

Sheet Pan Meals Make Supper Simple

SANDY HAGGARD – NUTRITION, FOOD SAFETY, AND HEALTH AGENT

As the weather begins to cool, many may find themselves turning the oven back on more often. One easy cooking method that requires very little preparation and makes cleanup a breeze is the sheet pan meal.

Sheet pan meals are a convenient way to prepare an entire meal using just one pan. Start by preheating the oven and lining a baking sheet with foil or parchment paper. Plan for about 3 ounces of protein and one half to one cup of vegetables per person. Cut vegetables into similar-sized pieces so they cook evenly and leave space between foods to allow heat to circulate. Avoid overcrowding the pan. If needed, use a second baking sheet.

Arrange larger food items toward the center of the pan, and drizzle the ingredients with about 2 tablespoons of oil, such as olive, peanut, or avocado oil. A combination of seasonings, herbs, and spices can add flavor without much extra effort.

To ensure foods are fully cooked, use a food thermometer. Chicken and turkey should reach 165°F, while beef cooked to medium should reach 145°F.

The following recipe was shared with Southwind District by the Johnson County Extension Master Food Volunteers: Sheet Pan Turkey Sausage and Sweet Potato (4 servings)

This delicious dish provides a nutritious meal in less than 30 minutes. Leave the skin on sweet potatoes for added fiber and nutrients. Serve with your favorite mustard.

Ingredients

- 4 turkey brats or linked sausages
- 2 sweet potatoes, diced into ½-inch cubes
- 1 red bell pepper, cut into strips
- 1 onion, cut into wedges
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 3 sprigs rosemary

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Directions: Preheat oven to 425°F.

Place sweet potatoes, onion, and red bell pepper on a sheet pan.

Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt, pepper, garlic powder, and paprika. Add rosemary sprigs and toss to coat.

Add sausages to the pan, poking a small hole in each link to allow steam to escape.

Roast for 20 to 25 minutes, stirring vegetables halfway through cooking. Cook until the turkey sausage reaches 165°F and the vegetables are tender.

Refrigerate leftovers in an airtight container within two hours.

Sheet pans can also be used for weekly meal preparation. Bake several chicken breasts with different seasonings or sauces to create a variety of quick meals throughout the week. Vegetables such as cauliflower and sweet potatoes can be sliced vertically and roasted as hearty "steaks" for a flavorful side dish or meatless meal.

To learn more, join a free Sheet Pan Meals program this fall at one of the following locations:

Thursday, October 1, 6:00 p.m. – Bressner Hall, Yates Center

Tuesday, October 13, 6:00 p.m. – Southwind Extension Office, Iola

Wednesday, November 4, 10:00 a.m. – Fort Scott Public Library

Thursday, November 5, 5:30 p.m. – Central Park Pavilion, Chanute

For more information or to schedule a Sheet Pan Meal program in the Southwind District, contact Sandy Haggard, Nutrition, Food Safety, and Health Agent, at SJHaggard@ksu.edu or 620-365-2242

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