

## Title:

"Food Of The Future," 40 Years In The Making

## Word Count:

393

## Summary:

Forty years ago, a first-class stamp cost a nickel, a new science fiction television show called "Star Trek" made its debut and a tasty topping began its crunchy history of enhancing salads, baked potatoes and Americans' cupboards.

## Keywords:

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## Article Body:

Forty years ago, a first-class stamp cost a nickel, a new science fiction television show called "Star Trek" made its debut and a tasty topping began its crunchy history of enhancing salads, baked potatoes and Americans' cupboards.

General Mills first tested Bac-Os as a better-for-you alternative to bacon in select markets in 1965. Bit by bit, the product's popularity took off, and it was dubbed a "food of the future" in early television advertisements. Consumers enjoyed the convenient product's multipurpose use—a savory ingredient used to jazz up casseroles, salads, soups and other favorite dishes. This handy condiment helped home cooks streamline their kitchen prep and promised the smoke-cured, sizzling flavor of bacon without a splattering mess.

"A jar of Bac-Os brought the flavor and texture of crisp bacon right to the family dinner table in a fraction of the time," says Maggie Gilbert, manager of the Betty Crocker Kitchens test kitchen. "Because they were considered superconvenient and required no refrigeration, they soon became a familiar ingredient in popular recipes of the day, such as holiday party dips, sweet-sour beans and twice-baked potatoes."

The brand debuted in its first print advertising campaign in 1970. The product was featured in several new recipes from the Betty Crocker Kitchens in national magazines, such as Better Homes and Gardens and Family Circle. Shortly thereafter, General Mills extended the line to include Saus-Os and Pepr-Os, two new soy proteins with distinct flavor possibilities.

Today, Bac-Os continues to appeal to consumers, particularly by offering added

health benefits: They're made with the goodness of soy, are kosher and contain no MSG. They can also help consumers keep healthy eating in check, without tipping the scale on calories, fat, saturated fat or cholesterol.

Happy Birthday, Bac-Os!

### Italian Spinach and Mushroom Salad

This seasonal salad for special gatherings has extra crunch and a burst of added flavor.

1 package (10 oz.) fresh spinach leaves, rinsed and patted dry

1 package (8 oz.) sliced mushrooms

1 can (19 oz.) Progresso chick peas, drained and rinsed

1/3 cup Betty Crocker Bac-Os bacon flavor bits or chips

1/2 cup seasoned croutons

1/2 cup Italian dressing

In large salad bowl, toss all ingredients except dressing. Just before serving, drizzle with dressing and toss gently. Makes 4 servings.

Jars of a revolutionary new "food of the future" product appeared on grocers' shelves 40 years ago, offering busy consumers the bacon flavor they loved with a simple shake of the wrist.