

Nutrition News

VOLUME 7, No. 3

A COMMUNITY NUTRITION PROGRAMS NEWSLETTER

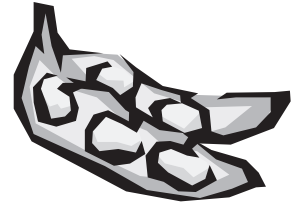
De'Shoin Friendship,
MPA, CFPP

Annrose Guarino,
PhD, RD

Sandra May
MS, RD

Heli Roy,
PhD, RD

Eat Vegetables, Move More: Benefits of Soy Foods



Soybeans have been grown and consumed for thousands of years in Asia, but only in the last 200 years have they been planted and processed in the United States. From soybeans comes a wide variety of foods that appear on supermarket shelves today. Soy foods, such as soy milk and other beverages, cereals, veggie burgers and hot dogs, cheese, yogurt and frozen desserts are just a few products derived from this versatile legume. Other ways soy foods are used:

- Roasted and eaten as soy nuts.
- Edamame, the young, green-shelled, edible bean, is boiled in the pod. After cooking, the beans are squeezed out of the pod for eating.
- Miso (fermented soy food), tofu (soybean curd) and soy sauce can be added to soups, sauces, stir-fry, and marinades to enhance the flavor of foods.
- Tempeh (white cake of cooked soybeans) is normally sliced and fried or used as an ingredient in soups, sandwiches, dips, and salads.
- Soy flour is a common ingredient used in baked goods, frozen desserts and pasta.
- Soybean oil is used in cooking and in salad dressings and is the most common oil used in processed foods and in mayonnaise.

Soybeans can be eaten fresh or dried and can be found in many forms and colors (yellow, black or green).

Alternative to Milk Products

For those who are lactose-intolerant, soy milk may be a good alternative. Soy milk does not contain the milk sugar lactose. It can also be a good choice for those who are allergic

to cow's milk. Plain, unfortified soymilk is an excellent source of high-quality protein, B-vitamins and iron. Some brands of soymilk are fortified with vitamins and minerals and are good sources of calcium, vitamin D and vitamin B-12.

Health Benefits of Soy

Not only do soy foods add taste and variety to meals and snacks, but they pack a punch when it comes to nutritional quality. Soy provides high-quality, complete protein equal to animal sources but is low in artery-clogging saturated fat. Soybeans are a good source of B vitamins, fiber and contain heart-healthy unsaturated fatty acids (about 82 percent), including some omega-3 fatty acids.

The health benefits of soy go beyond the nutrient content. Many soy foods contain isoflavones, which are plant compounds that may help lower risks of breast and prostate cancer, osteoporosis and heart disease. Research has shown that consuming 25 grams of soy protein per day can lower LDL (bad) cholesterol without lowering the HDL (good) cholesterol. In 1999, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved a health claim for foods that contain at least 6.25 grams of soy protein. The claim states that these foods may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease as part of a diet low in saturated fat and cholesterol. Many soy products now carry the health claim on their labels.

If you are a soy foods aficionado or you are experimenting with new healthy and tasty foods, try some recipes that incorporate soy in any of its forms for a nutritious and healthy alternative.

Soy also may be helpful in cancer prevention. Soy reduces inflammation, and some of the reduction in cancer incidence due to soy consumption may be due to this. April is a "Cancer Control Month." This was declared

LSU
AgCenter
Research & Extension

SU
Center
SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
AGRICULTURAL
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
C E N T E R

as early as 1938 by President Franklin Roosevelt when the U. S. Congress approved an amendment issuing an annual proclamation.

Cancer is the second-leading cause of death in the United States, with skin cancer as the most common type of cancer in men and women. About two-thirds of all cancers are due to lifestyle, sun exposure and smoking. Americans can reduce their risk of developing cancer.

Here are some ways to lower your cancer risk:

- Improve your lifestyle habits by eating a healthful diet (including more fruits and vegetables), exercising regularly, avoiding tobacco products and excessive alcohol intake and controlling your body weight.
- Wear sunscreen of at least SPF 15 and protective clothing (sunglasses that block UV rays, a hat, long sleeve shirt, pants, skirts) when in the sun. Avoid or at least limit midday sun exposure.
- Get regular physical exams and preventative health screenings. Early detection is important and increases the likelihood of survival if the cancer is caught in a more treatable stage.
- Be aware of your family history.

Visit our Web site: www.lsuagcenter.com

April 2008

Louisiana State University Agricultural Center

William R. Richardson, Chancellor

Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station

David J. Boethel, Vice Chancellor and Director

Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service

Paul D. Coreil, Vice Chancellor and Director

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture. The Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

This material was partially funded by USDA's Food Stamp program. The Food Stamp program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income.

To find out more, contact your parish agent.