

WINTER SUPPLEMENT: SEASONAL LAYERS FOR HOLIDAYS AND WINTERTIME

Winter Supplement: Seasonal Layers for Holidays and Wintertime

During the holidays, shoppers are looking for delicious meal ideas and recipes to make family celebrations and entertaining guests easy and as stress free as possible. Then, when the holidays wrap up and a new year begins, consumer behaviors change. As wellness resolutions are made in January, shoppers seek healthy and satisfying food options that fit the colder winter months.

In this ‘Seasonal Layer’ supplement to the Retail Dietitian Toolkit, the National Onion Association has provided turn-key content to assist with holiday season promotions and warm meals for cold weather days. Also included is information to help you educate shoppers on weight management and ideas for American Heart Month in February.

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- Article: Managing Weight with Planning and Produce
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- Social Media Posts

Heart Health *(February)*

- Media or Video Segment
- Social Media Posts





Easy Holiday Entertaining

Easy Holiday Entertaining Media or Video Segment

1. In advance:

Ask television station to post the outline and recipes on their website to ensure more impressions. For Instagram or Facebook Live, post the recipes online or link them to your retailer's website.

2. Props:

Holiday décor and placemats

3. Tips for Making Holiday Entertaining Easy:

Supermarkets are busy places during the holiday season. Make shopping as simple as possible by planning menus that use easy-to-find ingredients. Take advantage of convenience items, such as pre-cut vegetables and fruit.

– Make sure the food options can be enjoyed by all the guests. Ask about possible allergies ahead of time. A few ingredient substitutions will transform a recipe to vegetarian, gluten free or a healthier profile. *(Promote your retail dietitian services here to assist with recipes or refer the audience to your website for ideas).*

– Do as much pre-prep as possible so you are relaxed and ready to enjoy your company.

4. Demo Recipe:

Choose from one of the three recipes: Sweet Onion-Tomato Tartlets, Skinny French Onion Dip, or Crusty Onion Bruschetta.

Easy Holiday Entertaining Demo Recipes



Recipe and image provided by the National Onion Association/
onions-usa.org

Sweet Onion-Tomato Tartlets

Makes about 18 tartlets

INGREDIENTS:

3 cups grape tomatoes
1 large sweet onion, quartered and thinly sliced
(about 2 cups)
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon snipped fresh rosemary
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
1 package (2 sheets) frozen puff pastry sheets,
thawed
Manchego cheese shavings

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Prick tomatoes with a fork or the tip of a sharp knife. In an ungreased 15x10x1-inch pan, combine tomatoes, onion, oil, rosemary, salt and pepper. Roast for 25 to 30 minutes or until onion is tender. Remove from oven. Sprinkle with vinegar, cool.

Meanwhile, line a large baking sheet with parchment paper. On a lightly floured surface, unfold puff pastry. Using a 3-inch round cookie cutter, cut pastry into rounds. Place rounds on the prepared baking sheet.

Spoon about 2 tablespoons of the roasted tomato mixture onto each pastry round. Place onion first, then tomatoes and then top with more onion. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes or until edges are puffed and golden brown. Let stand on baking sheet for 5 minutes before serving. Garnish with cheese.

Per tartlet: 66 Calories, 3.55g Fat, 0.72g Protein,
8.37g Carbohydrate, 0.5g Fiber, 80mg Sodium



Photo and recipe courtesy of Daisy Brand® 2018

Skinny French Onion Dip

Makes 16 servings

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
- 2 large sweet onions, sliced thinly
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1 1/2 cups Daisy Cottage Cheese
- 1/4 cup Daisy Light Sour Cream
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh chives

DIRECTIONS:

Heat the oil over medium heat; cook and stir the onions for 15 minutes or until tender.

Reduce the heat to low. Stir in the garlic, sugar and salt; continue cooking for 10 to 15 minutes longer or until the onions are turn a deep golden brown color. Remove from the heat and cool slightly. Place the cottage cheese, sour cream, Worcestershire sauce and cayenne pepper in the bowl of a food processor. Blend until almost smooth. Add the onion mixture; pulse several times until the onions are chopped and distributed. Transfer the mixture to a serving bowl; cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. Just before serving, sprinkle with chopped chives.

Serve with fresh vegetables or whole grain crackers.

Per serving: 46 calories, 2.7 g fat, 2.4 g protein, 2.1 g carbohydrates, 195 mg sodium, 0.3 g fiber



Recipe and image provided by the National Onion Association/
onions-usa.org

Crusty Onion Bruschetta

Toasty bread and savory onions and cheese combine in this easy to prepare appetizer.

Makes 8 servings

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 French bread baguette (about 8 ounces)
- 4 ounces light cream cheese
- 1/2 cup low-fat ricotta cheese
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano
- 2 teaspoons dried basil
- 1 cup pizza sauce, canned
- 1 medium onion, cut into paper-thin wedges
- 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
- Parsley flakes (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

Pre-heat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit. Split bread in half lengthwise. Pull out some bread from center of each half, leaving a 1/2-inch shell. Blend together cheeses and herbs with fork and spread mixture along length of both bread halves.

Place a ribbon of pizza sauce and a single layer of onions over cheese mixture. Sprinkle with Parmesan and bake on baking sheet at 400°F for 30 minutes or until onion is tender and tips are slightly blackened, but crust is not too dark.

To serve, sprinkle with fresh chopped or dry parsley leaves, if desired. Cut crosswise into narrow strips.

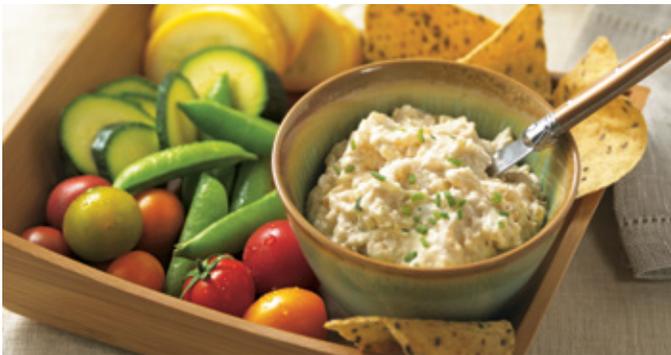
Per tartlet: 161 Calories, 5g Fat, 8g Protein,
21g Carbohydrate, 469mg Sodium, 21g Fiber

Easy Holiday Entertaining Social Media Posts



Facebook:

At (insert your retailer's name) we look forward to helping you entertain your holiday guests with ease. May we suggest these delicious Sweet Onion-Tomato Tartlets as a nutritious appetizer?
<http://bit.ly/2KMsny5> #enjoyonions



Twitter:

Love French Onion dip but hate the calories? Try our reduced-guilt recipe. <http://bit.ly/2VD6AhS>
#familymealsmonth #enjoyonions



Twitter:

Need a sensational side dish for your holiday roast? These Mini Onion Gratin are fabulous!
<http://bit.ly/2tS0rkf> #enjoyonions



Instagram:

Easy holiday entertaining calls for convenient ingredients. Prepared pizza sauce and a baguette from the supermarket bakery make this Crusty Onion Bruschetta a breeze! <http://bit.ly/2teiFiC> #enjoyonions

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Warm Family Meals

Blog or Newsletter Article: Slow Cooker Family Meals

When the temperature drops outside nothing beats a hot, wholesome meal to make your family feel cozy and warm on the inside. Meals prepared in the slow cooker are perfect for cold winter days. Nutritious ingredients can be easily combined in the morning so the family can arrive home to a delicious meal that only requires a few accompaniments to be complete.

Creating great meals with your slow cooker doesn't require a lot of culinary skill but here are a few tips to ensure success:

Benefits of Family Mealtime

- **Use the right size slow cooker.** Typical family meal recipes call for a 5- to 6-quart size.
- **Don't overfill your slow cooker.** To ensure your meal is finished on time, and to avoid potential food-safety hazards most manufacturers recommend filling slow cookers no more than two-thirds full.
- **Keep a lid on it.** Only open your slow cooker about 30 to 40 minutes before the end of the cooking range to check doneness.
- **Have ingredients ready.** Make sure meat is thawed and vegetables are chopped the night before. Frozen veggies or precut vegetables are also great time-saving additions.
- **Purchase a programmable slow cooker.** Sometimes a meal is done in 6 to 7 hours but you may still be at work. In this case, a programmable slow cooker will cook your meals for a designated time and then switch to a warm setting to keep food at a safe temperature until your family is ready to eat.

Share and enjoy as many meals with your family a week as possible. We've provided two simple menus for those busy weeknights or winter weekends of fun to make it easier.

Menu #1

Slow Cooker Chili

Whole Grain Tortilla Chips

Green Salad with Avocado

Menu #2

Slow Cooker Pulled Pork with Apples and Onions

Whole Grain Buns

Baby Carrots and Sugar Snap Peas



Warm Family Meals



Recipe and image provided by the National Onion Association/
onions-usa.org

Slow Cooker Chili

Traditional chili is a family favorite, sure to warm everyone from the inside.

Makes 2-1/2 quarts or 6 servings

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup dried pinto beans, sorted and rinsed
- 1 cup dried red kidney beans, sorted and rinsed
- 1-1/2 pound beef sirloin or pork loin, trimmed and cut into 3/4-inch cubes (3-1/2 cups)*
- 1 pound yellow or white onions, coarsely chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and diced (1-1/3 cups)
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 1-1/2 cups salsa
- 5 cups water

DIRECTIONS:

At least 6-8 hours before cooking (or overnight) soak dried beans in a bowl. Beans should be covered with enough water to stand 2-inches above beans. Soak a minimum of 6-8 hours or overnight.

Drain beans, place in 5 to 6-quart slow cooker. Add meat, onion, bell pepper, chili powder, cumin, salsa and water. Cover slow cooker with lid. Turn on high setting for 7 to 9 hours, or until meat and beans are fork tender. Serve in bowls topped with sour cream, cilantro and extra onions, if desired.

***Vegetarian Version:** Omit meat. Add 1 cup canned or frozen chopped mild green chile (drained), 1/2 cup uncooked brown rice and one additional cup of water. Cook as directed above.

Per serving: 323 Calories, 22g Protein, 13g Fat, 31g Carbohydrates, 321mg Sodium, 8g Fiber



This recipe was created for the National Pork Board by Catherine McCord at Weelicious

Slow Cooker Pork Roast with Apples and Onions

Makes 8 servings

INGREDIENTS:

5 pounds boneless pork loin
1 tablespoon olive oil (or butter)
salt
black pepper
3 gala apples (or pink lady, cored and cut into 8 wedges)
2 yellow onion (sliced)
1 head red cabbage (sliced)
1 bay leaf
1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
1 cup low sodium chicken stock (or apple juice)
2 tablespoons honey (or brown sugar)

DIRECTIONS:

Melt oil or butter in a large sauté pan (or use your slow cooker if it's safe to sauté with) over medium high heat. Season pork with salt and pepper and sauté on each side for a total of 4 minutes. Set aside.

Place the remaining ingredients in a slow cooker and top with pork.

Cook the pork for 5-6 hours on LOW (about 1 1/4 hours per pound) until pork is cooked through and the fruit and vegetables are fork tender. The National Pork Board recommends cooking pork chops, loin roasts and tenderloin to an internal temperature between 145°F (medium rare) and 160°F (medium), followed by a three-minute rest.

Per serving: 480 calories, 13.6 g fat, 66 g protein, 3.9 g fiber, 169 mg sodium

Warm Family Meals Social Media Posts



Facebook:

Looking for something fast, hot and super tasty? Try this smoky pulled pork with the seasonal taste of apples and savory onions in your slow cooker. Serve on whole grain buns with a side of colorful raw veggies and dinner is served! <http://bit.ly/2PZHRV5> #enjoyonions



Twitter:

A chill is in the air! Time to make a batch of Slow Cooker Chili – it's sure to have a warming effect on your family for those busy and not-so-busy nights! <https://bit.ly/2ui4XYG> #enjoyonions



Twitter:

What's for dinner? Satisfying and savory pot roast – an American classic straight from your slow cooker. You've got to taste it to believe how savory it really is! <https://bit.ly/2qd33H0> #enjoyonions



Instagram:

Craving a bowl of Classic Onion Soup? No need to go out . . . you can make a piping hot bowl – complete with melty cheese from your slow cooker! Here's our favorite recipe. <https://bit.ly/2tunRz7> #enjoyonions

Weight Management

Blog or Newsletter Article: Managing Weight with Planning and Produce

One of the main obstacles to weight management is not taking the time to plan and prepare healthier meals. Research shows us when people are able to cook their own food and eat at home their diet is typically lower in calories and higher in nutrients. Also, adding more nutrient-rich, low calorie fruits and vegetables to meals is one of the easiest ways to help control calorie intake.

Try to set aside an hour or so at the beginning of each week to plan out your menus and create a shopping list. Make sure to add in at least 5 daily fruit and/or vegetable options to pump up the nutrition.

Most people find the dinner meal is the most difficult to execute, especially after a busy day at work and with other family obligations. To take the hassle out of this equation we've put together a 7-day family-friendly dinner menu to get you started. Each meal is approximately 500 calories based on the portions indicated and we've included 2 servings of fruits and/or veggies in each meal. Enjoy!



7-Day Family-Friendly Dinner Menu:

- DAY 1:** – 4 oz. - Roasted Pork Tenderloin
– 1 small Baked Potato topped with 2 T. light sour cream
– 1 cup - Broccoli Florets, sautéed with 1 T. olive oil
-

- DAY 2:** – 1 serving - Frittata with Onion, Tomato and Basil
<http://bit.ly/2JhAv8l>
– 1 - Whole Grain English Muffin w/ 1 t. soft olive oil spread
– 1 cup -Fresh Berries
-

- DAY 3:** – 1 - 4 oz. lean Hamburger on Whole Grain Bun
– 1 serving – Gazpacho Salad
<http://bit.ly/2sISyT3>
-

- DAY 4:** – 1 serving – Cheese and Spinach Ravioli
– 1/2 cup – Veggie Pasta Sauce
– 2 cups – Tossed Green Salad with tomato and red onion; 2 T. Light Italian Dressing
– 1 cup – 1% Milk
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- DAY 5:** – 2 - Beef & Veggie Tacos (recipe below)
– 1/2 cup - Corn
– Sparkling Water with Lime
-

- DAY 6:** – Garden Style Fish w/ Onions and Bell Peppers
<http://bit.ly/2tS12Wl>
– 3/4 cup - Instant Brown Rice
– 1/2 cup – Pineapple Tidbits
– 1 cup – 1% Milk
-

- DAY 7:** – 4 oz. – Grilled Chicken Breast
– 1 Whole Grain Dinner Roll
– 1 serving - Grilled Vegetables w/ Balsamic Dressing
<http://bit.ly/2uqGr8r>
– 1 cup – Melon Chunks

Weight Management Meal



Recipe courtesy of Shari Steinbach, MS RDN
Image provided by the National Onion Association/
onions-usa.org

Beef & Veggie Tacos

Set up a taco bar and let the family fill their shells with their favorite toppings.

Makes 6 servings – 2 tacos each

INGREDIENTS:

1 pound lean ground beef
1 package reduced sodium taco seasoning mix
3/4 cup water
12 soft or hard taco shells
1 8-ounce package 2% shredded Mexican cheese blend
1 jar salsa
1 medium onion, chopped
1 avocado sliced
1 medium tomato, chopped
Lettuce, shredded

DIRECTIONS:

Brown meat in large skillet on medium-high heat. Drain fat.

Stir in seasoning mix and water. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to low; simmer 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Spoon into warmed taco shells. Serve with cheese, salsa, onion, avocado, lettuce and tomato.

Per serving: 468 Calories, 37g Protein 9g Fat, 58g Carbohydrate, 595mg Sodium, 5g Fiber

Weight Management Social Media Posts



Facebook:

The amazing onion provides layers of flavor, color, texture and nutrition to a wide variety of dishes and cuisines – no wonder onions are the third most consumed fresh vegetable in the U.S.! This video provides the techniques for cutting an onion to save you time, tears, and uneven cooking:

<https://youtu.be/M3-lZsi8b3c> #enjoyonions



Twitter:

Start the New Year off right w/more fruits & veggies – enjoy our Gazpacho Salad: <http://bit.ly/2slSyT3>
@Fruits_Veggies #enjoyonions



Twitter:

Grilled Vegetables w/Balsamic Dressing adds tasty nutrients to your meal for minimal calories

<http://bit.ly/2uqGr&r> #enjoyonions



Instagram:

Garden Style Fish w/Onions and Bell Peppers can help you manage your weight deliciously!

<http://bit.ly/2tS12WI> #enjoyonions



Heart Health

Heart Health Media Segment:

1. In advance:

Ask television station to post the outline and recipes on their website to ensure more impressions. For Instagram or Facebook Live, post the recipes online or link them to your retailer's website.

2. Props:

A basket filled with a variety of onions – yellow storage, yellow sweet, red, white and green. For a variety of sizes, include one or more colors of pearl onions. Include link to toolkit where types of onions are explained.

3. Onions – Your Ally for Heart Health

Onions are prized not only for their flavorful addition to meals, but for their value-added health components. Onions are high in vitamin C, a good source of fiber, and contain only 64 calories per 1 cup serving. In addition, onion bulbs have a unique combination of three families of compounds believed to have valuable effects on human health - fructans, flavonoids and organosulfur compounds.

Here are some excellent reasons to add onions to your meals to help keep your heart healthy this February and beyond:

- **The organosulfur compounds** are primarily responsible for the taste and smell of onions (and garlic). This compound has shown anti-inflammatory and anti-thrombotic activity, which means they may reduce the risk of blood clots associated with heart disease and stroke.
 - **The flavonoid quercetin** is found in all onions. This flavonoid scavenges particles in the body known as free radicals which damage cell membranes. Studies have shown quercetin to protect against heart disease and several types of cancer with its antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activities.
 - **Tip:** To reduce the pungency, sharpness or aftertaste of a raw onion, cut them the way you plan to use them place onions in a strainer or sieve. Run cold water through onions for at least a minute.
-

4. Demo:

Caramelized onions are delicious and can add flavor and health benefits of onions to meals.

Heart Health Meal

FOR DEMO: Do the beginning steps in one pan and have prepared caramelized onions in another pan. Have caramelized onions to show on top of a sandwich, over seafood, and a colorful salad or pasta dish to show versatility. Refer to the skill sheet for proper steps.



Recipe and image provided by the National Onion Association/
onions-usa.org

Basic Caramelized Onions

Makes 12 servings

INGREDIENTS:

3 pounds yellow onions (6 to 9 medium onions)
Cooking spray, as needed
1-1/2 tablespoons olive oil
1 teaspoon dried thyme, crushed
1 teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed
Salt and pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS:

Halve and slice onions. Coat 12-inch skillet with cooking spray. Over medium heat, cook onions in oil for 15 to 20 minutes, stirring occasionally, or until soft and golden.

Stir in thyme, rosemary, salt, and pepper. Serve warm or cover and chill for up to 5 days.

CARAMELIZED ONIONS ADD FLAVOR TO:

- Sandwiches
- Seafood
- Pasta dishes
- Baked Potato topping
- Better-for-you pizza
- Salads

Steps to Caramelizing Onions

Caramelizing brings out the naturally sweet flavor of onions. The key is to cook them slowly at the right temperatures. The result? A savory ingredient to use in soups and sauces or to top sandwiches, pizzas, steaks and chops.



STEP 1

Onions may be diced or cut in julienne slices with the grain or against the grain for caramelizing. The cut will alter cooking time and texture, see sidebar for details. In the following steps, onions cut with the grain are shown.

TIP: The all-purpose yellow onion is best for cooking.



STEP 2

Add a small amount of oil or butter to coat the bottom of a sauté pan. Place onions in pan. Over low heat, sweat the onions by covering the pan with a lid to keep the onions moist and slow down browning.



STEP 3

When onions are soft and translucent, uncover the pan, and increase heat to medium. Sauté until onions on the bottom of the pan start to brown.

TIP: If the onions start to look dry or stick to the pan, add small amounts of water to moisten and dissolve the burning sugars.



STEP 4

Lower the heat and continue to cook slowly, stirring occasionally until the onions are limp and have turned dark golden brown.

TIP: The thicker the cut, the lower the heat should be in the final stage of caramelizing.



STEP 5

Serve caramelized onions warm as a savory side or use in pastas, sauces and soups or to top your favorite steak or chop.

TIP: Caramelized onions can be prepared ahead and refrigerated up to 5 days in an airtight container.



NATIONAL ONION
ASSOCIATION

Caramelization

What causes onion texture, color & flavor to differ?

Sautéed and caramelized onions have a noticeably different texture, color and flavor. Full caramelization happens when the naturally present sugars oxidize. Onions contain sucrose which is a disaccharide. When heat is applied, sucrose breaks into fructose and glucose (both monosaccharides). Fructose begins to caramelize at 230°F and glucose begins to caramelize at 320°F. Fructose causes the highest degree of color development.

The cut of onion also affects texture. When identifiable onion texture is desired, cut with the grain. Or, skip sweating and start by sautéing on medium heat. For less noticeable texture (i.e. for thickening soups, sauces) and added depth of flavor use onions cut against the grain. A combination of cuts may be desirable in some dishes (i.e. French onion soup).

Caramelization takes time - exactly how much time will vary based on the water content, cut of the onion and the volume.

- Spring/summer varieties are higher in water content, which will increase the cook time in comparison to fall/winter varieties.



Heart Health Social Media Posts



Facebook:

Celebrate Heart Health Month with Onions! The organosulfur compounds responsible for the taste & smell of onions have shown anti-inflammatory and anti-clotting activity beneficial for reducing the risk of heart disease. Learn how to reduce tears and sharp flavors from the National Onion Association <https://www.onions-usa.org/faqs> #enjoyonions



Twitter:

Onions provide layers of health benefits along with their great flavor – check out the perks of adding onions to your diet! <https://bit.ly/2nHNUz2> #enjoyonions



Twitter:

Julia Child said, “It’s hard to imagine civilization without onions” - Find onion inspiration at <https://www.pinterest.com/NationalOnion/>



Instagram:

Garden Style Fish w/ Onions and Bell Peppers can help you manage your weight deliciously! <http://bit.ly/2tS12Wl> #enjoyonions

References

About the National Onion Association – The Voice of the Onion Industry

The National Onion Association is the official organization representing growers, shippers, brokers and commercial representatives of the U.S. onion industry. Founded in 1913, the association is the source of information about onion production, their health benefits and numerous culinary uses. For more information contact:

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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For Health Research and Nutrition Facts:

<https://www.onions-usa.org/all-about-onions/onion-health-research>

<https://www.onions-usa.org/all-about-onions/nutritional-facts-vegetables>