Crowd-Pleasing Vegetarian Chili

Ingredients:
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 onion chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 stalk celery, chopped
- 1 to 2 tbsp chili powder
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 1 can (28 oz/796 mL) tomatoes
- 1 can (14 oz/398 mL) black or red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 can (12 oz/355 mL) corn kernels, drained
- 1 cup bran cereal
- 3 cups cooked rice
- 1/2 cup shredded Cheddar cheese

Directions:
1. In a large saucepan, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onion, red pepper, garlic and celery, cook until vegetables are tender. Stir in chili powder and cumin; cook for 1 minute.
2. Add tomatoes, breaking up with spoon. Stir in beans, corn and cereal; bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer for 5 minutes. Serve over rice, sprinkled with cheese.

Special message:
This recipe is a rich source of vegetable protein. To fulfill the requirements for a complete protein, pair your chili with a whole grain roll or slice of corn bread. Please keep reading for more information.

Reference: Cook Great Food, by Dietitians of Canada, 2001 Published by Robert Rose Inc.

Some helpful hints...

You can substitute 1 cup dried beans (soaked, cooked and drained) for the canned beans

Soak the beans, either overnight or using the quick-soak method. In a slow cooker, combine 1 cup (250 mL) soaked beans, drained, and 3 cups (750 mL) water. Cover and cook on low setting for 8 to 10 hours. For convenience, cook the beans overnight, drain and refrigerate until ready to use.

Consider garnishing with chopped green or red onion and a dollop of light sour cream.
Proteins are the basic structural component for all cells and tissues in our body. Proteins are essential for all metabolic processes.

Amino acids are the building blocks for all proteins in our bodies. Certain amino acids, known as essential amino acids (EAA) can only be obtained from dietary protein and cannot be produced in the body. Single, large doses of EAA are unnecessary and can be dangerous.

A proper diet containing 0.8 g of protein/kg body weight per day will provide you with all the EAA you need. Protein needs may be slightly higher for children, pregnant/lactating women or athletes.

The 2002 Dietary Reference Intake report recommends healthy adults consume a range of protein intakes from 10 to 35% of their daily energy intake to meet essential nutrient requirements and reduce the risk of chronic disease.

There is no storage form of protein in the body so any excess protein consumed is either used for energy (although this is very low), excreted in the urine, or stored as fat. Remember, calories are still calories no matter the source!

**Special Considerations for Vegetarian Diets**

Vegans, who limit their food choices to only plant-based foods may not be getting sufficient protein from their diet.

Plant based sources of protein include nuts, legumes and beans.

If you simply cannot get enough protein from your Vegan diet consider adding a bit of rice or hemp protein to a fruit shake in the morning.

Lacto-ovo vegetarians that include high quality protein from milk and eggs as well as vegetarians that include complementary mixtures of plant proteins throughout the day, are capable of getting adequate intakes of all essential amino acids.

**What are the 9 essential amino?**

- Threonine
- Leucine
- Methionine
- Isoleucine
- Valine
- Lysine
- Tryptophan
- Histidine
- Phenylalanine