



Have You Heard?

By Doris Thomas
Lancaster Extension
Home Economist

Think Healthy, Think Barley!

The United States Department of Agriculture's Food Guide Pyramid zeros in on grain products as a key food group for healthy eating. It recommends that we consume 6 to 11 servings of foods from this category each day.

If you are searching for a different grain to try, try barley! Barley makes a natural choice because of its many nutritional benefits. This wholesome grain is loaded with carbohydrates, contains very little fat, and is cholesterol free. And like other grains, barley is a rich source of soluble and insoluble dietary fiber.

Laboratory studies show that insoluble fiber can be extremely effective in maintaining regular intestinal function which helps reduce the incidence of certain types of cancer such as colon cancer. Other research shows that soluble fiber can help lower blood cholesterol levels and reduce the risk of heart disease.

Barley, in its natural state, consists of a kernel that is enclosed in a tough hull. When the kernel is removed, the kernel is polished (pearled). Pearl barley may be found in the rice and noodle aisle of your supermarket.

When preparing pearl barley, here's a good rule of thumb: One cup of raw pearl barley yields about 3-1/2 cups cooked barley.

Barley is also available in flour, flakes and grits in health food stores and in some supermarkets. Barley is also used as an ingredient in many prepared food products such as breakfast cereals, soups, pilaf mixes, breads, cookies, crackers and snack bars.

Here is a recipe for making your own Barley Pilaf Mix rather than buying it in the supermarket. To cut down on preparation time, assemble this flavorful pilaf mix in advance and store in a zip-top plastic bag in a cool, dry place. Be sure to attach a card with the cooking directions to the bag.

HERBED BARLEY PILAF MIX

- 1/4 cup pearl barley
- 2 chicken or beef bouillon cubes or 2 teaspoons instant granular bouillon
- 1 tablespoon instant minced onion
- 1 tablespoon dry parsley flakes
- 1/2 teaspoon dry basil leaves
- 1/2 teaspoon dry oregano leaves
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder

Place barley in plastic bag. Combine remaining ingredients for seasoning and place in a smaller sandwich; seal and place in

PSU Extension Aids Poland Struggle

SMETHPORT (McClellan Co.) — Jim Clark, Penn State Cooperative Extension Agent in McKean and Potter Counties has been living and working in Olecko, Poland since January 1993. He is a part of a six-month Polish-American Extension Project organized to strengthen the Polish extension system and assist Polish farmers in understanding farming in a free market economy. The project is a cooperative effort between the United States Department of Agriculture, Polish Ministry of Agriculture and Food Economy, and Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences.

The news of Clark's work in the Northeast corner of Poland spread to the neighboring country of

Lithuania, a former Soviet Republic, and Clark was invited to visit and make a presentation to Lithuanian farmers. Clark stated it was the most exciting moment in his career. Polish farmers have had experience with private farming during communism, but Lithuanian farmers have had no experience with private farming or an agricultural extension system since 1946. Clark was able to visit and speak with the first private

Lithuanian farmer in the Svecional region of Lithuania on May 14. In a two-hour lecture presented to 30 farmers, he was also able to explain the United States Extension system and stressed the importance of the farmers working together to solve common problems.

Clark will return to Smethport in McKean County on July 9 and hopes to share his experiences in Poland and Lithuania with Pennsylvania residents.



Jim Clark (Right) Penn State Cooperative Extension Agent visits with the first private farmer in the Svecional Region of Lithuania.

plastic bag with barley. Seal bag and attach directions for preparation. Store mix in a cool, dry place until ready to use.

STOVE TOP DIRECTIONS: Place barley and contents of seasoning packet in medium-size saucepan. Add 2 cups water and 1 tablespoon butter or margarine. Bring to a boil; reduce heat to low, cover and cook 45 minutes or until barley is tender and liquid is absorbed. Makes 4 servings.

MICROWAVE DIRECTIONS: In a 2-quart casserole, combine barley, seasoning, 2 cups water and 1 tablespoon butter or margarine. Cover and cook on HIGH 6 to 8 minutes or until mixture comes to a boil. Stir with fork. Cover and continue to cook on HIGH 15 to 18 minutes or until most of the liquid is absorbed and barley is tender. Let stand, covered, 5 to 6 minutes.

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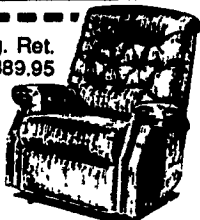
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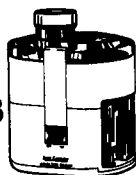
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