

# The Home Extension Line

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## Individual Highlights:

Recipe Make-Over	
May is National Osteoporosis Prevention Month	2
Fruits and Veggies, More Matters	3
Heart Disease: Are You At Risk?	4
Air Conditioner & Asthma	5
Go, Slow & Whoa Foods	6
What Does Organic Mean?	8
Fruit Juices for Kids	10
Variety of Options with Chicken	10
A "Grill Master" Always Knows	11
Florida Food Fare	12

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## Recipe Make-Over

Sometimes making minor changes in a recipe can help cut back on the fat or calories in general. If you cannot find a low-fat version of a favorite recipe, try some easy substitutions when preparing your family recipe:

When the recipe calls for ...	Use
Sour cream	Plain low-fat yogurt
Whipped cream	Chilled, whipped evaporated skim milk
Bacon	Canadian bacon or lean ham
Sausage	Lean ground turkey or 95% fat-free sausage
1 ounce baking chocolate	3 tablespoons cocoa powder and 1 tablespoon oil
Nuts	Dried fruits (raisins, chopped dried cranberries)
Pastry dough	Graham cracker crumb crust
Butter or vegetable oil for sautéing	Cooking spray, chicken broth or a small amount of olive oil
1 egg	2 egg whites or ¼ cup egg substitute

# May is National Osteoporosis Prevention Month

Osteoporosis, or brittle bone disease, affects millions of Americans every year. Osteoporosis makes bones weak and susceptible to fractures. The first step in prevention is to identify if you are at risk for developing osteoporosis. Think about the following questions that relate to risk factors for osteoporosis.

- How old are you? As one grows older, the bones become weaker and less dense.
- Are you a female? Women have a higher risk for developing osteoporosis because they have less bone mass.
- Do you have a family member that has osteoporosis or weak bones? Osteoporosis is not hereditary, but the susceptibility to fractures can be.
- What is your race? Caucasian and Asian women are more likely to develop osteoporosis.
- What type of body structure do you have? Small-boned and thin women (under 127 pounds) are at greater risk for osteoporosis.
- Have you been through menopause? Normal or early menopause increases the risk of developing osteoporosis.

There are also lifestyle practices that can affect bone density thereby increasing the chance of bone weakening. Cigarette smoking, drinking too much alcohol, consuming an inadequate amount of calcium, or physical inactivity increases the chances of developing osteoporosis.

Tips for building strong bones:

- Cut back on salt. Salt causes more calcium to be lost in the urine.
- Cut back on coffee and soft drinks. The caffeine in these products can promote calcium loss. Limit coffee to not more than 2 cups per day.
- Get the majority of your protein from vegetable sources. Excess animal protein (meats) causes an increase in calcium loss.
- Get plenty of calcium and vitamin D.

And don't forget that regular exercise plays an important part in building strong bones. Two types of exercises are important for bone health: weight-bearing and resistance exercises. Jogging, walking, stair climbing, dancing and soccer are examples of weight-bearing exercises. Weight lifting is considered a resistance exercise. Every day physical activity combines both types of exercise and helps build strong bones.

**Source: Family Nutrition in Action, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL**

## More Fruits and Vegetables Recommended

Florida Agriculture and Consumer Services Commissioner Charles H. Bronson today helped unveil a new health initiative designed to get Floridians to eat more fruits and vegetables.

At an event in the Capitol Plaza, Bronson touted the nationally sponsored "Fruits and Veggies —More Matters" campaign and told those in attendance that eating Florida produce is one of the easiest ways to improve one's health.

"The message is very simple — most people benefit from eating a variety of fruits and vegetables," Bronson said. "And we're truly blessed in Florida as we grow more than 280 commercial crops that feed Floridians, consumers throughout the country and citizens around the world."

Bronson's Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, the Florida Department of Education and the Florida Department of Health hosted the event, whose national sponsors include Produce for Better Health Foundation (PBH) and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The program is housed in the Florida Department of Health's Bureau of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.

The "Fruits and Veggies — More Matters" message is the next generation of PBH's 15-year-old "5-A-Day for Better Health" program, a campaign encouraging consumers to eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables each day.

Dr. William Dietz, director of the CDC's Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity, said that healthy diets rich in fruits and vegetables may reduce the risk of cancer, diabetes and other chronic diseases, as well as help people manage their weight. However, roughly nine of 10 consumers do not consume the recommended number of servings.

"Our mission is to change consumers' behavior over the long term and close this consumption gap," Dietz said.

For more information on the "Fruits and Veggies — More Matters" campaign, consumers are encouraged to visit the campaign's website at <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org>.

The interactive site offers recipes, serving ideas, shopping advice and includes activities for getting children involved.

**Source: Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.**

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## Heart Disease: Are You At Risk?

Here's a quick review of the risk factors for coronary artery disease – the most common form of heart disease.

Factors you can control with lifestyle changes or medications include:

- Smoking • High blood pressure • High blood cholesterol
- Diabetes • Obesity and overweight • Physical inactivity
- Stress and anger • Excessive alcohol consumption

Factors you can't control include:

- Male gender • Family history of coronary artery disease
- Aging • Black, Hispanic, American Indian or native Hawaiian race

**STRAIGHT TALK ON THE HEART.** In terms of heart disease prevention, it's helpful to know the medical terms for the symptoms and testing your doctor may use.

**Angina** – Chest pain, pressure or tightness, due to low or no blood flow to the heart. This can occur during increased physical activity or times of emotional stress.

**Angiogram** – A series of X-rays (taken after dye injection) showing blood flow blockages and narrowing inside vessels. Useful and accurate tests in diagnosing heart problems.

**C-reactive protein (CRP)** – a protein in your blood. A high level is a marker for inflammation that has been tied to coronary artery disease. CRP screening may be recommended if you're at known risk of heart disease.

**Electrocardiogram (ECG or EKG)** – A recording of electrical activity of heartbeats. An ECG shows your doctor whether your heart's electrical system is working normally.

**Lipids** – Fats, including HDL, LDL and triglycerides, in your bloodstream that become a part of each of your cells. They fuel your body, but high levels of some lipids raise heart attack risks.

**High-density lipoprotein (HDL)** – “Good” cholesterol that carries bad fats from your bloodstream. Levels of 60 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dl) or higher protect your heart. The higher your HDL, the better.

**Low-density lipoprotein (LDL)** – “Bad” cholesterol that damages artery walls, decreasing your heart's blood supply. Aim for a level less than 100 mg/dl. Diet, exercise or medications can lower LDL levels. The lower your LDL, the better.

**Triglycerides** – A fat found in foods and in your bloodstream that turns into body fat. High triglycerides may mean you're eating more calories than you burn. Keep your level under 150 mg/dl.

**Source:** [www.MayoClinic.com](http://www.MayoClinic.com)

## Air Conditioners and Asthma

Good maintenance means better protection against allergens

Allergens are tiny airborne particles that can trigger an asthma attack. The “Big Five” triggers are dust mites, animal dander, cockroaches and their droppings, mold and mildew, and pollen.

"Although there is no sure way to prevent asthma," says Nancy Bock, Vice President, Education, at The Soap and Detergent Association, "it can be managed by reducing exposure to these allergens."

Pollen is a particular problem during the spring and summer months. Keeping the windows closed will keep the pollen outside, where it belongs. And on warm summer days, an air conditioner can be an asthma sufferer's best friend. But, ironically, that best friend can be the source of other asthma triggers: mold and mildew.

Good maintenance practices, along with regular cleaning, will prevent mold and mildew buildup. Another bonus: clean, well-operating air conditioners are more efficient, which helps control energy costs.

### Room Unit Maintenance

Turn off the power or unplug the unit before you begin.

- At the beginning of the season, vacuum the evaporator coils. These can be found immediately behind the front grille.
- Using a level, check the installation. The unit should slant slightly toward the ground so that the condensed water flows out of the unit.
- Change disposable filters at regular intervals during the season.
- Permanent filters should be cleaned several times during the season. Remove the filter and lay it flat in the sink. Sprinkle detergent over the surface, and then fill the sink with about one inch of hot water. Let the filter soak for about 15 minutes. Rinse it well with warm water. Make sure it's thoroughly dry before reinstalling it.
- If the unit stays in the window all year, cover it during the off season. If you remove and store it anyplace that is prone to dampness, such as a cellar or a garage, raise the air conditioning unit off the floor with a few pieces of wood. This will protect it from moisture on the floor.
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for your unit.

### Central System Maintenance

A yearly service call by a professional should include washing the condensing coils and vacuuming the evaporator coils.

**Source: The Soap and Detergent Association**

## Go, Slow, and Whoa Foods

It pays to teach kids healthy habits early. “We know from studies that children who were taught healthy lifestyles in third to fifth grade were still practicing those behaviors in the seventh to ninth grades,” says Karen A. Donato, M.S., R.D., coordinator of the obesity education initiative of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.

Teaching kids about healthy eating means helping them understand the foods they should eat more and the foods they should eat less. An easy way to eat foods lower in fat and calories is to think in terms of GO, SLOW and WHOA foods, according to the National Institutes of Health.

- **GO foods** are great any time. They are the lowest in fat and sugar and relatively low in calories. They include fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean meat.
- **SLOW foods** are higher in fat, added sugar and calories. Kids should learn to choose these foods no more than a few times a week. Sport drinks and French toast are examples.
- **WHOA foods** are high in calories and often low in nutrients. These foods should be eaten in small portions only once in a while or for special occasions. These include French fries and other fried foods, and sweets such as soda, cookies and ice cream.

Food Group	GO	SLOW	WHOA
	Almost anytime foods	Sometimes foods	Once in a while foods
	Nutrient-dense		Calorie-dense
<b>Vegetables</b>	Almost all fresh, frozen, and canned vegetables without added fat and sauces	All vegetables with added fat and sauces; oven-baked French fries; avocados	Fried potatoes, like French fries or hash browns; other deep-fried vegetables
<b>Fruits</b>	All fresh, frozen, canned (in juice)	100 percent fruit juice; fruits canned in light syrup; dried fruits	Fruits canned in heavy syrup
<b>Breads and Cereals</b>	Whole-grain breads; pita bread; tortillas and pasta; brown rice; hot and cold unsweetened whole grain breakfast cereals	White refined flour bread, rice, and pasta. French toast; taco shells; corn-bread; biscuits; granola; waffles and pancakes	Croissants; muffins; doughnuts; sweet rolls; crackers made with trans fats; sweetened breakfast cereals

## Go, Slow, and Whoa Foods (continued)

Food Group	<b>GO</b> Almost anytime foods	<b>SLOW</b> Sometimes foods	<b>WHOA</b> Once in a while foods
	Nutrient-dense	Calorie-dense	
<b>Milk and Milk Products</b>	Fat-free or 1 percent reduced-fat milk; fat-free or low-fat yogurt; part skim, reduced fat, and fat-free cheese; low-fat or fat-free cottage cheese	2 percent low-fat milk; processed cheese spread	Whole milk; full-fat American, Cheddar, Colby, Swiss, cream cheese; whole-milk yogurt
<b>Meats, Poultry, Fish, eggs, Beans and Nuts</b>	Trimmed beef and pork; extra lean ground beef; chicken and turkey without skin; tuna canned in water; baked, broiled, steamed, grilled fish and shellfish; beans, split peas, lentils, tofu; egg whites and egg substitutes	Lean ground beef, broiled hamburgers; ham, Canadian bacon; chicken and turkey with skin; low-fat hot dogs; tuna canned in oil; peanut butter; nuts; whole eggs cooked without added fat	Untrimmed beef and pork; regular ground beef; fried hamburgers; ribs; bacon; fried chicken, chicken nuggets; hot dogs, lunch meats, pepperoni, sausage; fried fish and shellfish; whole eggs cooked with fat
<b>Sweets and Snacks</b>	Ice milk bars; frozen fruit juice bars; low-fat frozen yogurt and ice-cream; fig bars, ginger snaps, baked chips; low-fat microwave popcorn; pretzels		Cookies and cakes; pies; cheese cake; ice cream; chocolate; candy, chips; buttered microwave popcorn
<b>Fats</b>	Vinegar; ketchup; mustard; fat-free creamy salad dressings; fat-free mayonnaise; fat-free sour cream, vegetable oil, olive oil and oil-based salad dressing	Creamy salad dressing; low-fat mayonnaise; low-fat sour cream	Butter, margarine; lard; salt pork; gravy; regular creamy salad dressing; mayonnaise; tartar sauce; sour cream; cheese sauce; cream sauce; cream cheese dips
<b>Beverages</b>	Water, fat-free milk or 1 percent reduced-fat milk; diet soda; diet iced teas and lemonade	2 percent low-fat milk; 100 percent fruit juice; sports drinks	Whole milk; regular soda; sweetened iced teas and lemonade; fruit drinks with less than 100 percent fruit juice

**Source: National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute and we can!**

## What Does Organic Mean

Consumers purchase organic foods for many reasons. Some believe that organic foods are “safer” than conventionally produced foods. Others believe that organic foods are “better for you” than conventional products. Others want to support food production systems that are environmentally sound. Others have yet different reasons for buying organic products. Consumers need to understand the rules so that they can decide whether buying organic foods can help them achieve their goals, whatever they may be.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) developed legal rules about organic foods that went into effect about three years ago. These rules are very detailed. They cover how the food was produced, how it was processed, and even how it is transported. The rules are complex. Here we will just discuss a few items that may be of special interest to some consumers.

### Are organic foods produced without the use of pesticides?

The short answer is “no.” However, it’s a good deal more complicated than this simple answer implies. The National Organic Standards require that farmers must use three levels of pest management. Pests include insects, pathogens, and even weeds. To be able to sell a product as organic, a farmer **must** use levels one and two before resorting to level three. The first level is designed to prevent a problem from ever occurring. A producer might, for example, select cultivars (varieties) of a crop that are disease-resistant. The second level is to use cultural practices to help prevent and control any problem that does arise. This could include things like releasing beneficial insects to help control insects that are pests. The third level is to apply some sort of active agent to control the pest. This is allowed if the first two levels of protection and control fails. Most of these agents are natural substances that act as pesticides. One example is to use *Bacillus thuringiensis* or “BT.” This is a naturally occurring bacterium that controls some pests. Both conventional and organic farmers use it.

However, there are also some synthetic or “chemical” pesticides that can also be used. These are probably not what most of us consider as “chemical pesticides” in the traditional use of the word. Plastic mulch — a plastic sheet applied in the field to prevent weeds from growing — is allowed for example. So are hydrogen peroxide, copper sulfate and insecticidal soaps. On the other hand, some “natural” pesticides — such as nicotine — are prohibited. So, it is incorrect to say that organic foods are produced without the use of pesticides, or even without the use of synthetic pesticides. However, these substances are applied basically as a “last resort” measure when level one and two measures for protection and control have not worked, and the list of permitted synthetic substances is not extensive. Clearly, the intent of the law is to greatly reduce the need for application of active agents in general, and to rely primarily on natural cycles and systems, like naturally occurring beneficial insects, to manage pests.

### What about growth hormones, vaccines, antibiotics and such?

Genetically modified organisms (GMOs), growth hormones and ionizing radiation are all prohibited under the National Organic Standards. Vaccines are permitted and are used to protect the health of animals. Antibiotics are prohibited, **but** farmers are **not** allowed to

withhold treatment from animals that are ill. That would constitute cruelty to the animal. The rules governing the use of antibiotics when an animal does become ill are very explicit. For example, if an animal becomes ill and is treated with an antibiotic, the animal must be clearly identified and cannot be sold as “organic.”

### **Are organic foods “better for you?”**

The USDA makes no claims whatsoever that organically produced foods are safer or more nutritional than conventionally produced foods. The National Organic Standards cover how food products are grown, handled, processed and transported, not about the nature of the food product itself. Consumers should beware of claims that organic foods are more nutritious; have “disease-fighting” qualities and the like. The research to support such claims, by and large, has not been completed and the National Organic Program was not set up to encourage people to buy organic products, or to “protect” consumers from any known or perceived risk associated with conventionally produced foods. Rather, the intent is to make sure, when you do choose to buy an organic food product, that you know exactly what standards were applied in its production and processing and that the label on the product guarantees that the National Standards were met.

### **Are organic food production systems environmentally sound?**

Certainly, the intent of the National Organic Standards is to encourage the use of environmentally sound agricultural production practices. USDA says that:

“Organic food is produced by farmers who emphasize the use of renewable resources and the conservation of soil and water to enhance environmental quality for future generations. Organic meat, poultry, eggs, and dairy products come from animals that are given no antibiotics or growth hormones. Organic food is produced without: using most conventional pesticides; fertilizers made with synthetic ingredient or sewage sludge; bioengineering, or ionizing radiation.”

The regulations require that farmers have detailed plans for protecting soil and water quality and natural ecosystems. For example, the rules state that farmers must use a system of crop rotation and cover crops, both of which are designed to help ensure the long term productivity of the land.

However, many conventional farmers use these same practices. Soil conservation, for example, is not a concern just for organic farmers, but for most farmers who want to protect this critical resource for the future. Similarly, virtually every farmer is concerned about water quality and many farms, not just organic farms, are subject to regulatory and inspection programs to ensure that water quality is not compromised through farming practices. Protecting the resource base for food production is a key concept that underlies the National Organic Standards. Nonetheless, many farmers today are deeply concerned about the sustainability of our food production systems as well as natural ecosystems and use every practice possible to ensure their protection.

**Source: University of Florida/IFAS Department of Family, Youth and Community Sciences, Gainesville, FL**

## Fruit Juices for Kids

With kids spending more time playing outside this summer, make sure they drink often to keep their bodies hydrated. Offer milk, fruit juices, and water as sources of liquids. Water is the best thirst-quencher, while milk and fruit juices are packed with nutrients that growing children need.

Fruit juices are nutritious and taste good, which makes it easier to over-consume. Too much juice, like too much of any food, can throw children's diets off balance and lead to some problems like:

- Poor appetite because of filling up with juice while crowding out other foods.
- Unnecessary weight gain due to excessive calories from large amounts of juice.
- Intestinal problems (cramps, diarrhea) because of the sorbitol in some types of juices. Sorbitol is a type of sugar that cannot be absorbed by the gut. Prune juice and pear juice have sorbitol.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that fruit juice should provide no more than half of a child's daily fruit needs. Children under 4 years need 2 servings of fruit every day. Older children need up to 4 servings.

- Offer your child 4 to 8 ounces of fruit juice a day, in addition to a variety of fresh and canned fruits.
- Offer juice only in a cup and as part of meals or snacks.
- If children are thirsty in between meals, offer only water.

**Source: USDA/ARS Children's Nutrition Research Center at Baylor College of Medicine.**

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## Variety of Options with Chicken

Variety, enjoyment and flavor are key components to healthful meals. When you think chicken, how does it measure up? Chicken offers tremendous versatility due to its very mild taste. Chicken can be roasted, baked, oven-fried, grilled, stewed or even microwaved. For variety, season chicken with different herbs such as tarragon, chives, or basil, try teriyaki, parmesan, lemon, Cajun, or BBQ.

Boneless chicken breast cooks quickly and makes a great addition to salads, pasta, stir-fried vegetables, or mixed with fruit for chicken salad.

To enjoy chicken safely, cook until it reaches 160 degrees Fahrenheit or until juices run clear. If there are leftovers, wrap them tightly and store in the refrigerator for no longer than three or four days or in the freezer for up to four months.

If you are tired of plain chicken, experiment with new seasonings or use the many different summer vegetables to flavor-up chicken.

**Source: American Dietetic Association**

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## A “Grill Master” Always Knows ...

- Wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds before and after handling food.
- Always marinate foods in the refrigerator, not on the counter or outdoors. Don't use sauce that was used to marinate raw meat or poultry on cooked food. Boil used marinade before applying to cooked food.
- When grilling foods, preheat the coals on your grill for 20 to 30 minutes, or until the coals are lightly coated with ash.
- If you partially cook food in the microwave, oven or stove to reduce grilling time, do so immediately before the food goes on the hot grill.
- When it's time to cook the food, cook it to a safe internal temperature. Use a food thermometer to be sure.
  - Beef, veal and lamb steaks and roasts: 145°F for medium rare, 160°F for medium, and 170°F for well done.
  - Ground pork and ground beef: 160°F.
  - Poultry: to at least 165°F
  - Fin fish: 145°F or until the flesh is opaque and separates easily with a fork.
  - Shrimp, lobster and crabs: The meat should be pearly and opaque
  - Clams, oysters and mussels: Until the shells are open.
- Never place cooked food on a plate that previously held raw foods including meat, poultry, seafood or eggs. Be sure to have on hand plenty of clean utensils and platters.
- Grilled food can be kept hot until served by moving it to the side of the grill rack, just away from the coals where it can overcook.
- Never let raw meat, poultry, eggs, cooked food or cut fresh fruits or vegetables sit at room temperature more than two hours before putting them in the refrigerator or freezer (one hour when the temperature is above 90°F).

**Source: The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Meat and Poultry Hotline at 888-MPHotline; and [www.fightbac.org](http://www.fightbac.org).**

# Florida Food Fare

by Mary King

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## Basil

**Description:** Called the "royal herb" by ancient Greeks, this sun-loving annual is a member of the mint family. There are more than twelve varieties of basil that are cultivated for culinary use. Sweet Basil, *Ocimum bacilicum*, and its close relative, Genoa Basil, *Genova profumatissima*, are the most familiar varieties. Both produce fragrant, broad, deep green leaves in abundance. Their pungent flavor is sometimes described as a cross between licorice and cloves. Other varieties of basil range in color from richly ruffled purple to pale mossy green. Each one has a distinctive taste, with its name revealing the underlying tones: Lemon Basil, Cinnamon Basil, and Persian Anise Basil. Even their tiny flowers, which appear on spikes that tower above the plants, are edible. Depending on the type, flowers are either white, pale pink or lavender. The flavor of the flower is milder, but similar to the leaves of the plant. Basil plants are abundant producers and often grow to heights of 15 to 24 inches.

**Availability:** In Florida, basil can be sown directly in the ground in a sunny location and will produce year round, once established. Continuous picking will prolong the life of the plant, but it is sensitive to frost and drought. Basil also does well as a container plant. Fresh basil is available year round in the supermarket. It can also be purchased dried, though it bears little resemblance in either flavor or aroma to the fresh herb.

**Storage:** Fresh basil can be wrapped in barely damp paper towels, in a plastic bag and refrigerated for up to 4 days. Or store a bunch of basil, stems down, in a glass of water with a plastic bag over the leaves for up to a week, changing the water every 2 days. To preserve fresh basil, wash and dry the leaves and place layers of leaves, then coarse salt in a container; then cover with a layer of virgin olive oil and tightly seal. Another method of preserving is to puree the leaves with a bit of water or oil. Portion this into ice cube trays and freeze. When solidly frozen, store in the freezer in a zip lock bag. Basil has a high moisture content and will mold if not dried quickly.

**Uses:** Basil's robust, spicy flavor makes it a key herb in many kitchens. It is essential to Italian Pesto and many recipes using tomatoes, fish and vegetables. Basil is also used in making herb vinegar and potpourris. Basil is also used to relieve sore gums. Swish out the mouth with a tea made from 8 basil leaves in a cup of boiling water

### Recipes:

#### Pesto Sauce

1/2 cup fresh basil leaves	1/2 cup freshly grated parmesan cheese
1/2 cup pine nuts	1/2 cup olive oil
2 cloves garlic	Salt to taste

Put basil, pine nuts and garlic in a small food processor and blend. Add parmesan cheese, blend again. Add olive oil a little at a time until pesto is a creamy consistency. Add salt to taste. Serve on pasta. The pesto is never heated but be sure the pasta is served hot and buttered. Mix 2 tablespoons pesto with the pasta, and also add an extra spoonful on each serving. Makes enough for a one pound box of pasta.

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