

# Load Your Freezer, Love Your Family!

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My goal in this workshop is to help you identify the "right next step" in your meal planning, and to put a bunch of resources into your hands so that you are equipped to do so! My goal is not to overwhelm you in any way - realize that there are so many different ways to meal plan, and what's right for someone else might not be right for you. Freezer meal prep can fit into any method of meal planning, and even lessen the need to meal plan!

Food prep scenarios:

"I'm stuck in a rut"

"I just wing it"

"I can't seem to find a system that works"

"I've got my act together"

## Be a good steward of time and resources

- **Plan**

- What are your family's preferences and needs?

- Choosing recipes

- Make similar types of meals at the same time (all chicken, all Mexican, etc.).
- Don't be overzealous! Start with just a few recipes.

- Shop carefully

- Plan your freezer meal cooking based on when meat is on sale.
- Make note of what ingredients you already have. Don't be afraid to get pantry items like spices in bulk.
- Shop one day, prep the next.

- **Prep**

- Kinds of prep:
  - "Dump" Meals (require little to no precooking)
    - Chili, Meatloaf, Marinated Chicken, Soups (add the majority of the liquid the day of cooking)
  - Assembled meals (often require precooking)
    - Lasagna, casseroles, etc.
  - Meal components (typically "dump" prep)
    - Taco or fajita filling, sloppy joe filling, etc.
- Rapid-fire tips:
  - Use pre-minced garlic.
  - Combine prep when possible. Make multiple batches of tried and true meals.
  - Find a reasonable source for spices (Aldi, health food store, etc.)
  - Label your meals! Don't assume you will remember what meal it is, how to cook it, or how long it will keep.
  - Cool cooked food before putting it in freezer bags.
- Resources:
  - Use your freezer!
  - Freezer meal prep buddies for motivation
  - Bulk shopping to save money (Sam's Club, bulk meat from farmers)
  - Online recipe sources
    - [newleafwellness.biz](http://newleafwellness.biz) (lots of dump meals)
    - [stockpilingmoms.com](http://stockpilingmoms.com)
    - [onceamonthmeals.com](http://onceamonthmeals.com)
  - Google!

## **Use food to minister to others**

Feeding your own family

Giving meals to others

Hosting freezer meal prep parties

## **Recipe Plan for 4 pounds Ground Beef**

### **Slow Cooker Beef, Lime & Cilantro Chili**

#### ***Ingredients***

- 1 pound 85% lean ground beef (can be precooked)
- 14.5oz can tomato sauce
- 14.5oz can petite diced tomatoes, undrained
- 2 cans black beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 small yellow onion, chopped (about one cup)
- The juice and zest from 1 lime
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 2 teaspoons ground cumin
- Fresh cilantro, chopped (for topping)

#### ***Directions***

Add all of the ingredients to a freezer bag (except cilantro). Label and freeze.

Defrost overnight or in cold water. Cook on low in crockpot for 8 hours.

Break apart beef and stir in about one tablespoon of fresh cilantro.

Spoon into bowls and top with shredded cheddar cheese and tortilla chips.

### **Easy Crockpot Meatloaf**

#### ***Ingredients***

- 2 eggs, beaten
- ½ cup milk
- ⅔ cup bread crumbs
- ½ chopped onion
- 1 tsp salt
- ¼ tsp pepper
- ½ tsp sage
- 1½ lbs lean ground beef
- ketchup and/or BBQ sauce

***Directions***

Label freezer bags with cooking directions and date.

Mix together place into freezer safe bags.

Place in freezer.

On Cooking day, put frozen meatloaf in crockpot, cover with ketchup and/or BBQ sauce (use as little or as much as you want). Cook on low for 8-10 hours

**Hearty Western Casserole**

***Ingredients***

- 1.5 lbs ground beef, browned
- 16 oz can of corn, drained
- 16 oz can kidney beans, drained
- 10.75 oz can tomato soup
- 1 cup Cheese (your choice)
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1 teaspoon minced dry onion flakes
- 1/2 teaspoon chili powder

***Directions:***

Combine all ingredients in a gallon size freezer safe bag. Label & Freeze flat.

Cover and cook on low for 3-4 hours or high for 1-2 hours.

**Shopping List**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 4 pounds ground beef</li><li>• 14.5oz can tomato sauce</li><li>• 14.5oz can petite diced tomatoes</li><li>• 2 cans black beans</li><li>• 2 small yellow onions</li><li>• 1 lime</li><li>• 2 cloves garlic, minced</li><li>• 1.5 tablespoon chili powder</li><li>• 2 teaspoons ground cumin</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2 eggs</li><li>• 3/4 cup milk</li><li>• 2/3 cup bread crumbs</li><li>• 1 tsp salt</li><li>• 1/4 tsp pepper</li><li>• 1/2 tsp sage</li><li>• 16 oz can of corn</li><li>• 16 oz can kidney beans</li><li>• 10.75 oz can tomato soup</li><li>• 1 cup Cheese (your choice)</li><li>• 1 teaspoon minced dry onion flakes</li></ul> |
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## **Recipe Plan for 5 pounds Chicken Breasts**

### **Cool Ranch Shredded Chicken Tacos**

#### ***Ingredients***

- 2 pounds boneless skinless chicken breasts
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 taco seasoning packet (or this homemade version: 1T chili powder, 1tsp pepper, and 1/2tsp of each of the following – salt, ground cumin, red pepper flakes, paprika, oregano, garlic powder, onion powder)
- 1 dry ranch seasoning packet (or this homemade version: 1T dried parsley, 1tsp garlic powder, 1tsp onion powder, 1tsp dried onion flakes, 3/4tsp dill, 1/2tsp pepper, and 1/2 tsp salt. Traditional ranch seasoning packets also include 1T dried buttermilk.)

#### ***Directions***

Combine all ingredients in a gallon-sized plastic freezer bag (label first) and freeze for up to three months. When ready to cook, thaw overnight in refrigerator or in morning in water.

Cook on “low” setting for 6-8 hours. Shred chicken and mix with sauces and spices left in crockpot. Serve on soft tortillas, rice, or lettuce with your favorite taco toppings.

### **Slow Cooker Tex Mex Chicken**

#### ***Ingredients***

- 1 lb. boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch-wide strips
- 2 Tbsp. Taco Seasoning Mix
- 2 Tbsp. flour
- 1 each: green and red pepper, cut into 1-inch-wide strips
- 1 cup frozen corn
- 1½ cups salsa
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- Optional- crushed tortilla chips and sour cream to top

#### ***Directions***

Toss chicken with seasoning and flour in labeled freezer bag. Add all remaining ingredients except the shredded cheese; freeze for up to 3 months. When ready to cook, thaw overnight in refrigerator or in morning in water.

Cook on low for 6-8 hours or high for 3-4 hours. Stir just before serving. Top with the shredded cheese, crushed tortilla chips and dollop of sour cream.

Serve over rice, salad, with chips, or in tortillas.

### **Easy and Healthy Slow Cooker Chicken Teriyaki Recipe**

#### ***Ingredients***

- 2 pounds boneless chicken breasts
- 1 pound fresh or frozen stir fry vegetables\*
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ cup soy sauce
- ¼ cup honey
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes

#### ***Directions***

Add all ingredients to labeled freezer bag; freeze for up to 3 months. When ready to cook, thaw overnight in refrigerator or in morning in water.

Cook on low setting for 6-8 hours. Shred chicken and mix with sauce in slow cooker.

\*This recipe works great with any kind of fresh or frozen vegetables! Sugar snap peas, sliced red peppers, shredded carrots, etc. (note: fresh broccoli doesn't freeze well). If you prefer al dente vegetables, wait to add them until the last 30 minutes of cooking.

#### **Shopping List**

- 5 pounds boneless skinless chicken breasts
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 2 taco seasoning packets
- 1 dry ranch seasoning packet
- 2 Tbsp. flour
- 1 each: green and red pepper
- 1 cup frozen corn
- 1½ cups salsa
- 1 pound fresh or frozen stir fry vegetables (or any combination of vegetables)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ cup soy sauce
- ¼ cup honey
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes