1 TSP salt

### Preparation

Preheat your oven to 375 degrees. Empty cans of chickpeas into colander and then rinse thoroughly. Pat dry on a paper towel then let air dry for 10 minutes. In a large mixing bowl, combine salt, pepper, olive oil, and chickpeas and toss to coat. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper, then spread out chickpeas and roast in the oven for 30 minutes, spreading them around every 10 minutes. Mince the chipotle pepper as fine as possible, then combine with maple syrup and sesame seeds and put in a pan on medium high heat. Add in the roasted chickpeas and sauté for 2 minutes until evenly mixed. Pour back on the baking sheet and let cool before eating.



## From Farm to Table: The Simple Process Behind Canned Food

### from the ground

Canned fruit, vegetables and beans start on the farm or in the orchard with farmers who plant the seeds and carefully tend the crops.

### to harvest

Because most canned fruits and vegetables are packed within hours of harvest, they are picked at the peak of ripeness. That means nutrition is at its peak, too. And canning locks in that freshness and nutrition.

### into the can

Dry beans can be canned year-round. Commercial canning follows the same method as home canning.

### off to the store

After labels are added to share important nutrition and ingredient information, the finished cans are off to retailers across the country and around the world.

### to your table

The variety of delicious, nutritious canned foods available year-round make it easy to prepare and enjoy healthy meals with farm-grown ingredients.

### all in a safe and sustainable package

The steel can is the most recycled food package. After enjoying your favorite canned food, be sure to recycle the entire steel can (lids included) so it can be made into a new steel product. Now *that* is sustainability!

## Commercial canning follows the same simple steps as home canning:



**Addressing Consumer Questions about Canned Foods** As shoppers want to know more about how certain foods fit within their diets, we wanted to arm you with sample responses to some of the most common consumer questions surrounding canned foods.

**Q1: Isn't it better to cook with fresh ingredients?**

**A1:** When it comes to a healthy diet and getting the nutrition your body needs, all forms of foods count – canned, fresh, frozen, dried and 100% juice. There are benefits to each form. The key is to eat a diet filled with a variety of fruits, vegetables, beans/legumes, lean protein (including canned tuna, salmon and chicken), whole grains and low-fat dairy.

**Q2: Isn't canned food high in sodium?**

**A2:** Many canned foods are, and always have been, low in sodium. Today, there are more low-sodium, reduced sodium and no-salt-added options available in the canned food aisle than ever before. Simply read the nutrition label for the option that is right for you. And remember that draining and rinsing canned beans and vegetables can reduce sodium content even further. In one study of canned beans, sodium levels were reduced by 41% after draining and rinsing them; draining alone accounted for a 36% reduction.<sup>2</sup>

**Q3: Is it true that canned fruit is full of added sugar?**

**A3:** The fact is all fruit contains naturally occurring sugar. And not all canned fruit has added sugar. When it does, it is primarily used to maintain fruit's natural sweetness and flavor. Today, there are more canned fruit choices than ever before, including fruit packed in light syrup or in 100% juice. So, you can decide what's best for your family. Draining the canned fruit also can reduce added sugar content.

2. Duyff, J. Mount, J. Jones, *J of Culinary Sci and Tech*, Vol 9, Issue 2, 2011

#### **Q4: Canned food is filled with preservatives, isn't it?**

**A4:** Canned foods do not require preservatives. The canning process itself preserves the food until it is ready to be enjoyed. Take a look at the ingredient labels on foods such as canned beans, fruit, vegetables and seafood. Often you will find three or fewer simple ingredients. So you can feel free to take advantage of the convenience and affordability of canned foods, knowing your family will enjoy great-tasting nutrition.

#### **Q5: Is canned food considered 'processed food'?**

**A5:** According to the International Food Information Council (IFIC) Foundation, "food processing is any deliberate change in a food that occurs before it's available for us to eat." So yes, canned food is considered processed food, as are frozen vegetables, roasted nuts, tomato sauce, fruit jam and bagged salad greens, just to name a few other examples. Canned fruits, vegetables and lean proteins, including tuna, are considered minimally processed. Canning helps preserve foods and enhance nutrients and freshness of foods at their peak. This provides us access to nutritious, convenient, safe and affordable foods year-round.

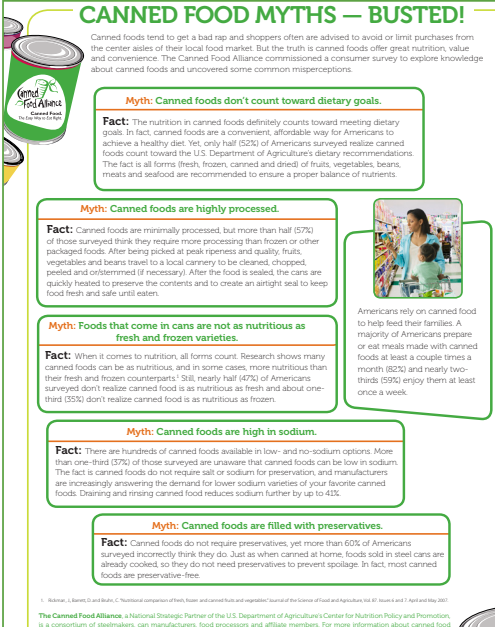
#### **Q6: What is BPA and should I be concerned about it when choosing canned food?**

**A6:** BPA, or Bisphenol A, can be a hot-button issue for some, but it is important to note that its use in food packaging, including in the linings of some steel food cans, has been approved and re-affirmed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Linings of canned foods serve an important role, creating a barrier between the metal and the food contained inside to maintain the safety, quality and nutritional value of these products.

# Canned Food Myths – Busted! Fact Sheet

Canned foods tend to get a bad rap and consumers often are advised to avoid or limit purchases from the center aisles of their local food market. But the truth is canned foods offer great nutrition, value and convenience.

The Canned Food Myths – Busted! Fact Sheet, available on [Mealtime.org](http://Mealtime.org), explores common misperceptions identified in a consumer survey and sheds light on the truth about canned foods.



## CANNED FOOD MYTHS — BUSTED!

Canned foods tend to get a bad rap and shoppers often are advised to avoid or limit purchases from the center aisles of their local food market. But the truth is canned foods offer great nutrition, value and convenience. The Canned Food Alliance commissioned a consumer survey to explore knowledge about canned foods and uncovered some common misperceptions.

**Myth: Canned foods don't count toward dietary goals.**

**Fact:** The nutrition in canned foods definitely counts toward meeting dietary goals. In fact, canned foods are a convenient, affordable way for Americans to achieve a healthy diet. Yet, only half (52%) of Americans surveyed realize canned foods count toward the U.S. Department of Agriculture's dietary recommendations. The fact is all forms (fresh, frozen, canned and dried) of fruits, vegetables, beans, meats and seafood are recommended to ensure a proper balance of nutrients.

**Myth: Canned foods are highly processed.**

**Fact:** Canned foods are minimally processed, but more than half (57%) of those surveyed think they require more processing than frozen or other packaged foods. After being picked at peak ripeness and quality, fruits, vegetables and beans travel to a local cannery to be cleaned, chopped, peeled and cut/steamed (if necessary). After the food is sealed, the cans are quickly heated to preserve the contents and to create an airtight seal to keep food fresh and safe until eaten.

**Myth: Foods that come in cans are not as nutritious as fresh and frozen varieties.**

**Fact:** When it comes to nutrition, all forms count. Research shows many canned foods can be as nutritious, and in some cases, more nutritious than their fresh and frozen counterparts. Still, nearly half (47%) of Americans surveyed don't realize canned food is as nutritious as fresh and about one-third (33%) don't realize canned food is as nutritious as frozen.

**Myth: Canned foods are high in sodium.**

**Fact:** There are hundreds of canned foods available in low- and no-sodium options. More than one-third (37%) of those surveyed are unaware that canned foods can be low in sodium. The fact is canned foods do not require salt or sodium for preservation, and manufacturers are increasingly answering the demand for lower sodium varieties of your favorite canned foods. Draining and rinsing canned food reduces sodium further by up to 43%.

**Myth: Canned foods are filled with preservatives.**

**Fact:** Canned foods do not require preservatives, yet more than 60% of Americans surveyed incorrectly think they do. Just as when canned at home, foods sold in steel cans are already cooked, so they do not need preservatives to prevent spoilage. In fact, most canned foods are preservative-free.

1. Walker, L. Barrett, D. and Smith, C. "Nutritional comparison of fresh, frozen and canned fruits and vegetables" Journal of the Science of Food and Agriculture, Vol. 81, Issues 4 and 5, April and May 2001.

The Canned Food Alliance is a National Strategic Partner of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, is a consortium of steelmakers, can manufacturers, food processors and affiliate members. For more information about canned food

## About Canned Food Alliance

The Canned Food Alliance, a National Strategic Partner of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, is a consortium of steelmakers, can manufacturers, food processors and affiliate members. For more information about canned food research, facts, resources, the canning process, family mealtime solutions, recipes that use canned foods and more, visit [Mealtime.org](http://Mealtime.org).

## About Mealtime.org

Mealtime.org, the Website for the Canned Food Alliance, is home to canned food research, free and shareable resources, information about the canning process, family mealtime tips and recipes that use canned food.

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*The Easy Way to Eat Right.*

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