



Get More Nutrients for Your Money with Canned Foods

New Cost-Per-Nutrient Research published in the *Journal of Nutrition and Food Sciences*¹ demonstrates you often can get more nutrients for your money when choosing canned foods compared to fresh, frozen or dried.²

Nutrition

Americans are increasingly overweight, yet many fall short of getting the nutrients their bodies need.

- Eating more nutrient-rich foods, such as fruits, vegetables, beans and seafood, is a solution to better nutrition.
- The Cost-Per-Nutrient Research shows that canned foods provide the important nutrients our bodies need, often at a lower total cost-per-nutrient than fresh, frozen or dried.
- For example: Of the 10 foods analyzed that provide dietary fiber (a “nutrient of concern” as identified by the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans), the canned variety provided fiber at a lower cost for pinto beans, green beans, corn, mushrooms, peas, pumpkin, tomatoes, peaches and pears.

Canned Food “Wins” by Nutrient

(a closer look at where canned foods offer equal or lower cost-per-nutrient compared to fresh, frozen and/or dried)

	Fiber	Folate	Potassium	Protein	Vitamin A*	Vitamin C
Corn	●	●	●	—		
Green Beans	●	●	●	—	—	
Mushrooms	●	●	●	—	—	
Peaches	●	●	●	—	●	
Pears	●	●	●	—		
Peas	●	●	●	—	—	
Pinto Beans	●	●	●	●	—	—
Pumpkin	●	●	●	—	●	●
Spinach	●	●	●	—	●	●
Tomatoes	●	●	●	—	●	
Tuna	—	●	—	●	●	—

KEY

- = canned food “wins”
- = canned food tied with fresh, frozen and/or dried
- indicates this nutrient is found in either negligible amounts in this food or no data was available

Blank cell = fresh, frozen and/or dried was less expensive than canned for that nutrient

*beta-carotene, the precursor to vitamin A, has been shown to be more bioavailable after canning, although the total amount compared to other forms may not differ

¹Kapica C and Weiss W. Canned fruits, vegetables, beans and fish provide nutrients at a lower cost compared to fresh, frozen or dried. *J Nutr Food Sci*, 2012.

²Data is based on total cost of the food, which includes purchase price, cost of waste (parts not typically eaten, such as stems, rinds, cobs, etc.) and value of time to prepare the food. Nutrients analyzed include fiber, folate, potassium, protein and vitamins A and C. Food analyzed included corn, green beans, mushrooms, peaches, pears, peas, pinto beans, pumpkin, spinach, tomatoes and tuna.





Get More Nutrients for Your Money with Canned Foods cont.

Affordability

American families, nutrition assistance programs, school food service organizations and food banks have to stretch budgets.

- The Cost-Per-Nutrient Research shows that choosing canned varieties of some fruits, vegetables, beans and seafood can often save money, while offering the same important nutrition as fresh or frozen.
- Eight of the 11 foods analyzed, including canned pinto beans, spinach, tomatoes and tuna, had a purchase price of between 8 cents and \$9 less per serving than their fresh, frozen or dried counterparts.
- When factoring in the cost of waste (stems, rinds, seeds, etc., that aren't eaten) and the value of the time to prepare the food, the canned variety was always the most cost-effective.



Convenience



Canned foods help bring nutritious meals to the table quickly and easily.

- Eating meals as a family promotes better dietary quality. Adding canned foods to the recipe mix helps make preparing nutritious meals a snap.
- The Cost-Per-Nutrient Research highlights the time-savings that often comes with using canned foods. For example: It takes just six minutes to prepare a can of pinto beans (which provide fiber and protein), while it takes almost 2½ hours (soaking and cooking) for dried beans to be meal-ready.
- As research shows that one-third of Americans typically decide what to make for dinner at the last minute, keeping nutritious canned foods on hand can help people make healthier eating choices.

The Cost-Per-Nutrient Research supports the idea that there is room for a variety of foods (canned, fresh, frozen and dried) as part of a healthy diet. As families of all income levels and cooking skills strive to eat a balanced diet filled with fruits, vegetables, and protein foods, such as beans and seafood, canned foods offer a nutritious, affordable and convenient way to do so.

The Canned Food Alliance, a National Strategic Partner of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, is a consortium of steelmakers, can manufacturers, food processors and affiliate members that have joined together to drive increased consumption of canned foods by enhancing the perception of their numerous benefits, including nutrition, convenience, affordability and accessibility. For more information about canned food research, facts, resources, the canning process, family mealtime solutions, recipes that use canned foods and more, visit Mealtime.org.