

With the cold winter months upon us, it's a great time for cooking up a bowl of warm and tasty Chili Bean soup. What I like best about this soup is that I can start it first thing in the morning in my crock pot and know that when I get home from work the kitchen will be filled with a delicious aroma and the soup will be hot and ready to serve up for my family.

To make this Chili soup, I use the Seven Bean mix of dried beans from Grandma's Pantry. Our Seven Bean mix is a combination of lima beans, blackeye beans, black turtle beans, great northern beans, red kidney beans, cranberry beans, and pinto beans. As with most beans they need to be soaked in water overnight in the refrigerator and then rinsed and drained in the morning. This soup can also be made in a heavy kettle, but I prefer the crock pot. Here is the recipe for Chili Bean soup:

- 2 cups Seven Bean Mix
- 4 cups water (extra water needs to be added if done in the crock pot)
- 1 lb. ground beef or ground turkey
- 2 cups chopped onion
- 2 cups chopped green pepper
- 1 14oz. can diced tomatoes
- 1 12oz. can tomato paste
- 3 tablespoons chili powder
- 1 ½ tablespoons garlic salt
- 1 teaspoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- ½ cup brown sugar

In a heavy pan, brown the ground meat then add onions and peppers and sauté until tender. In the crock pot, combine all of the ingredients and stir until well blended. (At this point, I add extra water since it will be cooking all day, use your own judgment depending on how thick you want the soup). Cook on low for at least 8 hours, so that the beans will become tender. Makes approximately 3 quarts.

I also like to prepare, ahead of time, the dry ingredients for corn bread so that when I get home, all I have to do is add the wet ingredients, bake it, and within minutes supper is on the table. The corn bread recipe, which I like to make as corn sticks, will require the following:

- 1 cup corn meal
- 1 ¼ cups flour
- 5 tablespoons sugar
- 3 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg
- 1 ¼ cups milk
- ¼ cup oil or melted margarine or butter

Combine the dry ingredients in a bowl. Add the liquid ingredients and combine until moistened. Place the mixture in a greased 8-inch pan (or 2 corn stick pans) and bake at 425 degrees for 20-25 minutes until golden brown.

If you like to use your crock pot and love to have a warm hearty meal waiting for you after a full day at work, this is the meal for you. For those of you who don't have a crock pot, we also offer a Chili Bean soup mix which is easy to just mix and eat.

Dried beans are loaded with fiber and are known to help lower cholesterol. Dried beans are also high in antioxidants. The U. S. Department of Agriculture includes dry beans in their list of high-protein foods. A weekly consumption of 3 cups a week of dried beans is recommended by the Dietary Guidelines of Americans. Grandma's Pantry carries a wide variety of dried beans as well as mixed dried bean soup mixes to help you meet these guidelines. Try some today and enjoy a healthy and tasty meal on these chilly winter nights!

***“So, whatever you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.”*** (I Cor. 10:31)