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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
WEDNESDAY, OCT. 18, 2023**

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## **Knightdale woman wins MREs in '23: Make-Ahead Lunch Challenge with sweet potato beef taco skillet**



RALEIGH – Registered Dietitian Sarah Hester of Knightdale took home the blue ribbon and a \$500 prize in the MREs in '23: Make-Ahead Lunch Challenge presented by Wegmans with a recipe for sweet potato beef taco skillet.

Amy Zimmerman of Raleigh took second place and won \$300 for her chicken and rice bowl. Aminah Hasan of Durham took third place and won \$200 for her Mason jar miso soup.

The winning recipe follows:

### **Sweet potato beef taco skillet**

Makes 2-4 servings

#### *Ingredients:*

- 2-4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large sweet potato, cubed
- 1/2 cup chicken broth
- 14-15 ounce can tomatoes (fire roasted preferred)
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1 cup shredded cheese

#### *Optional toppings:*

Sour cream, shredded cheese, cilantro, pickled red onions, lime wedges, sliced jalapeno, tortilla chips

#### *Quick-pickled red onions:*

- 1 large red onion, peeled and very thinly sliced
- 3/4 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1-2 tablespoons honey or sugar

#### *Quick-pickled red onion Instructions:*

Combine vinegar, water, salt and sugar in a skillet and heat to a boil.

Place onions in a Mason jar and cover with vinegar mixture.

Let cool, place a lid and top on the jar and set in the refrigerator. Best enjoyed after 4-6 hours or overnight.

*Instructions:*

In a large skillet, heat oil and brown ground beef until cooked through or to an internal temperature of 160 degrees F. If preparing pickled onions, prepare them while beef is cooking.

Once beef is almost cooked through, add in onion and cook until onion is tender, stirring frequently to avoid burning. Add in garlic, seasonings and stir once, until fragrant.

Remove beef mixture from pan, drain, reserving 1-2 tablespoons of grease and set aside. If no grease is able to be reserved, add 1-2 more tablespoons olive oil back to the pan and bring to medium high heat.

Add sweet potatoes and chicken broth to the pan and stir. Cook potatoes until almost fork tender and then add in canned tomatoes to the mixture.

Bring to a boil and allow the mixture to bubble for around 5 minutes. Add the ground beef and onion mixture back to the skillet and stir well to combine.

Turn off heat and top with shredded cheese and cover 1-2 minutes to allow cheese to melt.

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