

Smart Snacking

Celebrate Popcorn: October Is National Popcorn Poppin' Month

(NAPSA)—Popcorn lovers rejoice: October is National Popcorn Poppin' Month, a seasonal celebration of one of America's oldest and most beloved snack foods. As farmers head into the fields to harvest crops, families and friends gather to honor this ever-popular treat. Whether stovetop, microwave or ready-to-eat, we consume 13 billion quarts each year of this wholesome, whole grain.

Having been long regarded as a sign of good times, popcorn has found a new appreciation by today's lean and green consumer. Celebrated for its seed-to-snack simplicity, popcorn is also non-GMO, vegan, gluten-free, sugar-free and naturally low in fat and calories, which makes it an easy fit for the dietary conscious. And it's budget friendly. A quart of popped popcorn costs as little as 15 cents.

Add in popcorn's irresistible smell, taste and versatility and it's easy to understand its popularity. With so many different ways to eat it—plain, buttery or loaded with goodies—popcorn always fits the mood or occasion.

Pop up a bowl and join the Popcorn Poppin' Month celebration. For a special seasonal snack, try the following recipe courtesy of The Popcorn Board. Learn why popcorn pops, the history of popcorn, corny facts, recipes and more at www.popcorn.org.

Harvest Munch (Monster Munch)

Sweet and salty, this party snack mix can be altered with healthier mix-ins like raisins and nuts.

Or for a Halloween bash, add edible eyes and call it Monster Munch!

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Cook Time: 5 minutes

Total Time: 20 minutes

Makes: 12 servings



Give your next party extra pizzazz with this sweet and salty Harvest Munch.

Ingredients:

- 8 cups air-popped or stovetop popcorn
- 4 cups mini pretzel twists
- ¼ cup butter
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp corn syrup
- 1 cup marshmallows
- ¼ tsp salt
- 2 cups mini chocolate peanut butter cups
- 1 cup candy corn

Instructions:

1. Toss popcorn with pretzel twists; spread out on large parchment paper-lined baking sheet; set aside.

2. In saucepan set over medium heat, combine butter, brown sugar and corn syrup; cook, swirling pan, for 3 to 5 minutes or until brown sugar dissolves and mixture is bubbling.

3. Stir in marshmallows and salt; cook for 30 to 60 seconds or until marshmallows are melted. Pour evenly over popcorn mixture. Sprinkle with mini chocolate peanut butter cups and candy corn. Let cool completely and break into clusters.