

TREEBEARDS' HOPPIN' JOHN

Hoppin' John is a spicy black-eyed pea dish with a true, down-home goodness. Many of our customers eat this as a side dish, while others eat it as a main dish served over hot rice. As legend has it, you should eat black-eyed peas on New Year's Day to ensure good luck throughout the year.

1/2 pound dried black-eyed peas
5 cups water
1 1/2 teaspoons vegetable oil
1/2 cup chopped celery
1/2 cup chopped onion
1/4 cup chopped carrot
1/2 clove garlic, minced
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 bay leaf
1 1/4 cups chicken broth
6 ounces cooked ham, chopped
2 tablespoons chopped green onions (including tops)

Wash and rinse dried peas. Place peas in 4-quart saucepan and add 5 cups water. Soak 8 hours or overnight. Do not drain.

In skillet or saucepan, heat oil and saute celery, onion, carrot and garlic.

Meanwhile, bring black-eyed peas to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer 20 minutes. Add sauteed vegetables, black pepper, cayenne pepper, salt and bay leaf. Stir in chicken broth and ham. Cover and simmer 1 1/2 hours or until black-eyed peas are very tender. Sprinkle with chopped green onions just before serving.

Serve alone or over hot rice.

Serves 6.

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