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**CREATIVE BEAN CUISINE OPENS NEW WORLD OF TASTE
Expert Chef Offers New Takes For Using The Ol' Bean**

KNOXVILLE, Tenn., (October 23, 2002) – Through the ages cooks worldwide have handed down bean recipes highlighting the legendary legume's versatility as well as its healthful attributes of protein, fiber and vitamins.

While traditional bean dishes have always found a home on America's plates, the ethnic flavors associated with beans around the world are still slowly working their way into the American mainstream. This movement, which builds on the bean's international influence, continues to pick up speed. A recent USDA study shows annual bean consumption increased 28 percent in 2001.

"Beans no longer consist of just baked beans, kidney beans and lima beans," said Katy Keck, founder and consulting chef at the New World Grill and a global food trends expert. "Black beans are common in most cultures, and black-eye peas, pinto beans and kidney beans cross all boundaries. The lines of ethnic cooking are blurring and, as a result, beans are experiencing a boom."

The reverberations from this boom are being felt on the supermarket aisles as well, where companies like Bush's Best Beans are offering more diversified products than in the past.

"The ways Americans are serving and eating beans has changed dramatically in the past 10 years," says John McDermott, director of marketing at Bush's. "Where lima beans once dominated the aisle, now there's a growing demand for many different varieties of beans, including black beans, garbanzos and seasoned chili beans."

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McDermott goes on to say that in addition to wanting more variety, Americans want beans that are tender, bolder and full of flavor – like Bush’s Best beans.

A World of Possibilities

Cultures around the world have been incorporating beans into their diets for centuries. And while the meals have evolved, the basic ingredients have stayed the same. For example, French cassoulets contain a grocery list of varied ingredients, but always white beans (great northern or navy beans).

While some beans are indigenous to specific regions, like the adzuki bean in Asia; beans like black-eye peas are found all over the globe, including in Africa, the Caribbean, and North America. Some cultures have virtually the same dish, but by simply changing the type of bean used they come up with a completely different flavor. For example, Cajun-style beans and rice use pinto beans that are milder on the palate while Cuban-style beans and rice use black beans for a bold flavor.

“Beans have been a nutritional mainstay from the start of civilization and for good reason – they’re protein packed, nutrient dense and delicious any way you cook them,” said Keck. “The bottom line is that nutrient-dense beans are a staple to any ethnic dish.”

Mashes – More than Just Potatoes

The humble spud has been a mashing success for generations and recalls memories of mother’s kitchen. But a new era is dawning, and bean mashes are on the rise. Mashed beans add nutrients and saves time that any palate can appreciate.

As hummus has gone from the exclusive realm of Mediterranean restaurants to the supermarket aisles, Americans have discovered more ways to mash a bean.

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Restaurants are now featuring bean spreads in place of butter and olive oil with the table bread. "We started serving spreads years ago and couldn't take them off the menu because of customer demand," said Keck of the New World Grill.

Now these recipes are finding their way into kitchens as consumers realize the ease of adding beans, peppers, garlic and other pantry staples for a homemade side in no time

Just as spreads are increasing in popularity, the same can be said for traditional mashes. Rather than frying beans in a pan, Keck transforms Mexican refried beans by mixing Bush's light red kidney beans, chipotle peppers and seasonings in a blender.

A Powerful Snack for Pennies

As hard core exercise enthusiasts look for new and better ways to increase their energy and improve their workouts, they spend more and more money each year on nutrition bars and smoothies for body fuel. In fact, the nutrition bar category grew nearly 15 percent last year.

And while gym memberships and athletic gear can break the bank, homemade energy foods can enhance a workout for pennies, if you use your bean. Bean bars, smoothies and trail mix provide numerous health benefits, including:

- **Satisfying an appetite** – Because beans are complex carbohydrates they take longer to digest into the bloodstream and stave away hunger pangs.
- **Providing a virtually fat free and nutrient dense snack** – Beans bring iron, zinc, calcium and multi-vitamins to your diet, but leave the fat behind.
- **Supplying a body with fiber and protein** – The soluble fiber found in beans helps lower cholesterol levels and beans are the only food in the USDA Pyramid that can be found in both the vegetable and protein sections.

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For more information and delicious recipes such as Three Bean Chili, Traditional Black Beans and Rice and Hearty Bean Soup, visit www.bushbeans.com.

Founded in 1908 by A.J. Bush, Bush Brothers & Company is based in Knoxville, Tennessee. The food company began with canned tomatoes and has grown to offer more than 20 product lines, including its popular secret family recipe baked beans, the number one baked bean brand in the U.S. One-third of all canned beans are Bush's beans. Today, Bush Brothers & Company is still family owned and operated, working for the same ideals that were set forth by A. J. Bush more than 90 years ago.

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