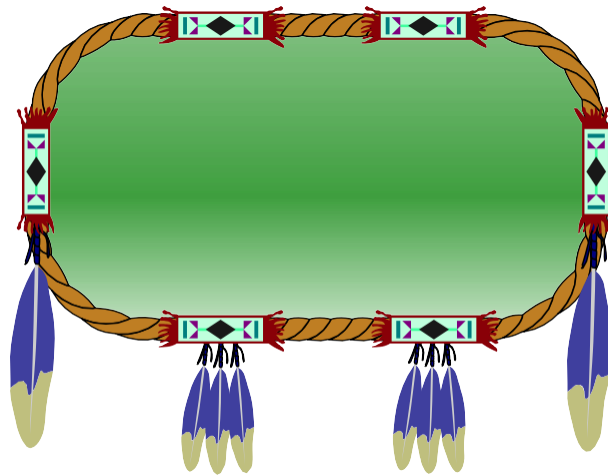


# Traditional Foods: A Native Way of Life



**Selected Recipes Featuring  
Traditional Foods  
of the Northern Plains Tribes**

## Acknowledgements

These recipes accompany the Traditional Foods video produced by the Montana Cardiovascular Health Program, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, in partnership with Montana State University. The recipes were obtained from several Northern Plains Tribes in South Dakota and Montana. When available, nutrient content information is provided.

The Cardiovascular Health Program would like to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of the following people who were involved in the creation of the video:

- ❖ Kibbe Conti, RD, CDE, Oglala Sioux Tribe
- ❖ Alma Hogan Snell, Crow Tribe
- ❖ Charlene F. Johnson, MPH, RD, CDE, Public Health Nutritionist, Crow/Northern Cheyenne Hospital, Indian Health Service
- ❖ Nonie Woolf, RD, MPH, Public Health Nutritionist, Blackfeet Community Hospital, Indian Health Service

This Traditional Foods recipe booklet can be downloaded from:

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/cardiovascular/AmericanIndianCardiovascularHealthResources>

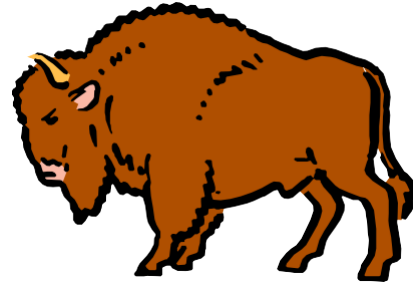


**MONTANA  
CARDIOVASCULAR  
HEALTH PROGRAM**

## Lakota Buffalo Pockets

### Ingredients:

1 large onion  
1 large red bell pepper  
1 large green bell pepper  
1 baby green zucchini  
3 pounds buffalo roast or lean beef roast  
black pepper to taste  
cooking spray  
Aluminum  
foil



1. Wash all vegetables. Slice all vegetables into bite-size, thin pieces.
2. Slice buffalo roast into bite-size pieces. Using a skillet, very lightly sprayed with cooking spray, brown the slices of buffalo meat.
3. Mix all vegetables and meat into a large bowl. Sprinkle with black pepper. Lightly spray foil with cooking spray, and shape into a pocket. Fill pockets with the vegetable and meat mix.
4. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place pockets on a cookie sheet and put in oven. Cook for 20-30 minutes. Discard foil. Serve the meat and vegetables with plain rice.

For other serving options, mix the cooked meat and vegetables with crumbled cornbread or serve with heated tortillas. Makes twelve 1-cup servings.

### Nutrient Content per Serving:

Exchanges: 4 lean meat +  $\frac{1}{2}$  vegetable

Calories: 184

Fat: 3 grams

Protein: 33 grams

Carbohydrate: 5 grams

Sodium: 67 milligrams

Cholesterol: 93 milligrams

Total dietary fiber: 1 gram

Source: Adapted from *A Traditional Food Book – recipes from the REZ*. Produced by Lakota Express for American Indian Talking Circles, 2001. Original recipe from Cherie Lapointe, Winnebago.

## Bison Chili

### Ingredients:

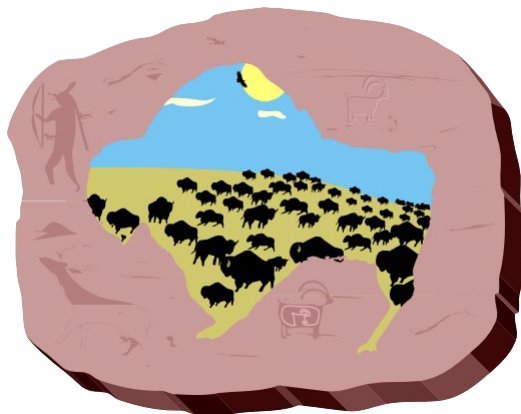
1 pound ground bison (or 1 pound lean ground beef)  
1 medium onion, chopped  
2 (16-ounce) cans tomatoes  
1 (16-ounce) can pinto or kidney beans, rinsed and drained  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt (optional)  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon ground black pepper  
2 teaspoons chili powder

1. Cook the ground bison and onion in a skillet on low heat until meat is browned and the onion is tender, about 10 minutes.
2. Add the beans, tomatoes, water, and seasonings.
3. Cover and simmer on low heat for 1 hour, adding more water if chili becomes too thick. Makes about seven 1-cup servings.

### Nutrient Content per Serving:

Calories: 136  
Fat: 2 grams  
Protein: 15 grams  
Carbohydrate: 15 grams  
Sodium: 578 milligrams  
Cholesterol: 30 milligrams  
Total dietary fiber: 4 grams

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture. Recipe provided by Buffalo Stampede.



## **Lakota Buffalo Roast and Veggies**

### **Ingredients:**

4 pounds buffalo roast or lean beef roast  
1 medium onion, sliced  
1 bag baby carrots (about ½ pound)  
5 medium red potatoes, peeled and diced  
5-6 stalks of celery, diced  
black pepper to taste

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Place buffalo roast in roaster with a lid with one inch of water. Or use a large baking dish covered with a tight-fitting lid or foil.
2. Slice the onions. Peel the potatoes, and dice the potatoes and celery.
3. Sprinkle the roast with black pepper. Place sliced onions in water and on top of the roast. Place the remaining vegetables around the roast in the roaster. Cover and place in oven.
4. Cook approximately 2-1/2 to 3 hours until the vegetables are tender and the meat reaches 160 degrees F. using a meat thermometer. If the meat is done before the vegetables, remove the meat from the roaster and continue cooking the vegetables. Makes twelve servings.

### **Nutrient Content per Serving:**

Exchanges: 1 starch + 5 lean meat + 1 vegetable  
Calories: 276  
Fat: 4 grams  
Protein: 44 grams  
Carbohydrate: 14 grams  
Sodium: 119 milligrams  
Cholesterol: 124 milligrams  
Total dietary fiber: 2 grams

Source: Adapted from *A Traditional Food Book – recipes from the REZ*. Produced by Lakota Express for American Indian Talking Circles, 2001. Recipe from Cherie Lapointe, Winnebago.

# Pemmican

## Ingredients:

Dry meat (uncooked or broiled in a cake pan for a toastier flavor before making pounded dry meat)

Ground chokecherries

Lard (not Crisco or shortening). Tallow was the original ingredient used.

Sugar

1. Add sugar to the ground chokecherries in a large pan. Use equal portions of sugar and chokecherries although some prefer more berries.
2. Lard should be melted until it is very soft (not to liquid form) for easier mixture into meat and berries.
3. Pour lard in pan and stir evenly until there's enough to form into a ball shape. If the lard is at the right temperature, the mixture should stick together when formed.
4. After shaping, place pemmican in refrigerator or in freezer for future use.

These ingredients are not measurable as it depends on how much meat and berries you have at the time.

Source: Dorcella (Three Irons) Flatmouth. Taught to her by mother, Mary (Tenbear) Three Irons, Crow.



## Pemmican 1-2-3

### Ingredients:

Dried meat (game, buffalo or beef) with NO added salt or seasoning. Common ways of drying are sun drying, oven or dehydrator.

Dried berries or fruit in a similar quantity as the dried meat by weight. Traditional berries such as chokecherry, juneberry, or huckleberry may be used. Raisins and Craisins (cranberry) can also be used and are available year-round.

Fat from the kidney or bone marrow or rendered beef lard (do NOT use shortening or butter). For less saturated fat, use canola oil.

1. Break dried meat into 1-inch pieces. Grind dried meat. Traditionally, a grinding stone was used. Today, it's common to use a blender or a manual meat grinder. (Small batches of 4-5 ounces are recommended if using a blender.)
2. Add dried berries or raisins to the ground meat. Grind again – fruit with meat. The consistency should be dry and loose with fruit broken up.  
Fruit weight = Meat weight, or 1/3 cup of fruit for each 4-5 ounces of meat.
3. Add melted fat slowly while mixing. Two tablespoons of fat are used for each 4-5 ounces of meat plus 1/3 cup of fruit. Fat changes the consistency and makes it appear semi-moist instead of dry and improves the flavor and texture.

Serve loose in a bowl or press into balls. Store in cloth or paper bag – *no plastic*.

### Nutrient Content per 4-Ounce Serving: Exchanges:

5 very lean meat + 2-1/2 fruit + 1 fat Calories: 400

Fat: 11 grams

Protein: 35 grams

Carbohydrate: 40 grams

Total dietary fiber: 2 grams

Source: Kibbe Conti, RD, Oglala Sioux.

## Macaroni and Bison Soup

### Ingredients:

1 pound ground bison (or 1 pound stew meat or 1 pound lean ground beef)  
2 quarts water  
1 garlic clove, chopped or ½ teaspoon garlic powder  
1 medium onion, chopped  
1 stalk celery, chopped  
1 teaspoon beef bouillon  
¼ teaspoon ground pepper (optional)  
8 ounces (2 cups) UNCOOKED macaroni  
½ cup canned corn, drained  
1 (14-1/2 ounce) can whole tomatoes, undrained  
2 carrots, peeled and chopped



1. Cook ground bison in a pan over medium heat. In a large pot, bring water to a boil.
2. Add onion, celery, garlic, carrots, beef bouillon and, if desired, pepper. Turn heat down to simmer. Cover; simmer for 10 minutes until vegetables are tender.
3. While vegetables are simmering, drain tomatoes, reserving liquid. Cut up tomatoes.
4. Add uncooked macaroni. Simmer for 10-12 minutes, until macaroni is tender.
5. Add tomatoes, corn, cooked bison and reserved tomato liquid. Bring to a boil. Serve. Makes approximately seven 1-cup servings.

### Nutrient Content per Serving:

Exchanges: 2-1/2 starch + 2 medium fat meat + 1 vegetable + ½ fat

Calories: 368

Fat: 12 grams

Protein: 22 grams

Carbohydrate: 44 grams

Sodium: 410 milligrams

Cholesterol: 43 milligrams

Total dietary fiber: 3 grams

Source: Adapted from *Northern Plains Indian: Food Practices, Customs, and Holidays*.  
Developed by American Dietetic Association and American Diabetes Association, 1999.

This recipe includes commodity food ingredients such as the canned corn and macaroni. For other recipes featuring commodities, see the USDA Web at [FDPIR Sharing Gallery: Recipes and Cookbooks | Food and Nutrition Service](#)



**INDIAN BERRY PUDDING (CHOKECHERRY,  
BUFFALO BERRY, JUNE BERRY)  
Baalappia – Crow word for pudding**

**Ingredients:**

Berries

Water

Flour

Sugar

1. Boil berries in a large saucepan. The water should be a couple of inches above the berries. Boil approximately 10 minutes.
2. Strain berry juice and save.
3. Mash the berries to release the juice and taste. Set aside berries.
4. Mix enough flour and water to make a thick mixture (not paste).
5. Using the same boiling pan, pour mashed berries and less than half of the saved berry juice back in the pan. Heat at medium high, slowly pouring the flour mixture in the pan. Keep stirring. If liquid gets thick, pour more berry juice, but not too much.
6. Keep stirring the pudding until it comes to a boil; immediately remove from stove (the thickness is up to the cook depending on whether you like thin watery pudding or thicker pudding). If made correctly, there should be some juice left. After the pudding cools down, add sugar to your taste.

Stirring is the trick to an almost perfect Indian pudding. Never leave the pudding while cooking. The pudding can easily burn, and it will ruin the good taste of the berry pudding.

There is no cup-by-cup, spoon-by-spoon measurement in making an Indian pudding. Whether you make a small or a large pot of pudding depends on how many berries you have.

Source: Dorcella (Three Irons) Flatmouth. Told to her by mother - Mary (Tenbear) Three Irons – and grandmother – Louise Three Irons, Crow.

## Berry Pudding

### Ingredients:

2 cups of berries (fresh, canned or frozen)  
1-1/2 cups water, divided  
½ cup sugar or sugar substitute\* (to taste)  
2 tablespoons cornstarch

1. Crush berries. In a medium saucepan, combine berries with 1-1/4 cups water. Bring to a boil, stirring occasionally. Lower heat.
2. Add sugar or sugar substitute.\* In a cup or small bowl, mix cornstarch with remaining ¼ cup water. Add mixture to sweetened berries; blend well.
3. Cook over low heat for about 4 minutes to thicken, stirring constantly, until consistency of a very thick sauce. Serve hot. Can be served with bannock bread (see the recipe on the next page). Makes eight ½-cup servings.

### Nutrient Content per Serving (with sugar):

Exchanges (with sugar): 1 fruit + 1 tsp. sugar  
Calories: 76  
Fat: 0 grams  
Protein: 0 grams  
Carbohydrate: 19 grams  
Sodium: 3 milligrams  
Cholesterol: 0 milligrams  
Total dietary fiber: 0.5 grams

\* Use sugar substitute equivalent in place of sugar. Or, add sugar substitute after the fruit mixture is thickened over heat. Sugar substitutes made with aspartame are not heat stable.

Source: *Northern Plains Indian: Food Practices, Customs, and Holidays*. Developed by American Dietetic Association and American Diabetes Association, 1999.

For detailed information on finding, harvesting and preparing wild berries in the Rocky Mountain West, please refer to:  
*The Rocky Mountain Berry Book*, by Bob Krumm, Falcon Press Publishing Company, Inc., 1991.

## Bannock Bread

### Ingredients:

2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour  
1-1/2 cups whole wheat flour  
1/2 cup nonfat dry milk  
2 tablespoons baking powder  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
2 cups water  
vegetable oil spray

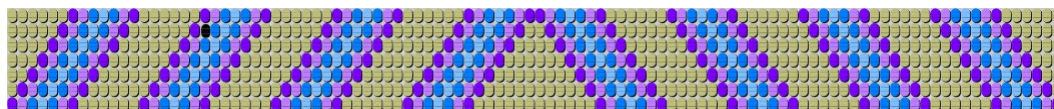
1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Put flours, dry milk, baking power, and salt in a medium-sized bowl. Blend well.
2. Make a well in the center of the dry ingredients. Gradually add water, mixing well to make a soft dough. If dough is too moist, add more flour. If too dry, add more water.
3. Knead in the bowl about 10 to 15 times, until dough no longer sticks to your hands. Spray a 13x8-inch baking pan with vegetable oil spray. Press dough into baking pan. Bake 45 to 50 minutes.
4. Slice. Serve hot or cold. This bread is characteristically heavy and dense. Makes sixteen 2x3-inch rectangle servings.

### Nutrient Content per Serving:

Exchanges: 1-1/2 starch  
Calories: 124  
Fat: 0.4 grams  
Protein: 5 grams  
Carbohydrate: 25 grams  
Sodium: 231 milligrams  
Cholesterol: 1 milligram  
Total dietary fiber: 2 grams

This recipe has been modified from the traditional method to decrease the amount of total fat by using pan spray instead of grease in the pan and adding whole wheat flour. The whole wheat flour also increases the fiber content.

Source: *Northern Plains Indian: Food Practices, Customs, and Holidays*. Developed by American Dietetic Association and American Diabetes Association, 1999.



## Quick 'n Easy Berry Sauce

### Ingredients:

½ of a 29-ounce can of commodity grape juice (14.5 ounces)

1 cup water

4 tablespoons cornstarch

½ cup sugar (or sugar substitute such as Splenda)

1. Put half of the can of commodity grape juice in a medium saucepan. Add ½ cup of water. Bring to a boil.
2. In a separate bowl, mix 4 tablespoons of cornstarch with ½ cup of water, then add the mixture to the saucepan. Thicken over medium heat for 5-10 minutes, stirring constantly.
3. Sweeten with ½ cup of sugar or sugar substitute. Makes approximately seven ½-cup servings.

### Nutrient Content per Serving (with sugar):

Exchanges: 2 carbohydrates

Calories: 110

Fat: 0 grams

Protein: 0.4 grams

Carbohydrate: 28 grams

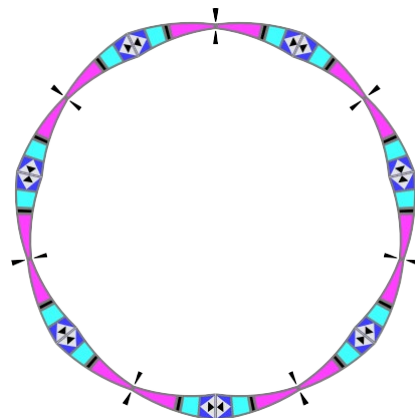
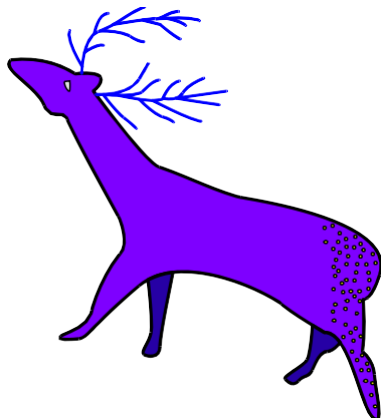
Sodium: 4 milligrams

Cholesterol: 0 milligrams

Total dietary fiber: 0 grams

Although this berry sauce is not a traditional recipe, it can be eaten with bannock bread or wheel bread when fresh berries are not available.

Source: Commodity Program, Pine Ridge



## Dried Berries



### Ingredients:

Traditional berries such as wild strawberries, gooseberries, juneberries (serviceberries), chokecherries or buffalo berries

1. After picking the berries, traditionally, the berries were pounded (including the seeds) to a pulp with a formed rock. Then the pulp would be formed into patties, and the patties would be dried in the sun. Today, a blender or food processor can be used instead.
2. After the patties are formed, lay them in the sun on a window screen covered with cheesecloth, occasionally turning the patties. This process takes about two days. The patties may be stored in a tightly covered container for future use and can be used to make berry sauce (Wojapi).

Source: Adapted from *Lakota Traditional and Contemporary Recipes*, collected and published by Spuka Sni Win, 1999.

## Lakota Dried Meat & Dried Chokecherries

### Ingredients:

2-4 strips of dried deer, beef or buffalo meat  
2-4 dried chokecherry patties  
2-4 tablespoons sugar  
vegetable oil

1. The chokecherry patties need to be soaked overnight in water to soften them.
2. Place dried meat in a shallow baking pan in a 350-degree oven until meat is crunchy. Place meat in a cloth dishtowel and pound until the dried meat is shredded or ground (May be able to grind with a meat grinder.). Place in a bowl.
3. Break up chokecherries in the dried meat. Add a little (approximately 1/8<sup>th</sup> cup) of the chokecherry water to moisten the mix.
4. Add the sugar according to your taste and preference, about 2 tablespoons. Mix well.
5. Add some vegetable oil (about ¼ cup) to keep the mix moistened. Place in a bowl and serve.

Source: Adapted from *A Traditional Food Book – recipes from the REZ*. Produced by Lakota Express for American Indian Talking Circles, 2001. Recipe from Ruth Cedar Face, Porcupine, South Dakota.

## Wheel Bread

### Ingredients:

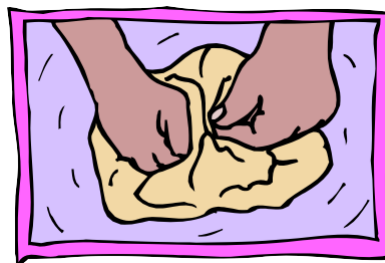
3 cups all-purpose flour  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
¼ teaspoon salt  
½ cup dry milk powder  
2 teaspoons sugar  
1 cup water  
1 tablespoon shortening

1. In a large bowl, mix together the flour, baking powder, salt, dry milk powder and sugar.
2. Now add the water. Mix to form a sticky dough.
3. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead lightly – about ten times.
4. Heat a 10 to 12-inch skillet over medium heat. Add the shortening.
5. When the shortening has melted, pat the dough into the skillet to form a round loaf, approximately 1 inch thick.
6. Cook for 8 to 10 minutes on both sides. If bread begins to brown too much, lower the heat.
7. Remove from pan. This bread is best eaten warm. Makes eight servings.

### Nutrient Content per Serving:

Calories: 204  
Fat: 2 grams  
Protein: 6 grams  
Carbohydrate: 39 grams  
Sodium: 198 milligrams  
Cholesterol: 1 milligram  
Total dietary fiber: 1 gram

Source: Myra Walker, Fort Belknap tribal elder.



## Selected Traditional Names for Recipes

Some traditional names for recipes are specific to a tribe, and the same food may be called a different name by another tribe. Here are some examples:

Berry Pudding

- Baalappia (Crow)
- Wojapi (Lakota)

Dried Berries

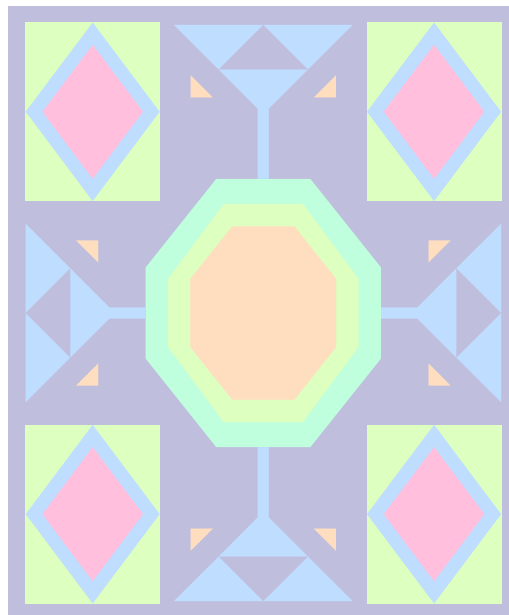
- Canpa (Lakota)

Dried Meat and Chokecherries

- Wasna (Lakota)

Pemmican

- Iaxshe (Crow)



This publication was supported through a cooperative agreement (U50/CCU821287-02) with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Adult and Community Health, and through the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the US Department of Health and Human Services.

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**DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH &  
HUMAN SERVICES**

