

# NEWSLETTER

## JANUARY 2023



## Mexican Chorizo and Sweet Potato Soup

*provided by Ana Gouge*

### *Ingredients:*

- 6 corn tortillas, cut into strips
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- Kosher salt
- 3/4 pound fresh chorizo or other spicy sausage, casings removed
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 large sweet potato, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 14-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 4 cups baby spinach
- Juice of 1 lime
- 3/4 cup roughly chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 avocado, halved, pitted and chopped

### *Directions:*

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Toss the tortilla strips with 1 tablespoon vegetable oil on a baking sheet, spread in a single layer and bake until crisp and golden, 12 to 15 minutes. Season with salt and set aside.

Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon vegetable oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add the chorizo and cumin and cook, breaking up the meat with a wooden spoon, until browned, about 4 minutes. Add the sweet potato, chicken broth, tomatoes and 1 cup water and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to maintain a simmer and cook until the sweet potato is tender, 10 to 15 minutes.

Stir in the spinach and lime juice and season with salt. Divide among bowls and top with the tortilla strips, cilantro and avocado.

## Activity Corner: Living Necklace

*provided by Kimberly Butcher*

**Materials Needed:** Clear plastic jewelry bags, Yarn- 30" length, Cotton balls, Dried beans, and Water

**Directions:** Dip cotton ball in water and gently squeeze out the excess moisture so it is not dripping. Flatten it like a pancake or tortilla. Place the bean seed in the middle of the damp cotton ball and wrap the cotton around the bean seed. Place the seed and cotton ball in the jewelry bag and seal tightly. Thread a piece of yarn through the hole at the top of the bag and tie the ends to make the necklace. The child may wear their "living necklace" around their home or hang them in a window for observation. The seed will sprout in three to five days. After five days open the bag to allow the seedling to get oxygen and add water. You can either plant the seed in soil at this point, or it can live for about two more weeks on the cotton ball if it is provided with water and oxygen.

# Active Play for Rainy and Cold Days

by Markaye Russell

Do the children drive you crazy when they have to play inside on inclement weather days? Children need active play every day. Taking children outside where they can use their muscles to run, jump, skip, climb, hop, ride a bike, swing, and slide is the best kind of active play, but that is not always an option. Not many people have gyms in their houses to allow children to run and jump like they do when they play outside. Try planning some indoor activities to give the children active play time indoors.



## CAUTION:

Young children can choke on small objects and toy parts. All items used for children under three years of age and any children who put toys in their mouths should be at least 1¼ inch in diameter and between 1 inch and 2¼ inches in length. Oval balls and toys should be at least 1¾ inch in diameter. Toys should meet federal small parts standards. Any toys or games labeled as unsuitable for children under three should not be used. Other items that pose a safety risk and should not be accessible to children under three include, but are not limited to: button batteries, magnets, plastic bags, Styrofoam objects, coins, balloons, latex gloves, and glitter.



**PUDDLE JUMPING** Find some newspaper or colored construction paper. Cut puddle shapes out of the paper. Lay them on the floor. The children take turns jumping in the puddles, around the puddles, over the puddles, etc.



**BOX CRAWLING** For this activity, you will need several large cardboard boxes. Open the ends of each box. Set the boxes on the floor so the children can crawl in and out of one box and into another.



**MOVE WITH THE MUSIC** For this activity, you will need recordings of music with a fast beat. Turn on the music and let the children dance to the beat.



**INDOOR OBSTACLE COURSE** Use chairs, boxes, tables, etc., to create an indoor obstacle course. Make sure there are things for children to go over, under, step into, go around, etc.



**HIDE AND HUNT** For this activity, you will need a small toy. Show the children the toy. Hide the toy in another room and ask the children to find it. The finder gets to hide the toy for the next game of hunting.

## Connecting Communities

by Jocinda Jackson-Jones

It's officially a new year and community members are excited for all of their favorite community-wide events to return. One way Healthy Communities works to connect communities is through the implementation of Farmers Markets. Healthy Communities Agents work directly with Farmer's Markets partners to assist them with signage, playstreets, and more creative ideas to help make the events feel more inviting for the community as a whole. Farmer's Markets connect communities in various ways by allowing community members to come out and make a profit and allowing people from other communities to come out and sell produce too.

Community members enjoy coming out to hear live music, purchase fresh produce and to fellowship with their friends and family.

Healthy Communities has played a role in helping Farmer's Market feel more inviting for all members of the community by recommending playstreets every so often. Playstreets are a creative and fun way to get kids to engage in physical activity in spaces where there is no park equipment. Children enjoy engaging in playstreets activities and making new friends.

Another great way Healthy Communities play a

role in the implementation of Farmer's Market is by adding those partners to their coalition and forming food systems workgroups. Food systems workgroups allow a small group of individuals that share common interests to form ideas and navigate through possible solutions for the event. Members of those work groups may have contacts on their end that may

sell produce or partnerships to push the work forward. It is our goal to continue to create safe spaces for communities to come out and feel happy in their community while also purchasing affordable food to feed their families. If you are interested in learning more about the way Farmer's Market's work in our communities, follow our Facebook pages to see the work we're doing.



January 6th is National Bean Day each year. There are many cultural and culinary traditions around the world that involve beans. Two come to mind almost immediately: red beans and rice on Mondays and black eyed peas for New Years. One way to look at these traditions is that beans play a key part of many cultures. National Bean Day celebrates beans of all shapes, sizes, and colors.

Beans are among the most versatile, economical, and commonly eaten foods throughout the world. Because of their nutritional composition, they have the potential to improve the diet quality and long-term health of those who consume beans regularly. Beans are an exceptionally healthy and affordable source of protein. They are an excellent source of fiber and are high in complex carbohydrates, folate, and iron.

With all that to offer, they deserve their own special day. So here are just a few ways to celebrate National Bean Day:

- Try a new bean recipe
- Try a new type of bean
- Add beans to each meal of the day
- Find a cultural or culinary tradition and prepare the recipe that is part of the tradition
- Plant some beans in your back yard
- Find some bean related greeting cards and send it to family and friends

*by Marianna Langston*

# NATIONAL BEAN DAY

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## UNION

- Small Changes Healthy Habits, Four-part series on Jan. 18th, 25th, Feb 1st, 8th, 12PM-1PM

## OUACHITA

- Ouachita Healthy Communities Coalition Meeting, Feb. 14th, 2023 at 1:30 PM
- Ouachita HYPE Coalition Meeting, February 18, 2023, 1:30 PM

## MOREHOUSE

## RICHLAND

## WEST CARROLL

## EAST CARROLL

## MADISON

## FRANKLIN

- Grow a Row to Share booth at Scott Center for Master Gardeners training meeting, Jan. 31st, 10 AM
- You Are What You Eat Workshop, Ages 9-12, First Class: Jan. 30th, 10 AM-12 PM
- Grow a Row to Share training meeting for FCS agents in NE and Central Regions, Jan. 23rd, 9:30 AM

## CALDWELL

## TENSAS

## CATAHOULA

## CONCORDIA



# BLACK-EYED PEA AND COLLARD GREEN SOUP

PROVIDED BY QUINCY VIDRINE

## INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups dried black-eyed peas
- 2 Tablespoons of canola oil
- 1 large yellow onion, finely chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large rib celery, finely chopped
- 1 large carrot, peeled and cut into a 1/4-inch dice
- 8 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 bunch (about 3/4 pound) collard greens, ribs removed and thinly sliced
- 1/2 pound ham, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1 Tablespoon cider vinegar
- Hot Sauce, to taste
- Salt and pepper to taste

## DIRECTIONS:

Place the dried beans in a large bowl and cover by 3 inches with cold water. Set aside for 8 hours or overnight; drain and rinse well. Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the onions, garlic, and celery and sauté until soft and translucent, about 5 to 8 minutes. Add the carrots, peas, broth, thyme, bay leaves, and collards and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer, partially cover, and cook for 45 minutes to an hour or until the peas and vegetables are tender. Remove the bay leaves. For a slightly thicker and creamier soup, smash a few peas against the side of the pot. Add the diced ham and heat just until warmed through. Stir in the vinegar and season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper.



*Flavors*  
OF HEALTH

## INFORMATION

Catahoula/Concordia Parishes Ana Gouge, LSU AgCenter (318) 414-6055	CDC Food Systems Coordinator Cecilia Stevens, LSU AgCenter (318) 435-2908
East Carroll/West Carroll Parishes Carolyn Robinson, Southern University (318) 559-1459	Franklin Parish/Caldwell Parishes/ FCS Regional Coordinator Quincy Vidrine, LSU AgCenter (318) 435-2903
East Carroll/Morehouse Parishes Jocinda Jackson, LSU AgCenter (318) 559-1459	Madison/Tensas Parishes Joy Sims, LSU AgCenter (318) 574-2465
Ouachita/Morehouse Parishes Kimberly Butcher, LSU AgCenter (318) 323-2251	Morehouse/Union Parishes Marianna Langston, Southern University (318) 368-9935
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