

Consuming Thoughts

by
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You and dry bean cookery have a friend — the crockery style cooker. These electric low temperature-long time cookers are ideally suited for the preparation of tasty bean dishes.

Crockery cookers have a long heritage including low temperature cooking of foods in earthenware pottery buried under open fire coals for many hours, followed by cast iron skillets in ovens, and now as countertop units with removable ceramic crocks.

Home use of crockery style cookers has increased dramatically in recent years because of their convenience, versatility and adaptability to fine recipes. These cookers provide for slow, unattended cooking of products at sub-boiling temperatures, which

results in reduced flavor loss, increased nutrient retention, and improved marination of ingredients.

Beans are especially well suited for preparation in crockery cookers, and are a tremendous help to the cook and a joy to the palate.

Beans prepared by low temperature long time cooking will cook to consistent and more uniform texture. Variations in heating time during low temperature cooking will not significantly change the textural properties. Furthermore, beans of different sizes or color classes can be readily blended and cooked at low temperature. This provides for easy and successful preparation of mixed bean dishes. The pre-soaking and cooking procedures are combined into one

when using the crockery cookers to further facilitate ease of preparation.

The temperatures used in crockery cooking are above the temperature zone suitable for the proliferation of food poisoning organisms, and products properly prepared in this manner are safe. A crockery cooker should not be used however, for reheating or refrigerating leftovers because the slow heating or cooling could potentially result in microbial growth.

Dry beans will increase in weight and swell in volume during the soaking and cooking procedures. Sufficient water must be provided to enable this to occur if the beans are to be properly cooked. Six cups of water per pound of beans is sufficient to cover and hydrate dry beans.

During menu planning, remember that beans are always an excellent source of protein, selected vitamins and minerals, and are increasingly recognized as an outstanding source of dietary fiber.

- Beans by the Crockfull**
- Sort, clean and wash beans.
 - Place beans in ceramic crock (provide ample space for swelling, do not exceed 1/3 the capacity of the crock with dry beans.)
 - Cover with sufficient boiling water to cover the beans (6 cups per pound of beans).
 - Set temperature range and cook — "low" range — 12 hours; "high" range — 6-7 hours.

Crockery Cooker Baked Beans

- 1 pound dry navy beans
 - 6 cups water
 - 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
 - 1 teaspoon dry mustard
 - 1/2 teaspoon pepper
 - 1/2 cup chopped onion
 - 1/2 cup molasses
 - 1/2 cup brown sugar
 - 1/4 pound salt pork, cubed
- Place beans in boiling water (enough to cover) and simmer for 10 minutes. Then combine beans, water and salt in crock. Cover and cook on low about 12 hours. Drain beans, reserving liquid. Combine beans with remaining ingredients

and add enough bean liquid to cover beans. Cover and cook on low another 6 hours.



Toastmasters

Bucks County 4-H is offering a Junior Leadership program in collaboration with the Doylestown Toastmaster's Club. This active "hands-on" program, from Feb. 5 through March 25, is designed to develop leadership, public speaking, and meeting management skills. The course prepares 4-H participants, ages 13-17 years, to meet demands and challenges of today's world.

The Junior Leadership program is being held at Neshaminy Manor Center, Doylestown, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. The course fee is \$9. Any youth interested in participating may call Penn State cooperative extension office, (215) 345-3283, for details.

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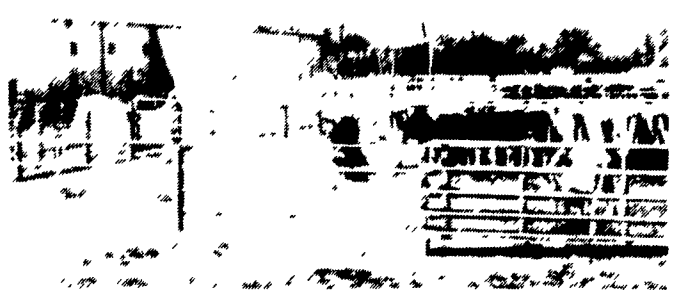


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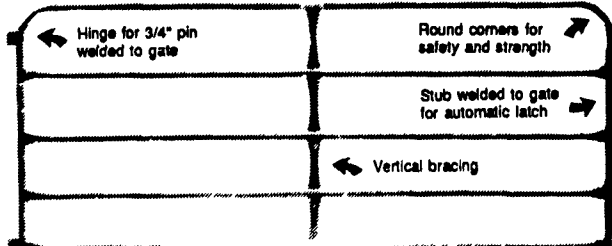


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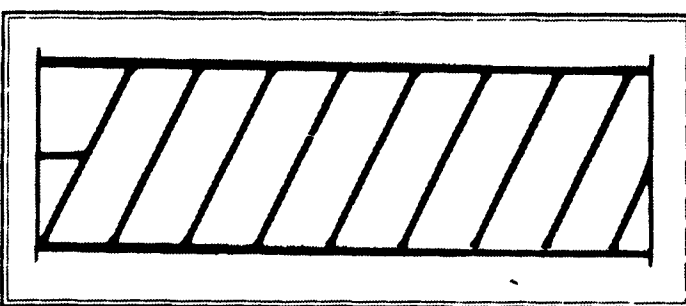


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