

# Pasta with Spinach and Sausage



## Ingredients:

- 1 lb. of pasta
- 1 tablespoon of olive oil
- 1 pound of Maglio Italian sausage
- 4-6 cloves of garlic
- 1 (7oz.) can of chicken broth
- 1 (12oz.) package of chopped spinach
- 1/2 cup of grated Parmesan cheese

## Directions:

1. Dice up the garlic and sauté it in olive oil.
2. Add sausage to the skillet and fry until brown.
3. Remove from pan and let cool, then dice into small pieces.
4. Cook spinach according to package directions.
5. Drain the spinach and sauté it in garlic, olive oil, and sausage
6. Boil water and add pasta then drain.
7. Mix pasta with spinach and sausage then add chicken broth.
8. Let cook for additional twenty minutes.
9. Tada, your meal can now be served!

**Total Calories:** 1923

## Calories per Ingredient:

<b>Pasta -</b>	1430
<b>Sausage -</b>	360
<b>Olive Oil -</b>	30
<b>Cheese -</b>	23
<b>Spinach -</b>	60
<b>Garlic -</b>	20

# Recipe Analysis

## •**Approximately what percent of the meal is processed vs. whole food?**

In all honesty, majority of this meal is processed considering it is made with sausage which is combined with all the “scraps” of pig body parts, and the spinach was bought in a bag located at the super market. In order for meat to be considered whole food, I feel as though it has to be purchased at a farmers market because then you know your food is produced without genetically modified organism and the animals are fed the proper diet and live in sustainable habitats.

## •**Health/nutrition:** Use the nutritional info on the label to estimate the caloric content, sugar content, fat content, etc. How will your body deal with what you ate? How are the various parts of the meal processed by your body? What are some possible health issues that could arise if you ate nothing but this meal every day?

Even though this meal includes certain ingredients that can be healthy for you, I don't necessarily think this meal would be healthy if you ate it on a daily basis. The calorie break down above shows that these ingredients have health benefits, they most definitely have a large amount of health effects. This meal contains a large amount of sodium which is not healthy for your body because it can lead to heart disease, high blood pressure, or even diabetes. Sodium is usually found in highly processed foods such as mixed dishes, meat and meat alternatives, and grains. When reading the labels, it is important to review the amount of sodium the dish has because if it exceeds 600 mg it can be very harmful to your body. An interesting fact is that “up to 75% of sodium that Americans consume comes from processed foods.” (Mattes) In addition, it is known that cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death world wide and sodium is one of the factors that influence this destructive disease.

## •**Environmental:** What state/country do you think your ingredients came from? Which food traveled the farthest? How many total miles did your meal travel? Was it organically grown (not as much fertilizer/pesticide/fossil fuel) or commercially grown? If it's processed, how does the processing affect the environment?

The Maglio sausage is actually produced right in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania so in order to get the meat from the company to our house only took a total of 7 miles. However, this meat was not grown properly so the animal source that we received our meat from was most likely fed corn instead of grass, injected with antibiotics, and genetically modified. All of these factors are not only dangerous to the animal, but also our bodies. The pasta used in this dish was made from the Barilla company, which is located in Ames, Iowa. This means that the rigatoni pasta was shipped from over 1,100 miles away from where we live. Although the sausage was produced locally, the bagged spinach manufactured by Bird's Eye was produced approximately two hours away. When compared to the pasta, this bagged spinach was made not too far away. As we know, cars emit green house gases into the air which is bad for the environment and causes global warming.

# Recipe Analysis continued...

**•Political/economic:** How much did this meal cost? How does this compare to fast food? How are these food items regulated? Who made money off your meal? What small and/or large corporations/businesses are involved?

In order to cook this delicious meal it costed about \$15. For some people this is expensive, for others it seems cheap. However, when it comes to eating Americans usually buy the cheapest and most convenient meal, which in most cases would be fast food. This is because you can feed a family of four for only \$10 in a matter of 5 minutes, but if you were to cook your own meal it would cost more and take a total of 45 minutes to make. As you can see, a healthier meal takes more time, money, and effort while an unhealthy meal is at your fingertips. This means that it takes determination and dedication to live a healthy and proper life style. The most obvious corporations that promote fast foods are McDonalds, Wendy's, and Burger King. It is known that the more fast food a child/adult eats, the more likely they are to get type 2 diabetes, which is a disease caused by eating unhealthy foods. A healthy diet starts with the parents because if the parents care about healthy and nutritious diets then their children will be healthier and share their knowledge with their children when they have them. As a country, we need to rise above the average American and make a change to our society before these issues are the plight of our future generations.

**•Social:** What are some of the social ramifications of your meal choice? Trace a few parts of your dish from the farm to the plate, including all intermediate steps on the way. Where were these food items purchased? Pick 2-3 ingredients and compare a commercial production process vs. a self-sufficient process. (For example, how does the commercial tomato growing and delivery system compare to growing tomatoes yourself?)

If I had my own farm, I would be able to properly maintain the health and habitat of the animals I am taking care of for my food source. This means that I would not have to transport the meat to a far place and I would know that this animal lived a healthy life, free of antibiotics and genetically modified organisms. Most of the meat we eat today contain these harmful components so having my own farm would benefit both me and the animals. Similarly, if we produced our own spinach we would be able to stay away from using pesticides and other harmful chemicals that can potentially affect our food product. After learning about all this, when I get older and have my own house I want to have a garden specifically for growing fruits and plants for food sources so that I know it was grown properly and has all the nutrients and proteins still available.

# Food Rule



**YOU** are what  
you **EAT!**

# Personal Reflection

This unit has made me more aware of the issues regarding health and food processing. Previously, I understood the consequences of eating “unhealthy foods,” but I never realized the misleading labels that companies got away with. For example, when a product states “free range chicken” these chickens only have to be out of their cage for a total of five minutes of their life. This is an absolutely disgrace, and it hurts me to know that this is legal within the United States. The biggest problem with our food system is that everything is a scam, the people, the government, and even the process. Some changes that I would like to make to my food choices are to eat more healthy products that have been sustainably produced with little to no pesticides, GMOs, etc. Also, I would like to start taking vitamins because you can never have too much vitamin amounts in your body. This will then strengthen my immune system and properly be able to fight off any viruses. In addition, it is my goal to become a vegetarian, although this is going to be difficult since all my life I was raised eating meat, I am determined to make this change. I don't agree with the way animals are raised and treated in society, therefore it is my goal to make a personal change.