

September Spice Club:

Nutritional Yeast



Suggested Reading

Raquel Pelzel, *Umami Bomb: 75 Vegetarian Recipes That Explode with Flavor*

Jo Stepaniak, *The Ultimate Uncheese Cookbook*

Debra Wasserman, *Conveniently Vegan*

Nutritional Yeast

Cheesy, nutty, oh-so-delicious nutritional yeast! Otherwise known as nooch, nutritional yeast is an inactive strain of yeast sold in granules, flakes, or powders. It can be used as both an ingredient in recipes and as a condiment (you may notice that the choice of recipes covers both uses). The high concentration of protein and complex B vitamins in fortified nutritional yeast make it a popular dietary item for vegans, vegetarians, and the lactose intolerant.

Nutritional yeast is traditionally found in natural food stores, but it is more common nowadays to see it on the shelf at Hannaford. If only a powder version of nooch is available, use less than the initial called-for amount, as most recipes use the flaked variety.

Have fun with nutritional yeast's versatility! Try different popcorn flavors, sprinkle on homemade crackers or bread, try a puréed bean and nooch chip dip. The umami flavor of nutritional yeast will add a lovely depth of flavor to dishes.

This Spice Club kit includes approximately ½ cup of nutritional yeast flakes, which should be enough to make the two enclosed recipes. Best if used by May 2024. If you would like to share reviews, photos, or suggest future spices, email Meghan at mfogg@freeportmaine.com.

November Spice Club: Garam Masala

Kits will be available for pickup 10/22/21.

Perfect Popcorn

Elise Bauer, Simply Recipes

Cook time: 10 minutes | Yield: makes 2 quarts

3 tablespoons coconut or peanut oil

1/3 cup high quality popcorn kernels

1/3 – 1/2 cup nutritional yeast, to taste

salt, to taste

optional: 1 tablespoon or more of butter

other optional toppings: Spanish smoked paprika, cayenne powder, chili pepper, curry powder, grated Parmesan cheese

Heat the oil in a 3-quart thick-bottomed saucepan on medium-high heat. If you are using coconut oil, allow the solid oil to melt.

Put 3-4 popcorn kernels into the oil. Wait for the kernels to pop. When the kernels pop, add the rest of the 1/3 cup popcorn kernels in an even layer. Cover the pot, remove from heat, and count 30 seconds.

Return the pan to heat. The popcorn should begin popping soon – and all at once! Once the popping starts in earnest, gently shake the pan by moving it back and forth over the burner. *Tip: as the popcorn pops, try to keep the lid slightly ajar to let the steam from the popcorn release; the popcorn will be drier and crisper.*

Once the popping slows to several seconds between pops, remove the pan from the heat, remove the lid, and dump the popcorn immediately into a wide bowl. If you are intending to use butter, take advantage of the now empty hot pan to melt some.

Drizzle butter on popcorn if applicable, then sprinkle popcorn with nutritional yeast and any other additional toppings and toss to distribute.

Secret Ingredient Tomato Soup

Beth Moncel, Budget Bytes

Cook time: 30 minutes | Yield: 4 servings

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 clove garlic, minced
½ teaspoon dried oregano
½ teaspoon dried basil
¼ teaspoon dried thyme
¼ teaspoon dried rosemary
1 pinch crushed red pepper flakes
3 oz. tomato paste
1 tablespoon brown sugar
1 28 oz. can crushed tomatoes
2 cups vegetable broth
1 15 oz. can cannellini beans
1 tablespoon nutritional yeast
salt and black pepper, to taste

Over medium heat, add the olive oil, minced garlic, oregano, basil, thyme, rosemary, crushed red pepper, and black pepper to a soup pot. Cook and stir herbs and oil for about 1 minute or until garlic is soft and fragrant.

Add the tomato paste and brown sugar. Continue to stir and cook the tomato paste mixture over medium heat for 2-3 minutes.

Pour the crushed tomatoes and vegetable broth into the pot and stir to combine. As the soup begins to heat through, add a can of cannellini beans (with the liquid from the can) to a blender and purée until smooth. Pour the puréed beans into the soup and stir to combine again.

Place a lid on the pot and allow it to come to a simmer. Once simmering, turn the heat down to medium-low and let it simmer, stirring occasionally, for 20 minutes.

Add nutritional yeast and stir to combine. Taste the soup and add salt as needed. Serve hot, ideally with crusty bread or croutons.