American cooking relies on herbs and spices from around the world to add variety and flavor to basic food dishes. Seasoning mixes are readily available in grocery stores, but are expensive when compared to the cost of mixing your own. Savvy shoppers can make their own seasoning combinations using the recipes below and spend their savings on good food for their families. To save money, get together with your neighbors and buy spices in large quantities, then have a seasoning mix party and make bags to divide up and take home.

Health Benefits
Try using spices and herbs instead of salt to flavor foods. Reduced salt intake is linked to lowered risk of developing cardiovascular disease. Use spices sparingly until you decide on the taste level that best suits your family. See if a neighbor has seasonings they might share before you buy herbs and spices you are unfamiliar with. Often a teaspoon makes all the difference!

Storage
The shelf life of many herbs and spices is one to two years, but this period is shorter if they are exposed to light, heat and open air. Herb leaves keep their flavor best when they are stored whole and crushed just before use. When herb seeds are to be used for cooking, the seeds should be stored whole and ground as needed. Old spices never go bad, they just fade away. If you sniff your spices and the aroma is strong, they are probably still good. Spices must be stored properly to maintain strong, fresh flavor. Heat, light, moisture and air all speed the loss of flavor and color for both herbs and spices.

Seasoning Mixes

Poultry
4 tablespoons dried sage leaves
1 teaspoon dried thyme leaves
1 teaspoon onion salt
1 teaspoon dried marjoram leaves

Italian Herb
1 teaspoon dried oregano leaves
1 teaspoon dried basil leaves
1 teaspoon dried marjoram leaves
1 teaspoon dried rosemary leaves
1 teaspoon dried thyme leaves
1 teaspoon dried sage leaves
1 teaspoon dried savory leaves

Mexican
1/4 cup chili powder
2 tablespoons dried basil leaves
2 tablespoons ground cumin
1 tablespoon dried thyme leaves
2 tablespoons ground coriander
1 tablespoon garlic powder
2 tablespoons dried oregano leaves
3/4 teaspoon cayenne powder

Scandinavian (good on fish)
6 tablespoons dried dill weed
1/2 cup dried ground lemon peel
3/4 cup onion powder

Spaghetti Sauce
1 teaspoon dried basil leaves
1 teaspoon dried marjoram leaves
1 teaspoon dried rosemary leaves
1 teaspoon celery salt
1 teaspoon dried savory leaves
1 teaspoon dried garlic salt
1 teaspoon dried thyme leaves
1 teaspoon dried oregano leaves

More recipes on the back!
**Pumpkin Pie Spice**

- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon allspice
- ½ teaspoon ginger
- ¼ teaspoon mace
- ½ teaspoon nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon cloves

**Ways to Flavor Recipes**

**Allspice:** Combines cinnamon, nutmeg and cloves. Use in pickling, baked apples, puddings, cakes and cookies, meat and fish recipes.

**Basil:** Use in soups, stews, eggplant, squash, tomatoes, sauces, egg dishes, stuffing, tossed salads and potatoes.

**Bay leaves:** Provides a pungent aroma and flavor. Use in stews, lentils, soups and tomato sauces.

**Cayenne:** Provides a “hot and spicy” flavor. Use in stews, sauces and salad dressings.

**Chili powder:** Provides a “hot” flavor. Use in stews, boiled eggs, chili and other Mexican dishes.

**Cinnamon:** Use in sweet potatoes, cinnamon toast, French toast, applesauce, pies, pears, peaches, cakes, cookies, pies and puddings.

**Cloves:** If used whole, remove before serving. Use in potato soup, pork roast, stews, cookies, cakes, stewed fruits, cooked apples and oranges.

**Curry:** Provides a strong, distinctive flavor. Combines cumin, turmeric, ginger, dill, black pepper, cayenne, mace, coriander and fenugreek. Use in egg and cheese dishes, meat dishes and sauces.

**Dill:** Use in sauces, on salads, potatoes and other vegetables, in soups or stews.

**Onion (powder or flakes):** Use in any dish where onion flavor is desired.

**Thyme:** Add carefully, very penetrating. Use in soups, stews, meat loaf, onions, carrots, beets, stuffing and sauces.

**Ginger:** Use in cakes, puddings, gingerbread and on eggnog.

**Nutmeg:** Use in cakes, puddings, gingerbread and on eggnog.

**Oregano:** Use in tomato sauce dishes, egg dishes and on salads.

**Paprika:** Use in potato dishes, shellfish, salad dressings.

**Parsley:** Mild and versatile. Use with meat, vegetables, soups, eggs, potatoes.

**Pepper:** Adds a strong flavor. Use with meats, sauces, soups, vegetables and salads.

**Ways to Season Your Vegetables**

**Green Beans:** Basil, dill, marjoram, oregano, thyme.

**Beets:** Allspice, bay leaves, cloves, dill, ginger, thyme.

**Broccoli:** Dill, tarragon.

**Cabbage:** Dill, nutmeg.

**Carrots:** Allspice, bay leaves, dill, ginger, marjoram, nutmeg, thyme.

**Cucumbers:** Basil, dill, tarragon.

**Onions:** Nutmeg, oregano, sage, thyme.

**Peas:** Basil, dill, oregano, rosemary, sage.

**Potatoes:** Basil, bay leaves, dill, chives, oregano, thyme.

**Spinach:** Basil, marjoram, nutmeg, oregano. Try a sprinkle of powdered garlic.

**Squash:** Allspice, basil, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, mustard, nutmeg, rosemary.

**Sweet potatoes:** Allspice, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg.

**Tomatoes:** Basil, bay leaves, oregano, sage, thyme.

To find out if you are eligible for free nutrition education, call UAF Cooperative Extension Service at 907-474-7930 or visit www.uaf.edu/ces/hhfd/fnp.

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The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact 907-465-3347.

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