

Northeast Region Newsletter

Flavors
OF HEALTH



June is Soul Food Month *by Quincy Vidrine and Brittney Newsome*

National Soul Food Month is celebrated in June and is immersed in tradition that traces its heritage back through many generations. To remind us of this rich culinary tradition, the Culinary Historians of Chicago created this month so people could take the time out to enjoy soul food cuisine but also reflect on its deep history.

Often times when we hear soul food and southern cooking, there is a comparison to be made but African American's developed soul food's distinct character by creating exceptional meals from less than desirable cuts of meat and produce. Many of the meals consisted of food items such as fried meats, vegetables, BBQ, and baked goods. These meals were served to nourish their bodies and the fellowship that went along with it nurtured the soul.

According to the Culinary Historians (culinaryhistorians.org), the term "soul food" made its appearance and became popular in the 1960s, giving a name to the flavorful foods that were becoming known in kitchens and restaurants in cities across the country. Although many people may consider soul food to be high in fat content or loaded with sugar, it doesn't have to be. Be creative with your soul food dishes and keep it light by adding different herbs and spices and using fresh produce and lean cuts of meats.

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided 1/1
- 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 4 green onions, sliced
- 1 tablespoon minced, fresh ginger root
- Cayenne pepper, ground to taste and 1 ½ teaspoons salt
- ½ cup thinly sliced okra
- 1 cup of diced bell peppers
- 1 cup thinly sliced collard greens
- 2 cups cooked Louisiana white rice (cold is best)
- 2 cups cooked Louisiana brown rice (cold is best)
- 1 (16 ounce) can black eye peas, drained and rinsed

Take the time out to observe National Soul Food Month by sharing your favorite soul food recipes with family and friends, research its rich history to see how much has changed throughout the years and dine out at a local soul food restaurant! Remember it's the flavor, flare and fellowship of the meal that makes it Soul Food.

The recipe we will feature in honor of National Soul Food month comes from Culinary Historian & Chef Michael W. Twitty's book "The Cooking Gene: A Journey Through African American Culinary History in the Old South." Twitty also refers to Soul Food as "African American Heritage Cooking." Our own Louisiana Soul Food ambassador and the "Queen of Creole Cuisine," Leah Chase developed Dooky Chase's restaurant in New Orleans into one of the first African American fine dining establishments in the country. She eagerly shared her culture, heritage, and love of cooking with everyone!

Please enjoy this modified version of Chef Michael Twitty's African Soul Fried Rice – We have incorporated a little bit of brown rice for added fiber and a whole grain. Adding chicken, pork, or beef would make this a wonderful, one-pot meal for your family:

Instructions: Heat 1 tablespoon of oil in a wok or large skillet until very hot. Add the garlic, green onions, and ginger – cook, stirring for about 3 minutes, until veggies are soft and release their scent. Add the other tablespoon of oil and season with salt and cayenne pepper. Add and sauté the okra, bell pepper, and collard greens for another 3 minutes. Add white and brown rice, and the black eye peas. Stir constantly – make sure to keep it moving so that the bottom portion of ingredients do not start to stick. If you choose to add protein at this point, use meat that is pre-cooked and heat for another 3 minutes. Serve hot and eat immediately.

Juneteenth Celebrations and Traditions in the Region

by Jocinda Jones

It's the month of June and Juneteenth Celebrations are happening all over the region to honor and celebrate the freedom of illegally detained slaves and their freedom on June 19, 1865. Juneteenth, also known as "Freedom Day," is centered around celebrating and honoring Black

culture, history, life and the many sacrifices that were made in the past. Juneteenth gives communities the opportunity to support and educate themselves through the implementation of community-wide activities that are fun for all. Here are some of the ways that Juneteenth is being celebrated in the Northeast Region:

• The Annual Juneteenth Parade

The annual Juneteenth parade will be on June 18 at 10:30 a.m. starting at the St. Benedict Catholic Church, 471 Maine St., Grambling and will be followed by the big festival from Maine Street to Grambling Park. The festival will include vendors, vendor trucks, children's activities, a car show and live music.

• Monroe Black Chamber of Commerce Juneteenth Events

The Chamber will open the festivities with a Juneteenth Weekend Kick Off Party 8 p.m. June 17 at the W Event Center, 2332 Sterlington Rd., Monroe. The event will feature a live band and DJ. Ticket prices are \$25 and \$35 for chamber members and non-members, respectively.

• Northeast Louisiana Delta African American Museum

The museum will host an open-mic poetry night on June 16 at 6 p.m. and a family fun day on June 19 at 3 p.m. A two-day event featuring vocalist CoCo York will be held on June 24 and June 25 with ticket prices ranging from \$25-40. The museum will conclude its Juneteenth observance with an artist program at 6 p.m. on June 30.

• Grambling's 2022 Juneteenth Heritage Festival

The City of Grambling will kick off its Juneteenth Heritage Festival with an opening program starting at 11 a.m. on Saturday, June 11 at Grambling City Hall, 127 King St, Grambling.

Tensas Parish supports Juneteenth by expressing its significance to the community with the following statement: "Juneteenth....why is it significant? Juneteenth has been celebrated for decades in states, but now, it is a federal holiday! And it's long overdue. June 19th, 1865 is the date that slaves in Galveston Texas learned that they were free. This was 2 years after the Emancipation Proclamation. So, Juneteenth to me commemorates America's original sin! In my small town, we are recognizing this and are hopeful that people learn, and feel free to discuss and talk about this. In turn, this can help our communities and our country more cohesive. I am happy, ecstatic to bring a celebration of awareness, togetherness, and love to my parish." – Mr. Kenny Spencer, Tensas High School Teacher & Community Leader

• Juneteenth Program

A program will be held 6 p.m. Friday, June 17 at Great Flowery Mt. Church, 1600 Wood St. The program will honor fathers ahead of Father's Day and will highlight three winners of an essay contest. Students in grades 2–12 wrote a one-page essay on the topic: "Let me tell you about my Father." The program's guest speaker will be Sarah McCoy, the first Black student admitted to the University of Louisiana Monroe, then known as Northeast Louisiana University, in 1964.

• The Freedom Day Parade

The Freedom Day Parade will roll on June 18 at 9 a.m. The parade line-up starts at 8 a.m. in the parking lot of the Monroe Civic Center on S. 11th St. and ends on North Stanley Avenue by the Eastgate Shopping Center. The parade will be followed by the Freedom Day Market from noon to 5 p.m. at the Downtown River Market, 316 S. Grand, Monroe.

• The 11th Annual Juneteenth Celebration

The 11th Annual Juneteenth Celebration in Monroe is being held on Saturday, June 18. Festivities will kick off with a parade at 11 a.m. The parade line-up starts at 9 a.m. at Wossman High School, 1600 Arizona Ave. Parade admission is \$4. Former Interim Monroe Police Chief Reggie Brown and Monroe Fire Captain Sabrina January will serve as Grand Marshals. The parade will be followed by a celebration at Charles Johnson Park, 3313 Bernstein Park Drive.

(Winnsboro, LA)—Summertime is here and so are farmers markets. Don't expect a trip to a farmers market to be like a trip to a grocery store. Farmers Markets offer a little bit of everything—fresh produce, prepared foods, crafted items, entertainment, and even education. The LSU AgCenter offers many programs which can be shared at farmers markets to help engage the community.

Want to get your farmers market clients up and moving? Kids and adults both love PlayStreets, a set of physical activity stations that serve as a "pop-up" park. Want to showcase recipes for produce in season at the market? The AgCenter's Family and Consumer Science agents can offer cooking demonstrations and taste tests. From food safety

to hurricane preparedness, the AgCenter has a program available to increase your family's safety.

Farmers Market Frenzy

by Cecilia Stevens

Take advantage of these LSU AgCenter programs and more. Contact your parish Extension office to schedule programming. A state-wide link to LSU AgCenter Extension offices can be found at https://www.lsuagcenter.com/portals/our_offices/parishes.

FOOD SAFE FAMILIES

by Kimberly Butcher

When summertime comes, we like to celebrate by spending as much time outside as possible. The U.S. Department of Agriculture wants to remind you to prevent foodborne illness before you light up that grill and pack up the cooler. Hot and humid weather combined with outdoor activities, provide the perfect environment for harmful bacteria to multiply on food and make people sick.

Fill your picnic basket with these items that will help keep your summer fun while handling food at your next outdoor gathering:

Activity Corner

by Cathy Agan

Summer is here, and Louisiana is Hot with a capital “H”! Physical activity is important year-round, so how do you keep yourself and your family from spending the summer

on the couch? Finding ways to stay moving during summer can be fun and healthy. Give these tips a try on for size:



Photo by James Wheeler

- Break activity up into smaller chunks of time throughout the day. Plan outdoor activities for morning or evening when temperatures are usually cooler.
- Stay hydrated!
- Get out in the great outdoors with your kids by scheduling time each day for an outdoor activity like bike riding, tennis, or walking a nature trail.
- Add swimming to your fitness fun to cool off while being active.



Use an insulated cooler filled with ice or frozen gel packs. Frozen food can also be used as a cold source.

Foods that need to be kept cold include raw meat, poultry, and seafood; deli and luncheon meats or sandwiches; summer salads (tuna, chicken, egg, pasta, or seafood); cut up fruit and vegetables; and perishable dairy products.



A full cooler will maintain its cold temperature longer than a partially filled one. When using a cooler, keep it out of the direct sun by placing it in the shade or shelter.

Avoid opening the cooler repeatedly so that your food stays colder longer.



Perishable food should not sit out for more than two hours. In hot weather (above 90 °F), food should NEVER sit out for more than one hour.

Serve cold food in small portions and keep the rest in the cooler. After cooking meat and poultry on the grill, keep it hot until served – at 140 °F or warmer.



Keep hot food hot by setting it to the side of the grill rack, not directly over the coals where they could overcook.

- Enjoy indoor activities that require movement such as bowling or dancing.
- Grow a garden together.
- Sign the kids up for a sports camp.
- Put the backyard sprinkler to use for a do-it-yourself splash pad.
- Host neighborhood contests to see who has hula-hoop, jump rope, hopscotch, or ping-pong skills.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Small Changes, Healthy Habits Nutrition Series (in-person and virtual) *Richland and West Carroll Parishes*

Contact Brittney Newsome for more information.

Home Food Preservation Training *Franklin Parish:*

Please contact Quincy L. Vidrine at 318-623-5217 for more information.

Crowville TeenChef Camp, 9AM-12PM *Franklin Parish*

At First Baptist Church of Crowville on June 14, 15, & 16, 2022 for ages 13-18. Please contact Quincy Vidrine for more information.

Crowville KidChef Camp, 1PM-3:30PM *Franklin Parish*

At First Baptist Church of Crowville on June 14, 15, & 16, 2022 for ages 9-12. Please contact Quincy Vidrine for more information.

Farmer's Market Food Demonstration, 3PM-6PM *Franklin Parish*

During the Crowville Farmer's Market on Thursday, June 23 at the Crowville Community Center. Contact Quincy Vidrine for more information.

Farmer's Market Food Demonstration, 8AM-12PM *Caldwell Parish*

During the Columbia Farmer's Market on Saturday, June 25. Contact Quincy Vidrine for more information.

INFORMATION

Catahoula/Concordia Parishes, Ana Gouge, (318) 414-6055

East Carroll/Morehouse Parishes, Jocinda Jackson, (318) 559-1459

Franklin Parish/Caldwell Parishes/FCS Regional Coordinator, Quincy Vidrine, (318) 435-2903

CDC Food Systems Coordinator, Cecilia Stevens, (318) 435-2908

Madison/Tensas Parishes, Joy Sims, (318) 574-2465

Ouachita Parish, Cathy Agan, (318) 323-2251

Ouachita/Morehouse Parishes, Kimberly Butcher, (318) 323-2251

Ouachita/Union Parish, Markaye Russell, (318) 323-2251

Richland/West Carroll Parishes, Brittney Newsome, (318) 281-5741



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Dr. Luke Laborde, LSU Vice President for Agriculture Louisiana State University Agricultural Center, Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station, Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service, LSU College of Agriculture. The LSU AgCenter and LSU provide equal opportunities in programs and employment. Dr. Luke Laborde, LSU Vice President for Agriculture Louisiana State University Agricultural Center Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service LSU College of Agriculture If you need an ADA accommodation for your participation, please contact Quincy Vidrine at least two weeks prior to the event. The LSU AgCenter provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.