What’s Cooking?
USDA MIXING BOWL

Cookbook

CACFP Latin American, Mexican, Carribean Style
Around the World Try Day for Family Child Care

By National CACFP Forum
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Arroz Con Pollo

Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 1 hour
Makes: 6 Servings

Arroz Con Pollo (rice with chicken) is a classic dish that is enjoyed throughout Spain and Latin America. Each country has its own version but it remains a family favorite. Try this hearty, flavorful recipe today.

Ingredients

1/2 cup Brown rice, long-grain, uncooked
1 cup Water
1/2 teaspoon Salt, table
1/2 teaspoon Black pepper, ground
1/2 teaspoon Garlic powder
2 teaspoons Cumin, ground
**Directions**

1. Combine brown rice and water in a small stockpot.

2. Heat on medium-high heat to a rolling boil.

3. Cover and reduce heat to medium. Cook about 10-15 minutes. Stir, cover, and cook an additional 10 minutes over low heat until water is absorbed. Fluff the rice gently with a fork.

4. In a small bowl combine seasonings: Salt, black pepper, garlic powder, and cumin.

5. Sprinkle chicken tenderloins with 1/2 of the seasoning mixture. Reserve the remaining seasoning mixture for step 11.

7. Roast for 12-15 minutes. Chicken tenderloins should reach an internal temperature of 165 °F for at least 15 seconds.

8. While tenderloins are roasting, spray a medium skillet with nonstick cooking spray.

9. Place skillet over medium-high heat.

10. Add onion and peppers and sauté for about 3 minutes, or until vegetables are tender. Stir frequently.

11. Add fresh garlic, oregano, tomatoes, and the remaining seasoning mixture. Cook for 3 minutes, stirring frequently.

12. Add chicken broth and bring to boil.

13. Add cooked rice, stir well, and cover.

14. Cook for 7-10 minutes. Stir occasionally.

15. Serve one chicken tenderloin with 1/2 cup rice and vegetable mixture.

Critical Control Point: Hold at 140 °F or higher.

Notes

CACFP Crediting Information:

1 chicken tenderloin and 1/2 cup rice and vegetable mixture (No. 8 scoop) provides 1 1/2 oz. equivalent meat, 1/4 cup vegetable, and 1/2 oz. equivalent grains.

For a quantity recipe that yields 25 or 50 servings see: https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/quantity/child-nutrition-cnp/arroz-con-pollo.

Source: Team Nutrition: Adapted from CNPP Cultural Recipes.
Baked Batatas and Apples

Prep time: 7 minutes
Cook time: 40 minutes
Makes: 6 Servings

The batata dulce or sweet potato is a root vegetable that is native to Central and South America, Mexico, and the West Indies. As the result of exploration and early world travel, the sweet potato is eaten in Asian and South American countries as well as the United States. This combination of apples and batatas dulces creates a sweet-savory dish that both kids and adults enjoy.

Ingredients

3 tablespoons Brown sugar, packed
1/2 teaspoon Cinnamon, ground
1/4 teaspoon Salt, table
2 cups Sweet potatoes (batatas dulce) fresh, peeled, 1/2" cubed

3 cups Apples, fresh, peeled, cored, 1/2" cubed
(Recommend: Braeburn, gala, honey crisp, jonagold, or jonathans)

1 tablespoon Canola oil

1/4 cup Orange juice

Nonstick cooking spray

**Directions**

1. Preheat oven to 350 °F.
2. Lightly coat a medium baking dish (about 8” x 8”) with nonstick cooking spray.
3. In a medium bowl, combine brown sugar, cinnamon, and salt.
4. Toss sweet potatoes (batatas dulces), apples, oil, and orange juice in the cinnamon-sugar mixture.
5. Place the sweet potato (batata dulce) and apple mixture in the baking dish.
6. Cover with foil and bake for 40 minutes, or until sweet potatoes (batatas dulces) are tender. Heat to 140 °F for at least 15 seconds.
7. Serve 1/2 cup.

Critical Control Point: Hold at 140 °F or higher.

**Notes**

**CACFP Crediting Information:**
1/2 cup provides 1/4 cup vegetable and 1/4 cup fruit.

**Variations:**

Yams or butternut squash may be substituted for the sweet potatoes.

Canned apple slices may be substituted for fresh apples.

**Chef Tips:**

Add 1/2 cup chopped nuts or 1 tablespoon grated orange rind to the cinnamon-sugar mixture for a crunchy texture or citrus flavor.


**Source:** Team Nutrition: Adapted from http://extension.umass.edu/nutrition/recipes/baked-batatas-and-apples.
Baked Cod Olé

**Prep time:** 10 minutes

**Cook time:** 15 minutes

**Makes:** 6 Servings

In Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, Barbados, and other parts of the Caribbean seafood is very popular. Each island has its own specialty dish and many include baked fish. Cod is a popular choice; it is versatile and can be baked, poached, or grilled.

### Ingredients

- **3 tablespoons** Lime juice, fresh squeezed, seeds removed or bottled lime juice (2 limes = about 3 Tbsp lime juice)
- **1/2 teaspoon** Olive oil
- **1/4 teaspoon** Black pepper, ground
- **1/4 teaspoon** Salt, table
- **1 1/4 cups** Tomatoes, fresh, 1/4” diced

### Nutrition Information

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### MyPlate Food Groups

- **Vegetables:** 1/4 cup
- **Protein Foods:** 1 1/2 ounces
1 1/4 cups Onions, fresh, peeled, 1/4” diced

2 tablespoons Cilantro, fresh, chopped

13 1/2 ounces Cod fish fillets, fresh or frozen (each piece should be about 2 1/4 oz)

Nonstick cooking spray

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400 °F.

2. To make dressing: In a small bowl, whisk together lime juice, olive oil, black pepper, and salt.

3. Prepare salsa: In a medium bowl, combine tomatoes, onions, and cilantro. Add dressing and toss.


5. Place fish portions on a baking sheet with about 1” of space between each piece.

6. Top each piece of fish with 1/3 cup (about 2 1/3 oz) salsa.

7. Roast for 12-15 minutes. When done, fish will flake easily with a fork. Heat to an internal temperature of 145 °F for at least 15 seconds.

8. Serve 1 fillet topped with 1/3 cup salsa.

Critical Control Point: Hold at 140 °F.

Notes

CACFP Crediting Information:

1 fish fillet topped with 1/3 cup salsa provides 1 1/2 oz.
equivalent meat and 1/4 cup vegetable.

**Variations:**

Tilapia, halibut, or other white fish can be substituted for cod.

For a quantity recipe that yields 25 or 50 servings see: https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/quantity/child-nutrition-cnp/baked-cod-ol.

**Source:** Team Nutrition: Adapted from https://healthyeating.nhlbi.nih.gov/recipeDetail.aspx?linkId=13&cId=3&rId=256.
Beef Picadillo

**Prep time:** 10 minutes  
**Cook time:** 40 minutes  
**Makes:** 6 Servings

Picadillo is a delicious stew made with ground beef, tomatoes, and other ingredients. It is a popular dish in South American countries and the Caribbean. Serve it over rice or as a filling in tacos.

**Ingredients**

- 1/2 cup Brown rice, long-grain, uncooked
- 1 cup Water
- 12 ounces Ground beef, 90% lean, raw, fresh or frozen
- 1 1/4 cups Onions, fresh, 1/4" diced
- 1 cup Green bell peppers, fresh, 1/4" diced
- 1 clove Garlic, fresh, minced (1 clove is about 1/2 teaspoon minced)
1/3 cup Tomatoes with juice, diced, canned
1 cup Tomato sauce, canned
1/2 cup Raisins, seedless, unpacked
1/4 teaspoon Oregano, dry
1/2 teaspoon Cumin, dry, ground
2 tablespoons Cilantro, fresh, chopped (optional)

Directions

1. Combine brown rice and water to a small stockpot.

2. Heat on medium-high heat to a rolling boil. Cover and reduce heat to medium. Cook until water is absorbed, about 15-20 minutes. Stir once. Cover and cook an additional 10 minutes over low heat. Fluff the rice gently with a fork.

3. Heat a medium skillet on medium-high heat on top of stove.

4. Brown ground beef. Drain. Heat to 165 °F or higher for at least 15 seconds.

5. Add onions, bell peppers, and garlic to ground beef. Sauté on medium-high heat until onions and bell peppers are soft. Stir frequently.

6. Add diced tomatoes with juice, tomato sauce, raisins, oregano, and cumin. Bring to a boil and remove from heat.

7. Serve 1/2 cup picadillo over 1/4 cup rice. Garnish with 1 teaspoon cilantro (optional).

Critical Control Point: Hold at 140 °F or higher.
Notes

CACFP Crediting Information:

1/2 cup picadillo over 1/4 cup rice provides 1 1/2 oz. equivalent meat, 1/4 cup vegetable, and 1/2 oz. equivalent grains.

Chef Tips:

For optimal browning and taste: 1. Do not rinse ground meat. 2. Do not crowd ground meat. Crowding may cause the juices to pool around the meat. Pooling causes the juices to steam the meat rather than brown it, making it less flavorful.

Variations:

If ground beef is frozen, defrost in the refrigerator for 1 day per 1-5 pounds. Store raw beef at 40 °F or lower.

Frozen bell peppers may be substituted for fresh bell peppers.

For a quantity recipe that yields 25 or 50 servings see: https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/quantity/child-nutrition-cnp/beef-picadillo.

Source: Team Nutrition: Adapted from recipe by Learning Care Group.
Black Beans with Plantains

**Prep time:** 10 minutes  
**Cook time:** 30 minutes  
**Makes:** 6 Servings

This flavorful dish includes black beans and plantains, two foods that are frequently used in meals prepared in South America and the Caribbean. Plantains are a staple food in many tropical regions. They can be steamed or boiled and used in a manner similar to the way potatoes are used in North America.

**Ingredients**

- **1/2 cup** Brown rice, long-grain, uncooked
- **1 1/2 cups** Water
- **1 teaspoon** Canola oil
- **1 1/4 cups** Onions, fresh, peeled, 1/4” diced
1 clove Garlic, fresh, minced (1 clove is about 1/2 teaspoon minced)

1 quart Black beans, low-sodium, canned, drained and rinsed or black beans, dry, cooked

1 cup Water

1 cup Tomato sauce, low-sodium, canned

2/3 cup Plantains, fresh, ripe (yellow), peeled, 1/4” diced

1 tablespoon Cumin, dried, ground

1 teaspoon Paprika

1/2 teaspoon Black pepper, ground

2 tablespoons Salsa, traditional (optional)

2 tablespoons Cilantro, fresh, chopped (optional)

2 tablespoons Green onions with tops, fresh, chopped (optional)

Directions

1. Combine brown rice and 1 cup water in a small stockpot. Reserve remaining water.

2. Heat on medium-high heat to a rolling boil.

3. Cover and reduce heat to medium. Cook until water is absorbed, about 15-20 minutes. Stir once. Cover and cook an additional 10 minutes over low heat. Fluff the rice gently with a fork.


5. Add onions and sauté until soft.

6. Add garlic. Continue cooking on medium-high heat until garlic is fragrant, about 1-2 minutes. Stir frequently.
7. Add cooked rice, black beans, 1/2 cup water, tomato sauce, plantains, cumin, paprika, and pepper.

8. Stir well and bring to boil. Stir frequently.

9. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer for 5 minutes or until liquid is absorbed into the ingredients. Heat to 140 °F for at least 15 seconds.

10. Serve 1 cup.

11. Garnish each serving with 1 teaspoon of salsa, 1 teaspoon of cilantro, and 1 teaspoon of green onions (optional).

Critical Control Point: Hold at 140 °F or higher.

Notes

CACFP Crediting Information:

1 cup provides Legume as Meat Alternate: 1 1/2 oz. equivalent meat alternate, 1/4 cup vegetable, and 1/2 oz. equivalent grains or Legume as Vegetable: 5/8 cup vegetable and 1/2 oz. equivalent grains.

Tips for Soaking Dry Beans

1 lb. dry black beans = about 2 1/4 cups dry or 4 1/2 cups cooked beans.

Overnight Method: Add 1 3/4 qt. cold water to every 1 lb. of dry beans. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Discard the water. Proceed with recipe.

Quick-Soak Method: Boil 1 3/4 qt. of water for each 1 lb. of dry beans. Add beans and boil for 2 minutes. Remove from heat and allow to soak for 1 hour. Discard the water. Proceed with recipe.

Tips for Cooking Dry Beans
Once the beans have been soaked, add 1 3/4 qt. water for every lb. of dry beans. Boil gently with lid tilted until tender, about 2 hours.

Use cooked beans immediately.

**Critical Control Point:** Hold for hot service at 140 °F or higher or chill for later use. To chill, cool to 70 °F within 2 hours and to 40 °F or lower within an additional 4 hours.

For a quantity recipe that yields 25 or 50 servings see: [https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/quantity/child-nutrition-cnp/black-beans-plantains](https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/quantity/child-nutrition-cnp/black-beans-plantains)

Quick Quesadilla

Prep time: 20 minutes
Cook time: 15 minutes
Makes: 6 Servings

Quesadillas, a popular menu item in Mexico, are made by folding a corn or flour tortilla in half and filling it with a variety of ingredients such as vegetables, cheese, beans, and meat. This recipe puts a twist on the traditional favorite by baking the quesadillas, instead of toasting them on a griddle or in a pan. This allows you to cook several at one time. Try topping these quesadillas with avocado, cilantro, or salsa.

Ingredients

2 1/4 cups Spinach, frozen, chopped (2 1/4 cups thawed and drained yields 1 1/2 cups)

1 cup Dark red kidney beans, canned, no salt added, drained and rinsed or kidney beans, dry, cooked

1 teaspoon Garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon Onion powder
1/4 teaspoon Chili powder
4 Whole-grain tortillas, 8" (at least 51 gm each)
1 1/2 cups Mozzarella cheese, low-fat, shredded
Nonstick cooking spray

Directions

1. Thaw, drain, and squeeze excess liquid from spinach. Yields: 1 1/2 cups (7 1/2 oz.)
2. Preheat oven to 350 °F.
3. Place kidney beans in a small microwavable bowl.
4. Add garlic powder, onion powder, and chili powder.
5. Lightly mash beans by squeezing using gloved hands (at least 50% of the beans should appear whole). Be careful not to over-mash beans.
6. Heat in microwave for 1 minute. Stir with a spoon.
7. Prepare quesadillas:
   a. Place half of the tortillas on a baking sheet. Spread 3/4 cup of spinach on each tortilla. Top each with 3/8 cup of bean mixture and 3/4 cup of cheese.
   b. Place remaining tortillas on top.
   c. Spray outside of filled quesadillas with nonstick cooking spray.
8. Bake for 15 minutes. Heat quesadillas to an internal temperature of 140 °F or higher for at least 15 seconds.
9. Cut each quesadilla into 6 wedges.
10. Serve 2 wedges or 1/3 quesadilla.

Optional: Serve with sliced or mashed avocado, cilantro or salsa.

Critical Control Point: Hold at 140 °F or higher.

Notes

CACFP Crediting Information:

2 wedges (1/3 quesadilla) provides Legume as Meat Alternate: 1 1/2 oz. equivalent meat alternate, 1/4 cup vegetable, and 1 oz. equivalent grains OR Legume as Vegetable: 1 oz. equivalent meat alternate, 3/8 cup vegetable, and 1 oz. equivalent grains.

Tips for Soaking Dry Beans

1 lb. dry kidney beans = about 2 1/2 cups dry or 6 1/4 cups cooked beans.

Overnight Method: Add 1 3/4 qt. cold water to every 1 lb. of dry beans. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Discard the water. Proceed with recipe.

Quick-Soak Method: Boil 1 3/4 qt. of water for each 1 lb. of dry beans. Add beans and boil for 2 minutes. Remove from heat and allow to soak for 1 hour. Discard the water. Proceed with recipe.

Tips for Cooking Dry Beans

Once the beans have been soaked, add 1 3/4 qt. water for every lb. of dry beans. Boil gently with lid tilted until tender, about 2 hours. Use cooked beans immediately.

Critical Control Point: Hold for hot service at 140 °F or higher or chill for later use. To chill, cool to 70 °F within 2 hours and to 40 °F or lower within an additional 4 hours

For a quantity recipe that yields 25 or 50 servings see: https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/quantity/child-nutrition-cnp/quick-quesadilla
Source: Team Nutrition: Adapted from CNPP Cultural Recipes.
Red Beans and Rice

**Prep time:** 10 minutes  
**Cook time:** 20 minutes  
**Makes:** 6 Servings

Rice and beans is a staple dish in many South American countries. The popular duo is sometimes called “casamiento” or “matrimonio,” which means wedding or marriage. Rice and beans is also a popular part of Creole cuisine in Louisiana.

**Ingredients**

1 **tablespoon** Olive oil  
1 1/2 **cups** Onions, fresh, peeled, 1/4” diced  
1 1/2 **cups** Green bell peppers, fresh, 1/4” diced  
3 **cloves** Garlic, fresh, minced (1 clove is about 1/2 teaspoon minced)  
3/4 **cup** Brown rice, instant, uncooked

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**MyPlate Food Groups**

- **Vegetables**: 1/4 cup
- **Grains**: 1/2 ounce
- **Protein Foods**: 1 1/2 ounces
2 teaspoons Cumin, ground

2 teaspoons Oregano, leaves, dried

1/2 teaspoon Salt, table

1/2 teaspoon Black pepper, ground

2 cups Chicken broth, low-sodium

3 cups Dark red kidney beans, canned, low-sodium, drained and rinsed or kidney beans, dry, cooked

Directions

1. Heat oil on medium-high in a medium skillet.

2. Add onions and peppers and sauté for about 3 minutes or until onions are soft.

3. Reduce heat to medium.

4. Stir in garlic, brown rice, cumin, oregano, salt, and pepper. Cook for 1 minute or until rice and spices become toasted, stirring constantly.

5. When rice and spices are toasted, immediately add chicken broth. Stir, increase heat to medium-high, and bring to a boil.

6. Stir in kidney beans. Reduce heat to medium and simmer for 5 minutes or until rice becomes tender. Heat to a temperature of 140 °F for at least 15 seconds.


Critical Control Point: Hold at 140 °F.

Notes
Tips for Soaking Dry Beans

1 lb. dry kidney beans = about 2 1/2 cups dry or 6 1/4 cups cooked beans.

Overnight Method: Add 1 3/4 qt. cold water to every 1 lb. of dry beans. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Discard the water. Proceed with recipe.

Quick-Soak Method: Boil 1 3/4 qt. of water for each 1 lb. of dry beans. Add beans and boil for 2 minutes. Remove from heat and allow to soak for 1 hour. Discard the water. Proceed with recipe.

Tips for Cooking Dry Beans

Once the beans have been soaked, add 1 3/4 qt. water for every lb. of dry beans. Boil gently with lid tilted until tender, about 2 hours. Use cooked beans immediately.

Critical Control Point: Hold for hot service at 140 °F or higher or chill for later use. To chill, cool to 70 °F within 2 hours and to 40 °F or lower within an additional 4 hours.


Source: Team Nutrition: Adapted from CNPP Cultural Recipes.
Red Pozole

Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 50 minutes
Makes: 6 Servings

Pozole, which means hominy, is a traditional soup or stew from Mexico. Hominy is a food produced from treated dried corn kernels and can be found in many dishes prepared throughout Mexico and Central America. When served, it often includes add-ins such as radishes, shredded cabbage, cilantro, lime, and avocado.

Ingredients

12 1/2 ounces Chicken breast, boneless, skinless, fresh or frozen, raw
1 teaspoon Canola oil
1 1/4 cups Onions, fresh 1/4" diced
1 clove Garlic, fresh, minced (1 clove is about 1/2 teaspoon minced)
Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400 °F. Spray baking sheet with nonstick cooking spray.

2. Place chicken breasts on a baking sheet. Bake for 15-25 minutes (Note: For large chicken breasts, cut in half to decrease cooking time.) Bake until internal temperature reaches 165 °F or higher for at least 15 seconds.

3. Remove chicken breasts from oven. Let chicken breast sit for 10 minutes to cool slightly, then dice.


5. Add onions and sauté until soft.

6. Add garlic, salt, and pepper. Continue cooking on medium-high heat until garlic is fragrant, about 1-2 minutes. Stir frequently.
7. Add cooked chicken, diced tomatoes with juice, tomato paste, hominy, and water. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. If too thick, add more water for desired consistency. Critical Control Point: Heat to 140 °F or higher for at least 15 seconds.

8. Remove pozole from heat and stir in fresh cilantro.

9. Serve 1/2 cup. Lime wedge is optional.

Critical Control Point: Hold at 140 °F or higher.

Notes

CACFP Crediting Information:

1/2 cup provides 1 1/2 oz. equivalent meat and 1/4 cup vegetable.

Variations:

If chicken is frozen, defrost in the refrigerator for 1 day. Hold raw chicken at 40 °F or lower.

Beef may be substituted for chicken.

For a quantity recipe that yields 25 or 50 servings see: https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/quantity/child-nutrition-cnp/red-pozole