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INSTITUTE OF  
CHILD NUTRITION

# CULINARY QUICK BITES

DEVELOPING FLAVOR: BASIC OVERVIEW  
OF DRIED SPICES AND THEIR USES



# **CULINARY QUICK BITES**

## **DEVELOPING FLAVOR: BASIC OVERVIEW OF DRIED SPICES AND THEIR USES**

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The University of Mississippi, School of Applied Sciences  
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Key Area: 2 – Operations

**USDA Professional Standards Code**  
Food Production – 2100

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# TRAINING OVERVIEW

The Culinary Quick Bites training series is a tool to help child nutrition professionals develop and refine their culinary skills. Each lesson is designed to last approximately fifteen minutes. Each lesson should be facilitated (led) by the person responsible for overseeing food production at a meal site, service area, or the district level.

Training facilitators should review the training, in its entirety, prior to conducting the training.

This training has been developed to address a variety of learning styles. The training includes an overview of the topic presented by the facilitator, an infographic to reinforce the training topic visually, a video to demonstrate the topic, and an activity to reinforce learning.

Please contact the Institute of Child Nutrition Help Desk at 1-800-321-3054 or [helpdesk@theicn.org](mailto:helpdesk@theicn.org) if you have any questions about how best to facilitate this training.

## KEY AREA

Key Area: 2 – Operations

## PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

### FOOD PRODUCTION – 2100

Employee will be able to effectively utilize food preparation principles, production records, kitchen equipment, and food crediting to prepare foods from standardized recipes, including those for special diets.

2130 – Develop culinary skills necessary for school meal preparation.

## FACILITATOR'S NOTES

This training counts for 15 minutes of training credit under USDA Professional Standards learning objective 2130 – Develop culinary skills necessary for school meal preparation.

The activity at the end of the lesson involves making a taco spice blend. This activity helps reinforce knowledge and skills learned during this lesson. The taco spice blend prepared during this lesson may be included in the next day's menu production.

Before the training, prepare for the lesson activity and set up the kitchen workstation as described on page 12.

Deliver the lesson/training to participants:

- Read the lesson overview to the participants.
- Discuss the infographic and how it relates to the training topic.
- View the instruction video with participants.
- Answer any questions participants may have on the lesson, infographic, and video.

Complete the activity as instructed on page 12.

## MATERIALS NEEDED



**NOTE:** Participants will be working together to make the recipe. Determine the quantity of the recipe to prepare based on the number of servings needed for your service. Scale recipe accordingly.

- Chili Powder
- Cumin
- Onion Powder
- Garlic Powder
- Oregano
- Paprika
- Measuring utensils
- Airtight storage container(s)
- Infographic: CIGN Dried Spices Poster - 1 per person
- Infographic: CIGN Spice Blends Poster - 1 per person
- Access to a screen to show the training video. Possible options include:
  - Site computer monitor with sound
  - Projector with sound
  - Tablets and smartphones
    - A QR code has been provided for quick access to the video on handheld devices.

# LESSON OVERVIEW

## OBJECTIVE:

At the end of this lesson, participants will be able to recognize how to use dried spices in recipes for school meals.

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT DRIED SPICES

- Spices come from the bark, buds, fruit, roots, seeds, or stems of various plants or trees.
- Dried spices are best added early in the cooking process as they need moisture to help rehydrate from their dried state and break them down in the dish.
- Techniques you can use to get the most flavor out of your spices are to toast or bloom them.
- **Toasting spices** is primarily done with whole spices by applying dry heat to release the aromatic oils within the spices. Then, pulverize or crush them into powder form.
  - Alternatively, you can use them whole in a moist heat cooking method for flavor, but be sure to remove any whole spices before serving. Moist heat cooking- cooking with water, other liquid, or steam to transfer heat to food; methods include poaching, simmering, boiling, braising, stewing, pot roasting, and steaming
  - Examples of spices to toast include: allspice berries, cumin seed, cardamom seeds, mustard seeds, anise seed, celery seed, caraway seed, sesame seed, cloves, coriander seed, dill seed, mace, peppercorns, Sichuan peppercorns, and poppy seed.
- **Blooming spices** is a technique that is used to release the fat-soluble compounds from the spice into the cooking fat. This technique pulls most of the flavor from the spice and flavors the cooking fat. Blooming spices entails heating the spices in cooking fat to release the compounds. The flavors of the spices are then imparted into the cooking fat, creating an increase in flavor and even distribution of flavor throughout the recipe.
  - Examples of spices to bloom include: mustard seeds, cumin seeds, fenugreek seeds, fennel seeds, cinnamon, cloves, and dried chilies.
- The proper use of spices allows you to create a flavorful dish that is low in sodium and high in flavor.
- Creating your own spice blends is a great way to ensure the foods you are serving have the flavor profile that your students prefer and enjoy.
- Spice blends are a great way to control the sodium content in your recipes.
  - Some commercially processed spice blends are high in sodium. When you develop your own blends for use in your program, you control the sodium levels and the flavor profile.
  - Create a signature spice blend and name it after your school mascot/some other creative title. Have a spice-creation and/or a naming contest among students.
- Combine the different spices in ratios that resonate with your audience; some students may enjoy more spice, while other students may enjoy a more subtle approach with spice.
- A best practice is to make larger batches of spice blends you regularly use, for example, a Southwest seasoning that you use in tacos, fajitas, and tortilla soup. Rather than making the blend each time a recipe calls for the seasoning blend, have a month's worth ready to go.



# LESSON OVERVIEW

## HOW TO SELECT DRIED SPICES FOR YOUR RECIPES

- Utilizing the infographics, review the different flavor profiles and uses of the spices and spice blends.
- Review the embedded training video.

***After we review the infographic and video, there will be an activity to reinforce skills learned.***

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# DRIED SPICES

## ALLSPICE

Earthy, Sweet



### Best Used In

Baked Goods, Marinades, Sauces, Soups, Spice Blends, Stews

### Produce

Apples, Cabbage, Carrot, Cauliflower, Chickpeas, Root Vegetables, Sweet Potato, Winter Squash

### Meat/Meat Alternates

Beef, Chicken, Legumes, Pork, Yogurt

## CAYENNE

Spicy, Earthy



### Best Used In

Chili, Condiments, Curry, Marinades, Salad Dressing, Salsa, Sauces, Soups, Spice Blends, Stews

### Produce

Bell Peppers, Black Beans, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chickpeas, Corn, Potato, Root Vegetables, Summer Squash, White Beans

### Meat/Meat Alternates

Beef, Chicken, Fish, Legumes, Pork, Tofu

## CHILI POWDER

Sweet, Spicy, Smokey, Earthy, Savory



### Best Used In

Chili, Condiments, Curry, Fresh Fruit, Fruit Salads, Marinades, Salad Dressing, Salsa, Sauces, Soups, Spice Blends, Tomato Sauce

### Produce

Bell Peppers, Black Beans, Cabbage, Carrot, Cauliflower, Chickpeas, Corn, Melon, Pineapple, Root Vegetables, Summer Squash, Tomato

### Meat/Meat Alternates

Beef, Chicken, Legumes, Pork, Tofu

## CINNAMON

Earthy, Sweet, Spicy, Woody



### Best Used In

Baked Goods, Chili, Condiments, Curry, Fruit Salads, Marinades, Sauces, Spice Blends, Stews

### Produce

Apples, Carrot, Root Vegetables, Sweet Potato, Winter Squash

### Meat/Meat Alternates

Chicken, Legumes, Pork, Tofu

## CORIANDER

Citrusy, Earthy, Peppery



### Best Used In

Chili, Curry, Marinades, Salad Dressing, Sauces, Soups, Spice Blends, Stews

### Produce

Bell Peppers, Black Beans, Cabbage, Carrot, Cauliflower, Chickpeas, Potato, Tomato

### Meat/Meat Alternates

Beef, Chicken, Fish, Legumes, Pork, Tofu, Yogurt

## CUMIN

Earthy, Nutty, Mild-Spice



### Best Used In

Chili, Curry, Marinades, Salsa, Sauces, Soups, Spice Blends

### Produce

Bell Peppers, Black Beans, Cabbage, Carrot, Cauliflower, Chickpeas, Corn, Green Beans, Summer Squash, Tomato

### Meat/Meat Alternates

Beef, Chicken, Fish, Legumes, Pork, Tofu, Turkey, Yogurt

## GARLIC

granulated/powder  
Savory, Spicy



### Best Used In

Chili, Condiments, Curry, Marinades, Salad Dressing, Salsa, Sauces, Soups, Spice Blends

### Produce

Bell Peppers, Black Beans, Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrot, Cauliflower, Chickpeas, Corn, Mushrooms, Peas, Potato, Tomato, White Beans

### Meat/Meat Alternates

Beef, Chicken, Legumes, Pork, Yogurt

## GINGER

Mild-Spice, Sweet, Warm



### Best Used In

Baked Goods, Condiments, Curry, Marinades, Spice Blends, Stir-fry

### Produce

Carrot, Root Vegetables, Summer Squash, Sweet Potato, Winter Squash

### Meat/Meat Alternates

Beef, Chicken, Fish, Legumes, Pork, Tofu

## NUTMEG

Earthy, Nutty, Sweet



### Best Used In

Baked Goods, Sauces, Soups

### Produce

Broccoli, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Root Vegetables, Sweet Potato

### Meat/Meat Alternates

Chicken, Egg, Fish, Yogurt

## ONION POWDER

Sweet, Savory



### Best Used In

Chili, Condiments, Curry, Marinades, Salad Dressing, Sauces, Soups, Spice Blends, Stews

### Produce

Bell Peppers, Black Beans, Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrot, Cauliflower, Chickpeas, Corn, Green Beans, Mushrooms, Peas, Potato, Root Vegetables, Summer Squash, Sweet Potato, Tomato, White Beans, Winter Squash

### Meat/Meat Alternates

Beef, Chicken, Egg, Fish, Legumes, Pork, Tofu, Turkey, Yogurt

## PAPRIKA

Mild-Sweetness



### Best Used In

Chili, Condiments, Curry, Marinades, Salad Dressing, Sauces, Soups, Spice Blends, Stews

### Produce

Bell Peppers, Black Beans, Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrot, Cauliflower, Chickpeas, Corn, Cucumber, Green Beans, Mushrooms, Potato, Summer Squash, Tomato, White Beans

### Meat/Meat Alternates

Beef, Chicken, Egg, Fish, Legumes, Pork, Tofu, Turkey, Yogurt

## RED CHILI FLAKES

Spicy, Mild Sweetness



### Best Used In

Chili, Condiments, Curry, Marinades, Salad Dressing, Salsa, Sauces, Soups, Spice Blends, Stews, Stir-fry, Tomato Sauce

### Produce

Bell Peppers, Black Beans, Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrot, Cauliflower, Chickpeas, Corn, Cucumber, Green Beans, Mushrooms, Potato, Root Vegetables, Summer Squash, Tomato, White Beans

### Meat/Meat Alternates

Beef, Chicken, Egg, Fish, Legumes, Pork, Tofu, Turkey, Yogurt

## TURMERIC

Mild-Aromatic, Bitter Mild Citrus



### Best Used In

Condiments, Curry, Marinades, Sauces

### Produce

Cabbage, Carrot, Cauliflower, Chickpeas, Potato, Sweet Potato, Winter Squash

### Meat/Meat Alternates

Chicken, Fish, Legumes, Tofu, Turkey, Yogurt

## PURCHASING TIP



Only buy in quantities that you can use within three months.

## PRO TIP



Creating your own spice blends allows you to customize flavors to meet your student's needs.

## STORAGE TIP



Keep in a dry cool place in a tightly sealed container. Moisture will quickly ruin your spices.

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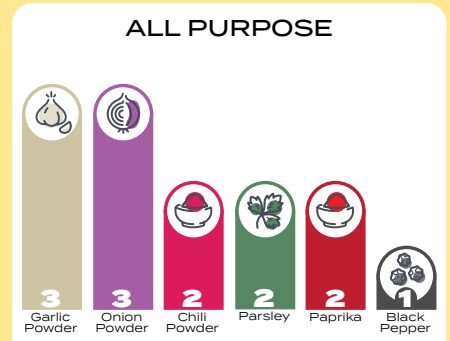
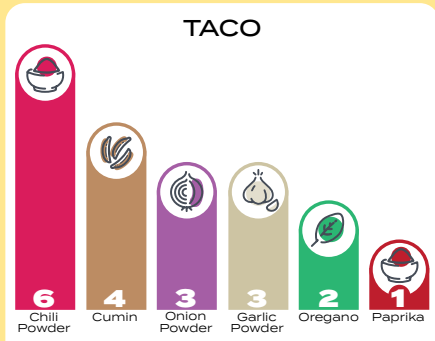
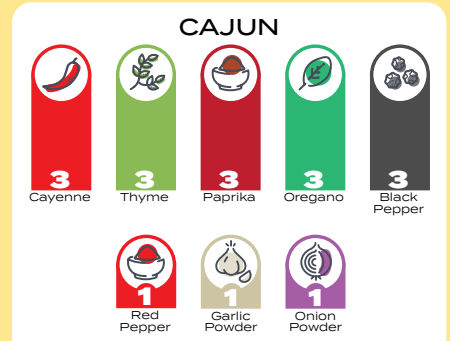
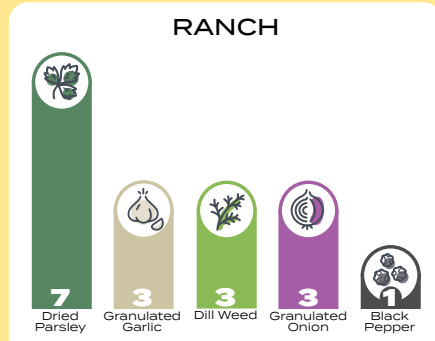
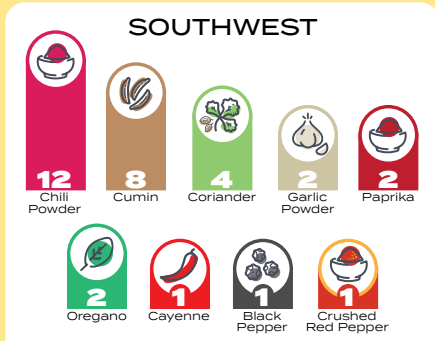
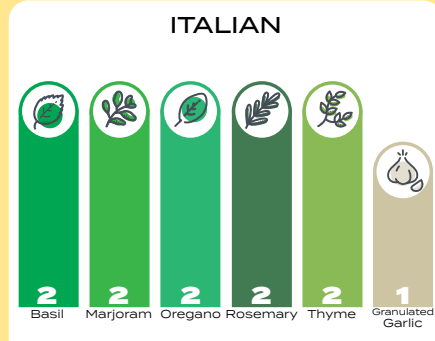
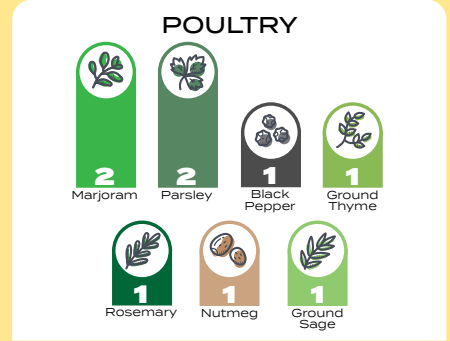
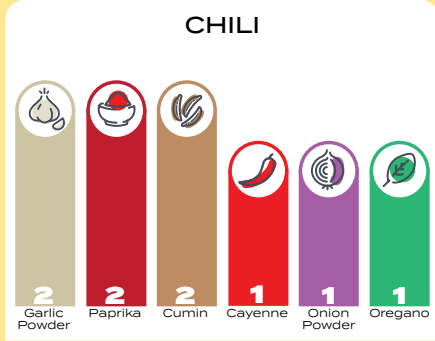
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# SPICE BLENDS

The numbers referenced in each ingredient represent a ratio part.



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# CULINARY QUICK BITES

## Basic Overview of Dried Spices and Their Uses

[WATCH THE VIDEO](#)

<https://vimeo.com/695263914/87bc141761>

### QR CODE

Utilize the QR code embedded to the right to share the video with staff utilizing handheld devices such as smartphones and tablets. Use the photo app on the smart device to scan the code to be directed to the video.



# ACTIVITY

## SETUP

### MATERIALS:



Infographic: CIGN  
Dried Spices Poster



Onion Powder



Measuring utensils



Infographic: CIGN  
Spice Blend Poster



Garlic Powder



Airtight storage  
container(s)



Chili Powder



Oregano



Cumin



Paprika

**NOTE:** Participants will be working together to make the recipe. Determine the number of recipes needed based on the number of servings needed for your service. Scale recipe accordingly.

## SETUP INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACILITATOR

- 1** Prior to the training, gather all of the materials needed for the activity. Set up a workstations as needed to prepare the taco spice blend.
- 2** During the activity, remember to monitor and observe staff as they practice their culinary skills.

# ACTIVITY

## ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

- 1** Refer the participants to the taco blend in the CIGN Spice Blends Poster infographic. Then read the instructions for the activity. Ask the participants if there are any questions before beginning the activity.
- 2** Instruct all participants to wash their hands and put on single-use gloves before starting the activity.
- 3** As a group, the participants will prepare the taco spice blend. Divide and assign the steps so everyone can participate.
  - Instruct participants to take their time and follow the steps carefully.
  - Discard waste.

## POST ACTIVITY

- After completing the hands-on activity, recap the lesson with the participants. Offer an opportunity for participants to share their learning experience during the training and highlight any tips or takeaways they want to share with the group.
- If time allows, facilitate a discussion with the participants. Suggested discussion topics include:
  - Ask participants to discuss flavor combinations that were not listed that would be a good addition to the site's offerings.
  - Ask participants to discuss if adding a flavor station or changing the current flavor station offerings will help support students' ability to customize menu items.
- Facilitator can guide discussion:
  - Discuss potential for student involvement and buy-in by creating an official "Spice It Up!" launch event to introduce some new spices and how the school nutrition team wants to involve students in a spice blend naming contest.
  - Discuss the feasibility of and potential for creating other spice blends and involving students in the process.
  - Discuss how students can get involved, which will then spotlight the school nutrition program and encourage participation.
- Ask if the participants feel more comfortable with the training topic or want more time to develop the skill further if time allows.
- Plan the next training session based on the needs of your staff.
- Remind participants that they should not add ingredients to any standardized recipe without consulting with the Menu Planner or Supervisor first. Recipes may need to be tested/analyzed when adding spices/herbs/culinary acids, etc. before implementing in school cafeterias.



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