HOW TO MAKE
EASY CHEESY BEAN DIP
Easy Cheesy Bean Dip

This bean dip is healthy, delicious, and a simple snack that hungry kids can make for themselves.

About the Activity
This activity will show teens how to make a simple, tasty snack that’s also a smart choice for their health. Along the way, they’ll learn about the importance of dietary fiber and also the practice of measuring ingredients for proper nutrition and results.

The Teen Cuisine curriculum is developed by Virginia Cooperative Extension.

Supplies

These simple materials will get you started.

- 15 ounces of canned refried beans
- 15 ounces of salsa
- 1 teaspoon of garlic powder, cumin, or both (optional)
- ½ cup reduced-fat shredded cheddar cheese
- 8 bell peppers cut into strips
- 1 bell pepper diced

Grades: 8-12
Topic: Healthy Living & Cooking
Time: 5 minutes
Activity Steps
Before we start, you should know that this is a protein-and fiber-rich dish because beans are high in fiber and protein. Protein is an essential building block for your skin, hair, nails, muscle, bone, and internal organs. Fiber is a source of carbohydrates that your body can’t digest. And that’s a good thing, because it helps digestion and makes you feel full, which also helps with weight management.

Now, let’s get started!

1. Add refried beans, salsa, and seasonings (if using) to a microwave-safe bowl. Mix together.

   QUICK TIP:
   Precision matters.
   Using a measuring cup ensures you’ve got the right amount of ingredients and seasonings. Put in the wrong amount of one thing or the other, and you’ll throw off the flavor or consistency!

2. Heat in the microwave for two minutes.
   Not every bowl can be used in a microwave, so check the bottom for a marker that clearly states yours is microwave-safe.

   DID YOU KNOW:
   Beans can be used as a healthy ingredient substitute in everything from burgers to cakes, pies, and muffins.

   DID YOU KNOW? You can get Vitamin C from more than just oranges: One cup of bell peppers has more than 100 percent of your daily need of this immune-boosting vitamin! ¹

3. Stir in diced bell peppers

4. Top with shredded cheese and dig in with your pepper strips!

FUN FACT:
This recipe makes 16 servings. Each serving has 60 calories, with 3 grams of fiber. Young adults need between 25 and 38 grams of fiber, but most people only eat 10-15 grams per day.
How well do you know your bean dip?

**QUESTION 1**
What does dietary fiber do for your body?
- a. Aids in digestion.
- b. Helps you feel full.
- c. Builds muscle tissue.
- d. Both A and B.

**QUESTION 2**
True or false? Every bowl can be used in the microwave.
- a. True
- b. False

**QUESTION 3**
Bell peppers are a good source of which nutrient?
- a. Vitamin D
- b. Calcium
- c. Vitamin C
- d. “Good” Fats

**QUESTION 4**
Protein is a major part of which of these parts of your body?
- a. Bones
- b. Muscles
- c. Internal organs
- d. Hair and nails
- e. All of the above

**QUESTION 5**
True or false? Most people need to eat more fiber each day.
- a. True
- b. False

Reflection Questions

Questions to deepen wonder and understanding.

- What other spices could you have added to this to make it taste differently?
- Are there other dips where you can use pepper strips instead of chips?
- What other vegetables do you think you could dip in this bean dip?
- What are some other ways you can eat more fiber?
Dietary fiber and more vegetables. Fiber controls the speed of your digestion so your meal or snack makes you feel full and helps you stay feeling full for longer. But it also does lots of other wonderful things for your health: Soluble fiber, which is found not just in beans, but blueberries and oats, helps keep cholesterol low and manages blood sugar. Soluble fiber dissolves in water—that's what “soluble” means.

There's another type of fiber called insoluble fiber. This type of fiber does not dissolve in water, but helps with your bowel health and reduces your risk of developing diabetes, and it’s found in vegetables—like the pepper strips you used for dipping. Only about 1 in 10 Americans eat the recommended amount of vegetables.²

Eating more can not only give you fiber, but also provide vitamins, minerals, and water that your body needs to be healthy.