

Cooking Corner



Enjoying An All-American Food

(NAPSA)—“Next to jazz music,” trumpet player Harry James once said, “there is nothing that lifts the spirit and strengthens the soul more than a good bowl of chili.” Indeed, chili has been called the all-American dish, a food invented in this country and, some would say, embodying the American spirit.

That may be why the competition for the title of the best chili is so fierce. Recently, 400 top chili chefs from across the United States and around the world met in battle at the 40th Annual World Championship Chili Cookoff sanctioned by the International Chili Society and presented by ConAgra Foods.

For most chili lovers, the purest form of chili is traditional red, also known as “Texas red.” Most red chili recipes include finely chopped meat, diced vegetables, tomato sauce or paste, garlic, chili powder and other spices.

To make award-winning chili at home, store your chili overnight and serve the next day. The more time you give the flavors to marinate, the better the flavor.

Quality ingredients also make a difference. Tomatoes, onions, and green and red chili peppers are important for award-winning chili. For the best chili, use canned tomato products such as Hunt’s tomato paste or diced



Chili cookoff winner J.R. Knudson and his wife accept their prize.

tomatoes. Mix canned-diced and petite-diced tomatoes for a better-looking chili. For variety, try Ro*Tel diced tomatoes and green chiles. Also include quality brands such as Gebhardt chili powder, Gilroy Foods garlic and Wesson Oil to ensure your chili is filled with flavor.

Try this year’s winning recipe:

J.R.’s Rough and Ready Chili

By J.R. Knudson, Granite Bay, California

- 3 pounds beef tri-tip, chopped**
- 2 ounces sausage**
- 1 ounce rendered beef fat**
- 1 medium onion, diced**
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder**
- 1 green Ortega pepper, seeds removed and diced fine**
- ½ ounce salt**

- ¼ teaspoon fine black pepper**
- 2 ounces Gebhardt chili powder**
- ½ ounce California chili powder**
- ½ ounce New Mexico powder**
- ½ ounce cumin**
- ½ teaspoon pequin powder**
- 1 or 2 14-ounce cans chicken broth**
- 1 eight-ounce can Hunt’s Tomato Sauce**
- ¾ teaspoon cayenne pepper**
- Tabasco sauce to taste**

Sauté onion and green pepper in rendered beef fat in a 3- quart pot. Add garlic powder and half of chili powder. Add half a can of chicken broth, mix well and set aside. Brown sausage and beef in a skillet about one pound at a time. Drain and add meat to onion mix. Add remaining chili powder, salt and pepper and remaining can of chicken broth. Cook for 30 minutes on low heat. Add tomato sauce, cumin, cayenne pepper and pequin powder. Add more broth as needed and cook until meat is tender, about two to three hours. Add a dash of Tabasco sauce if needed for heat.

Go to www.conagrafoods.com or www.chilicookoff.com for the top 2006 cookoff recipe and more tips for making your chili world-class.