

**In this issue:**

- Benefits
- How to Use
- Safety Precautions

**Recipes:**

- Slow Cooker Stuffing
- Slow Cooker Pork Stew over Brown Rice
- Baked Slow Cooker Apples
- Stuffed Bell Peppers



**October 2020**

## Slow Cooker Meals

Using a slow cooker makes it easy to have a meal ready by the time you get home from work. Your meal is already cooked and you only have to serve it. Slow cookers are also a great way to meal prep. You can freeze meals, put them in the slow cooker before work, and have a healthy and tasty meal ready when you get home.

### Benefits of Using Slow Cookers

- A slow cooker uses less energy than ovens
- You can make a variety of meals (soups, stew, casseroles)
- When you cook meats that are lower in price, they will become tender from being slow-cooked and has a similar flavor and texture of more expensive meats
- You can use them year-round. Slow cookers will not heat your kitchen in the summer as an oven would, and in the winter, they provide a delicious smell to your home.



This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistant Program – SNAP. For more information on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistant Program (SNAP), please contact your local Social Services office.

For more information on stretching your food dollars, contact your local SDSU Extension office or the State office at 605-688-4440.

SDSU Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer in accordance with the nondiscrimination policies of South Dakota State University, the South Dakota Board of Regents and the United States Department of Agriculture.

Recipes from: <https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/>

Content from: <http://www.extension.org/>; <http://doe.sd.gov/cans/sfsp.aspx>; <https://choosemyplate.gov/>

3,650 copies, \$0.21 each, SDSU Extension. Printed on recycled paper. ES059 9/20

## How Long Should I Cook It?



Slow cookers have 2-3 settings. The low setting is for cooking meals within 6 to 10 hours, while the high setting cooks most meals in 4 to 6 hours. It is best to turn the slow cooker on high for 1 hour before choosing the correct temperature for your meal of choice. When selecting which setting, a general rule of thumb is for a recipe that generally takes 15-30 minutes to cook it will take approximately 4 hours on the low setting and about 1 ½ hour on high.

### Safety Information

- Always make sure that your hands, counters, utensils, and the slow cooker are clean
- Be sure that meat is thawed completely before placing in the slow cooker
- Cut meat into smaller chunks if intended to cook quickly
- Place vegetables in first due to cooking time, followed by meat, and then a liquid. Liquids are important for helping to make sure the meal gets properly and evenly cooked
- Leave at least two inches of space from the top of the slow cooker. Filling completely to the top will not allow the food to be fully cooked
- Always be sure to use a food thermometer to test the temperature of the food







## Slow Cooker Stuffing

Makes 16 Servings

### Ingredients:

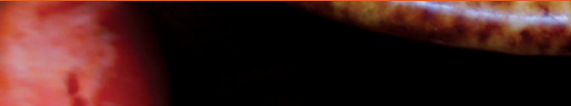
¾ stick of light butter	1 teaspoon poultry seasoning
2 cups chopped celery	1 ½ teaspoons dried sage
1 cup chopped onion	1 teaspoon dried thyme
2 ½ teaspoons dried parsley	1 teaspoon garlic powder
2 cups fresh mushrooms (sliced)	½ teaspoon ground black pepper
16 cups 100% whole-wheat bread (cubed)	3 cups low-sodium chicken broth
½ cup dried cranberries	1 egg (beaten)
1 cup chopped apple	2 egg whites (beaten)
	1 cup water

### Directions:

Melt butter in a large pan over medium heat. Add onion, celery, mushrooms, and parsley to pan. Stir often until veggies are tender. Combine bread cubes, cranberries, and apple in a large bowl. Pour veggies over bread cubes and mix gently. Season with poultry seasoning, sage, thyme, garlic powder, and pepper. Pour in broth (just enough to moisten) and gently mix in eggs. Transfer mixture to slow cooker and cover. Set slow cooker to high for 45 minutes; then reduce heat to low and cook for 4 to 8 hours.

Nutritional Information per serving:  
Total Calories 150; Total Fat 5g; Saturated Fat 2g; Protein 7g; Carbohydrates 21g; Dietary Fiber 3g; Sodium 204mg

Rather than take away “unhealthy” ingredients, this version got colorful by adding red cranberries and green apples.



## Slow Cooker Pork Stew over Brown Rice

Makes 8 Servings

### Ingredients:

- 2 pounds lean pork stew meat
- 3 cups baby carrots
- 1 large onion, sliced
- 1 ½ teaspoons dried thyme leaves
- ½ teaspoon coarse ground black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 ½ cups complete bran and wheat flakes ready-to-eat cereal (crushed to ¾ cup)
- 1 cup dried tart cherries
- ¾ cup 100% apple juice or apple cider
- 4 cups hot cooked brown rice

### Directions:

Trim fat from pork. Spray large pan with non-stick cooking spray. Cook half of the pork at a time until browned. In a 4-6 quart crockery cooker layer carrots, onion, thyme, pepper, salt and garlic. Sprinkle with cereal and cherries. Top with pork and pour apple juice or cider over contents in the cooker. Cover and cook on low setting for 7-8 hours or on high setting for 3 ½ to 4 hours. Prepare the brown rice according to package directions toward the end of the stew cooking time. (Brown rice typically takes about 40-45 minutes to cook). Stir pork mixture and serve over ½ cup brown rice.

Nutritional Information per serving:  
Total Calories 360; Total Fat 5g; Saturated Fat 2g; Protein 27g; Carbohydrates 50g; Dietary Fiber 6g; Sodium 139mg

Apple juice and dried fruit add a touch of sweetness to this stew.





Not only are these apples delicious, but your home will smell wonderful after they cook all day!

## Baked Slow Cooker Apples

Makes 6 servings

### Ingredients:

6 Large crisp all-purpose apples	1 teaspoon Ground cinnamon
1 tablespoon Lemon juice	3/4 cup Chopped walnuts
3 tablespoons Butter or margarine softened	1/3 cup Raisins
1/3 cup Light brown sugar	1 cup Apple cider

### Directions:

Wash and core each apple, leaving a cavity about 1-1/2 inches wide and 1/2-inch from bottom; peel about an inch around tops. (If you don't have an apple corer, you can use a sharp knife to cut the apple in half, then remove the core.) Brush the lemon juice on all revealed surfaces. Combine butter or margarine, brown sugar, cinnamon, walnuts, and raisins; stir to mix well. Place apples in a single layer in the slow cooker. Fill apple centers with walnut-raisin mixture. Drizzle with cider. Sprinkle with additional cinnamon, if desired. Cover slow cooker and cook on LOW for 3 to 4 hours or until apples are tender. Baste with juices and serve warm, or at room temperature.

Nutritional Information per serving:  
Total calories 297; Total fat 15.3g; Saturated fat 4.2g; Carbohydrates 42g; Protein 4.5g; Fiber 6g; Sodium 58.5mg



Bell peppers tend to vary in price so buy whatever is least expensive – red, green, or yellow – for this tasty dish.

## Stuffed Bell Peppers

Makes 4 Servings

### Ingredients:

2 Large green bell peppers	3 Green onions chopped
2 Large red bell peppers	1/4 teaspoon Seasoned salt
1/2 cup Converted white rice (Uncle Ben's)	1/4 teaspoon Garlic pepper
15-1/4 ounces Whole kernel corn, drained	14-1/2 ounces Diced tomatoes, undrained
2-1/4 ounces Sliced ripe olives, drained	1/3 cup red or white grape juice
	6 ounces Tomato paste

### Directions:

Slice tops off peppers and carefully remove seeds and inner ribs. Remove stems from tops and chop remaining pepper pieces. Stand the peppers upright in a 5 qt slow cooker. In a medium bowl, combine chopped pepper tops, rice, corn, olives, green onions, seasoned salt, garlic pepper, and 1/4 cup tomatoes. Mix well. Stuff peppers with corn mixture, dividing evenly and packing lightly. Mix remaining tomatoes and their liquid with juice and tomato paste until well blended. Pour over and around the peppers in slow cooker. Cover and cook on low for 6-7 hours, or until rice is cooked and peppers are tender, but still hold their shape.

Nutritional Information per serving:  
Total Calories 30; Total Fat 3g; Saturated Fat 0g; Protein 4g; Carbohydrates 0g; Dietary Fiber 0g; Sodium 73mg