

# ***Cooking for One or Two***

2023 FAMILY AND COMMUNITY EDUCATION (FCE) LEADER LESSON

*Prepared by:*

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## **OVERVIEW**

This lesson provides information to help people prepare nutritious meals to serve one or two people. Information about modifying recipes, choosing customizable dishes, and freezing foods is covered in this lesson.

## **MATERIALS NEEDED**

- Projector and Screen (Optional if copies of the slides are provided to each participant.)
- Printed copies of the Power Point Slides (if desired)
- Paper and pens/pencils (if desired for optional grain bowl activity)
- PB 1483- Freezing Foods Publication
- Cooking for One or Two Handout
- Cooking for One or Two Evaluation Form

## **INTRODUCTION (5 MINUTES)**

Welcome participants and introduce yourself. Distribute any of the following items you are using: copies of the Power Point slides, copies of the Cooking for One or Two handout, copies of the freezing foods publication, and paper and pens/pencils.

- **Ask:** “Has anyone been in a situation where you needed to prepare a meal for one or two people? Was it easy for you to find recipes or prepare a meal for one or two?”
- **Say:** “Whether you prepare meals for one to two people regularly or only once in a while, it can sometimes feel challenging to cook for a smaller crowd, especially if you’re used to cooking for a large group of people! Sometimes, it can even feel like cooking for one to two people isn’t worth the effort.”
- **Ask:** “Has anyone ever felt that way?”
- **Say:** In today’s lesson, we will discuss tips and techniques that can help us prepare nutritious meals for one to two people.

## **PRESENTATION (25 – 30 MINUTES)**

Present the Power Point slides or provide participants printed copies of the slides and use the notes in the Power Point presentation to guide your discussion for the following topics.

*Make mealtimes enjoyable (slide 2)* - Discuss meal planning, ideas to make mealtimes pleasant and exciting, and creating a welcoming eating environment following the script in the Power Point slides.

*Incorporate leftovers and planned overs (slide 3)* - Discuss strategies to incorporate leftovers and repurpose leftovers into planned overs safely following the script in the Power Point Slides.  
*Nutrition, single-serve and convenience options (slides 4-5)* - Discuss strategies to incorporate a variety of nutritious foods into meal plans and strategies to balance convenience with price and nutrition following the script in the Power Point slides.

*Customizable dishes (slides 6-11)* - Discuss dishes that can be easily customized to fit the amount of food needed and the foods a person has on-hand and enjoys. Share the general guidelines for preparing a grain bowl and share as many examples as desired.

*Optional activity* – Ask participants to create their own grain bowl or work in small groups to create a grain bowl they would like to try. Ask for a few volunteers to share their creations. Provide paper and pens/pencils for this activity, as needed.

*Modifying recipes (slides 12-22)* - Discuss modifying recipes to serve fewer people, reviewing modifying amounts needed for ingredients, cooking time, and identifying smaller pots, pans, and other items, as needed.

*Freezing and thawing food (slides 23-24)* Discuss steps to safely freeze and thaw prepared food to use later following the script in the Power Point slides. Encourage participants to refer to the freezing foods publication to learn more about freezing different foods.

*Recipe activity (slide 25)* Review the recipe for roast chicken and oranges and what they might do if they wanted to prepare this recipe that serves four, but they only need to serve one to two people. Remind participants that the recipe is on the handout for this lesson.

## **WRAP UP (5 MINUTES)**

*Say:* In today's lesson, we talked about a few different strategies we might use when we are cooking for ourselves, for two people, or even for a smaller group of people. Sometimes cooking for one or two people can be challenging, so remember to look for ways that make mealtimes pleasant and enjoyable for you. Remember to choose meals and snacks that give our bodies all the nutrients we need to be our best, and balance convenience options with their cost and their nutritional value. Make the most of your valuable time and money by using leftovers and planned overs and explore your creativity with customizable dishes. Modifying recipes and freezing food can also be useful tools, especially if you find that many recipes prepare more food than you'll need!

*Ask:* "Did anyone think of a strategy they would like to try, or will continue doing when you are cooking for 1 or 2 people?" Ask for a few volunteers to share.

*Distribute:* Evaluation form and allow participants a few minutes to complete.

Thank participants for their time and address any questions. Encourage participants to try different strategies when they are cooking for one or two people. It may take time to find the strategies that work best for you!

#### **AFTER THE LESSON**

Collect evaluation forms and give the evaluation forms to the FCS Agent in your county so that the agent can use the data to measure the impact of FCS programming in your county.

## ***Cooking for One or Two Evaluation Form***

In the table below, please place an “X” in the appropriate box to show your agreement with the following statements.

As a result of participating in the Cooking for One or Two lesson.....

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Unsure</b>
I learned strategies that I can begin using, or will continue using, to help me prepare nutritious meals for one or two people.*			
I learned about techniques that can help me make mealtimes pleasant and enjoyable.**			
I learned food safety techniques to keep food safe while preparing leftovers, freezing, and thawing foods.			

\* Agents, report in SUPER under “\_\_ of \_\_ participants prepared healthy meals”.

\*\* Agents, report in SUPER under “\_\_ of \_\_ participants practiced healthy mealtime habits”.

