

Alternative Proteins Station

Objective: To teach and show observers alternative proteins we can eat instead of animal protein. Using talking points and examples below, guests will learn ways to incorporate these alternatives into our meals and snacks, the nutrient value of alternative proteins, and serving sizes for these products.

Set up and supplies needed: Table with tablecloth, examples of firm and silken tofu, visual examples of a package of edamame and other soy products like Boca Burgers, Morning Star Farm products, packages/cans of pinto or kidney beans, packages of a variety of nuts, and a jar of peanut butter, serving suggestions handout, sanitizing wipes, food service nonlatex gloves, sample cups, napkins, medium bowl for sample food with spoon. Consider using nuts and/or some shelled edamame as samples (see serving suggestion below).

Talking Points:

- Soy, nuts and beans are good sources of protein providing nutrients needed for good health.
- Soy protein is easily absorbed in the body.
- Protein is vital for healthy body functions such as tissue repair, metabolism and fluid balance. Every cell in the body uses protein and it increases satiety by slowing down digestion.
- Protein forms the structure for bones, teeth, hair, nails, skin and muscles.
- Beans and nuts are a good source of fiber also. Beans are rich in B vitamins.
- Nuts have heart healthy fats and are rich in potassium, phosphorus and magnesium.
- A serving of nuts is 1 oz. which feels like holding a golf ball in the palm of your hand and about 4-6 grams of protein depending on the type of nut.

Make your own trail mix

Combine your favorite nuts (1-3 varieties), dried fruits (1-2 types-cranberries, raisins, cherries, apricots, blueberries, etc.) with a whole grain cereal like a shredded wheat or toasted oat cereal and a small amount of mini chocolate or butterscotch chips.

Be careful how much you eat (1 serving = approximately ½ cup) because it will be really tasty!

- A serving of beans and edamame is ½ cup and around 6-8 grams of protein.
- To reduce the sodium in canned beans, rinse in a strainer and eliminate about 40% of the sodium content.
- Snack ideas and serving suggestions:
 - Add chopped nuts to oatmeal or other hot cereals, top salads, ice cream and use as a mid-morning/afternoon snack.
 - Add cooked edamame and beans to soups and salads for higher protein, vitamin and fiber content.
 - Microwave frozen edamame, toss with a buttery spray, salt and/or garlic powder to taste and enjoy as a snack.
 - Blend silken tofu into tomato sauces like spaghetti sauce to add a high-quality protein. Silken tofu has no flavor, the consistency of sour cream and takes on whatever flavors are in the sauce. No one will know it's there but they will have the benefit of its nutrients!
- Budget considerations:
 - Buy on sale and store brand when available.

- Buy nuts in bulk and divide into smaller containers for easy snacking. Store nuts in freezer for longer shelf life.