About CSPI, publisher of Nutrition Action Healthletter

CENTER FOR Science IN THE Public Interest

The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), founded in 1971, is an independent nonprofit consumer health group. CSPI advocates honest food labeling and advertising, safer and more nutritious foods, and pro-health alcohol policies. CSPI's work is supported by *Nutrition Action Healthletter* subscribers and foundation grants. CSPI accepts no government or industry funding. *Nutrition Action Healthletter*, first published in 1974, accepts no advertising.

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RIGHT STUFF

BEST IN BEAN

You can't beat beans. They're little packages of protein, fiber, B vitamins, copper, iron, magnesium, potassium, and zinc. And they're cheap and versatile, making an appearance in virtually every traditional cuisine on the planet.

Only one problem: if you cook them from scratch, it takes hours, and if you buy them in cans, they come with enough salt to supply roughly 250 to 450 milligrams of sodium in each half-cup.

That is, unless you buy **Eden Organic No Salt Added Beans**. Eden offers a dozen kinds—**Aduki, Black, Black Eyed Peas, Black Soybeans, Butter Beans, Cannellini, Garbanzo, Great Northern, Kidney, Navy, Pinto,** and **Small Red**—all with nothing more than their naturally occurring sodium (10 to 45 mg per half-cup). And unlike some canned beans, Eden's are firm, not mushy, so they hold their own in salads, soups, and sautés.

Bonus: Eden uses none of the BPA-laced epoxy resin that lines almost all cans. BPA, which can mimic estrogen, is suspected of raising the risk of diabetes and heart disease, and of causing abnormal changes in brain cells of fetuses and babies. Until experts confirm or dispel that evidence, Eden's plant-based lining sounds reassuring.

So cook up some cannellinis with sautéed spinach and garlic, toss some kidneys into that vegetarian chili, sprinkle some garbanzos on your salad, or put up a pot of black bean soup.

With Eden, canned beans' original sin—sodium—isn't an issue.

Eden Foods: (888) 424-3336

tip OF THE MONTH

Cut an acorn squash in half and scoop out the seeds. Put 1 Tbs. of olive oil and 1 Tbs. of orange juice in the well of each half. Sprinkle liberally with fresh-ground pepper. Cover and bake at 350° until soft (about 1 hour).

FOOD PORN

PARADISE LOST

"We start with a warm, chewy bar layered with chocolate chips, walnuts and coconut," says **Chili's** menu. Then its **Chocolate Chip Paradise Pie** is "topped with vanilla ice cream and drizzled with hot fudge and caramel."

Doesn't that sound delish? How nice of Chili's, the second-largest "casual dining" chain, to "pepper in some fun" for its customers. Why else create a dessert with 1,600 calories (roughly ¾ of a day's worth) and 35 grams of saturated fat (almost two days' worth)? Chili's even manages to squeeze in 950 milligrams of sodium (⅔ of a day's worth)—not easy to find in sweets.

How many restaurants offer desserts that make a slice of cheesecake (720 calories and 25 grams of sat fat) look good? That doesn't just happen. It takes foresight, creativity, dedication.

Best of all, you'd never guess what the pie packs just by looking. No one would mistake the ice-cream-covered bar for a salad, but it doesn't look like 1½ racks of Chili's Original Grilled Baby Back Ribs either. ("I'll have the Paradise Pie for dessert, please, and he'll have a rack and a half of ribs.")

Want something lighter? The **Sweet Shots**—*tiny* cups stuffed with layers of cake and icing—cut calories but still dispatch a surprising shot of sat fat to your arteries. Expect 220 calories and 8 grams of sat fat in the Warm Cinnamon Roll, for example, or 410 calories and 14 grams of sat fat in the Double Chocolate Fudge Brownie.

It's enough to send Chilis up and down your spine.

Chili's: (800) 983-4637

Photos: Eden Foods (left), Nick Waring (right).