

Native Heritage: Food

LESSON 2

CHICKASAW TRADITIONAL

Recipes

Many traditional Chickasaw foods and recipes have withstood the test of time. Chickasaw families continue to cook and enjoy many of the same foods their ancestors enjoyed long ago. Most notably, this includes the Three Sisters, grape dumplings and pishofa.

Three Sisters Stew

The Three Sisters is a vegetable medley of corn, squash and beans that are planted together so each plant can support and nourish each other.

Corn, beans and squash have provided nutrition for the Chickasaw people for generations. These three sisters grow together and support each other as they thrive. Traditionally, the vegetables were planted together in late May or early June. In gardens, small mounds were built 2 feet apart at the base and 4 feet apart at the top. In the center of each, several corn kernels were planted in a small circle. After the corn grew about a hand high, pole beans were planted in another circle in the mound, about 6 inches outside the corn. A week later, squash seeds were planted around the outer edge of the mound. The beans grew up the cornstalks, which were strong enough to hold the weight. The squash grew out and covered the ground, keeping out the weeds and keeping in the moisture. These plants provided for each other, just as they provided for Chickasaw families.

Today, many Chickasaws enjoy Three Sisters Stew.

Three Sisters Stew

- 2 cups onions, diced
- 6 cups water
- 2 cans diced tomatoes, no salt added (14.5-oz. can)
- 6 cups red skinned potatoes, cubed
- 1 can tomato sauce, no salt added (15-oz. can)
- 1 cup corn, frozen
- 1 cup yellow squash, diced
- 1 can light red kidney beans, drained and rinsed (15.5-oz. can)
- ½ can quick cooking barley
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 ½ teaspoon black pepper

In a large stockpot, add all ingredients. Bring to a boil, then lower heat and simmer for 30-45 minutes until the potatoes are soft. Serve immediately.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Choose one (or more) of the recipes shared in the Native American Heritage: Traditional Chickasaw Foods series and, under supervision of an adult, make and try the food.

Recipes can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y8tahuwp>

To watch videos and learn more about Chickasaw foods, visit Chickasaw.net/Food.