Black Beans

**Key Points**

- Before preparing dried beans, sort through for tiny pebbles or shriveled beans.
- Dried beans need to be soaked before they are cooked.
- The best way to soak dried beans is to cover them in cold water and bring to a gentle boil, turn off the heat and allow beans to soak in the water for 1-2 hours. *Do not add salt to the soaking water. Drain water and rinse with fresh water.
- To cook beans, cover with fresh water and simmer for 1-2 hours. Do not let beans dry out, beans should always be covered with water.

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**Black Bean Spread**

**Ingredients:**
1 1/2 cups cooked or 1 can (15.5 ounces) black beans, rinsed
1 onion, chopped
3/4 teaspoon paprika
1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 garlic clove, minced
2 tablespoons chopped basil (optional)
Salt and pepper to taste

**Directions:**
1. Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Mash together and mix well.
2. Serve and enjoy!
3. Refrigerate leftovers.

**Makes 10 servings.**  
*Adapted from www.vegweb.com*

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**Black Beans and Sweet Potato Stew**

**Ingredients:**
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
1 onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 green pepper, chopped
1 1/2 cups peeled and diced sweet potato
2 tomatoes, chopped
2 cups cooked black beans
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley (or 2 teaspoons dried parsley) optional
Salt and pepper to taste

**Directions:**
2. Add sweet potato and 2 cups water. Cook until sweet potatoes are soft, about 15 minutes.
3. Stir in tomatoes, black beans, parsley, salt and pepper. Cook for 5 more minutes.
4. Serve hot and enjoy!
5. Refrigerate leftovers.

**Makes 6 servings.**  
*Adapted from http://fatfreevegan.com*

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**Quick Tips**

- One pound dried beans (2 cups) equals 5 to 6 cups cooked beans.
- Beans are an inexpensive source of protein and fiber.
- Dried beans can be kept in an airtight container for a year.
- Remember to rinse all fruits and vegetables before using.

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