



# THE BUZZ

FRENCH BROAD FOOD  QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2018



## Wrapping Up Winter

by Melissa Fryar, HBC Manager

Oh winter! As I look out over the mountains...trees barren of leaves except the deep green of the conifers...I am pulled to hibernate by the fire. Hot tea, cozy socks, and good book in hand. As the darkness falls early, we all should take some time to slow down, sleep a bit more, snuggle, nourish ourselves and our families. We all produce more melatonin as the dark increases, and I think that getting enough sunshine and vitamin D are key this time of year for both our physical and mental health. Even through the cold weather, don't forget to get outside. Especially during the hustle of the holidays, I love getting out for a hike with my pups and taking time away from the have to's to be fed by the land around me.

As I type this, snow falls and the holidays are in full swing. A wonderful, festive time for some...a struggle for others. Who said: "If you think you have attained enlightenment, go spend a week with your family."

Truer words were never spoken. Here at the coop, we do have some ideas to keep you sane...

Nourishing your nervous system and Adaptogens

I am a huge fan of "Herbal bliss" blends. Sometimes a shot of Herb Pharm's Anxiety Soother or Herbalist and Alchemists Emotional Relief can make a world of difference and prevent a meltdown. My favorite bliss tea is Organic India's Sweet rose. Holy basil and rose are both delicious and soul soothing! If you are a do it yourselfer, here are a couple of recipes to get you chillin!

### **Adaptogen Power Blend**

1 part maca powder

1 part ashwagandha powder

1 part eleuthro powder

1/4 part cinnamon powder

Mix all together and store in glass jar. Add to smoothies, juice, or as a terrific addition to go-go balls.



## STATEMENT OF CUSTOMER SERVICE

- We guarantee our owners and customers friendly, courteous, professional service.
- We guarantee 100% satisfaction on all merchandise. Any cashier may refund the full purchase price with a receipt within 30 days of purchase. Customers seeking a refund without a receipt will be issued store credit or exchange.
- We guarantee accurate prices, weights, measures, and counts on all products.
- We guarantee that the Co-op will absorb the loss resulting from a product that was accidentally broken by a customer in the store.
- We guarantee that our staff members will escort all customers to the location of a product they have requested. Cashiers who cannot leave the front of the store for security reasons will either offer to call for assistance or direct the customer to the desired product.
- We guarantee that we will go to great lengths to ensure that our customers leave satisfied.
- We guarantee that all advertising is factual and that we will make every effort to have sufficient supply of the product to meet customer demand.
- We will strive to make the co-op a friendly atmosphere for all.
- We will not make excuses. So, we will "Acknowledge the complaint," "Sincerely apologize," and "Fix it!"
- We will strive to answer any ringing phone after no more than 3 rings. If a call goes to voicemail during business hours, we will strive to return it the same day. After hours voicemail messages are returned on the next business day.

## POLICY OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

Not only are we Living Wage Certified by Just Economics, thanks to input from Traci Reinartz we have an updated non-discrimination policy: French Broad Food Co-op is an equal opportunity employer accepting, supporting and practicing the concepts of non-discrimination pertaining, but not limited to hiring, pay, assignments, promotion, discipline, working conditions, training and benefits. French Broad Food Co-op does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, age, national origin, religion, disability, genetic information, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity/reassignment, citizenship, pregnancy or maternity, veteran status or any other status protected by the applicable laws. Any questions or concerns relating to equal employment opportunities should be directed to the General Manager.



Oatstraw for Mellow Out Tea

### Go-Go Balls

2 cups nut butter or soaked and dried nuts  
1 cup honey  
7-10 oz. herb powders  
1 Tbsp. Cardamom powder  
1/2 tsp. nutmeg powder  
1 cup chocolate chips  
1 cup shredded coconut  
cocoa powder

Mix nut butter and honey well, add herb powders and mix thoroughly. Add remaining ingredients and blend well, adding as much cocoa powder as needed to obtain a good consistency. Roll into balls and refrigerate. You can eat these as is or dip into melted chocolate for a decadent treat. Feel free to add other things such as chopped nuts, an adaptogen tincture or ginseng extract for extra zoom, and dried fruits.

### Mellow Out Tea

2 parts oatstraw  
2 parts passionflower  
2 parts chamomile  
2 parts lemon balm  
1 part skullcap  
1/2 part cinnamon chips  
1/2 part orange peel  
Blend together well and add 1 Tbsp. herbs per cup of water. Infuse for 10 minutes, add honey if desired, and sip the bliss!

### For holiday gifts, the Co-op has so many terrific options this season!

- \*Andes Fair Trade Alpaca blend hats, scarves, gloves, & accessories
- \*African Market baskets (new shipment just in!)
- \*Matr Boomie Fair Trade jewelry, bells, and accessories
- \*Zum Holiday soaps
- \*Patcha Bath Bombs
- \*Locally made wreaths
- \*Tons of candles to illuminate the dark...local, beeswax, palm, holiday
- \*Himalayan Salt Lamps
- \*Locally crafted cutting boards
- \*Maggie's Organic socks
- \*2018 Calendars including We'Moon & Stella Natura
- \*Books for your favorite gardener, chef, or herbalist

### And new in HBC:

- \*Evan Healy Skin Care- a super clean and organic line of skin nourishment. Come try the holy basil hydrosol and sea algae serum! Decadent!
- \*Mushroom Science Mushrooms to support immunity
- \*Hydroflask reusable water bottles and mugs- thus far, my favorite water bottle and coffee mugs! Keeps water cool even in a hot car all day!
- \*Immune Tree Colostrum
- \*Eclectics Lomatium Osha throat spray is back!!
- \*Charlotte's Web CBD oils

As we move through the holidays, know that we have some great products and suggestions to help keep you healthy during the cold and flu season. Vitality works Sinus Blaster, Red Moon Herbs Fire Tonic, and Norm's Farm Elderberry Syrup are still staff favorites. If you want to try your hand at making your own, any of our HBC staff can assist you. Don't forget to frequent your co-ops produce section as well...ginger, fresh turmeric, onions, garlic and horseradish are usually in stock and should be your first line of defense during the cold season.

As we move to the end of winter, February, I know I am craving some heat! A great time to blend up some herbal aphrodisiacs! Keep an eye out for our Chocolate and Aphrodisiac Demo for some love inspiration and recipes to delight your loves, or just yourself for Valentines.

### Herbal Love Cordial

2 parts Oat tops  
1 part damiana  
1 part horny goat weed  
1 vanilla bean, split  
1/2 part rose petals  
Place herbs into mason jar and cover with brandy or whiskey. Make sure herbs are covered completely with an inch or so over the herbs. Let sit for 4 weeks, shaking regularly. Strain and add Pomegranate concentrate and or honey to taste. Enjoy the love!  
I wish you all a lovely winter filled with warmth and goodness.  
Thank you for supporting the co-op and being part of this wild and wonderful family!

Bobby Sullivan  
General Manager

Sage Turner  
Finance & Project Manager

Clare Schwartz  
Outreach Co+ordinator

TJ Van Voorhis  
Grocery Manager

Rob Jones  
Assistant Grocery Manager

Jesse Reim  
Produce Manager

Alexander Avgerinos  
Deli Manager

Melissa Fryar  
Health & Body Care Manager

### FBFC Board of Directors

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### French Broad Food Co-op

90 Biltmore Ave.  
Asheville, NC 28801  
Tel:828.255.7650

info@frenchbroadfood.coop  
www.frenchbroadfood.coop

Monday-Sunday 8am to 9pm



# Lighten Up with Legumes

Legumes lend protein to these satisfying, low-fat main dish recipes.

Reprinted by permission from StrongerTogether.coop. Find these and other recipes, plus information about your food and where it comes from at [www.strongertogether.coop](http://www.strongertogether.coop).

## Lemony Lentil Spinach Soup

Serves: 4. Prep time: 10 minutes active; 6 hours, 10 minutes total.

- 1 cup lentils
- ½ large lemon, seeds removed
- 2 large carrots, chopped
- 4 cups water
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 4 cups fresh spinach, chopped
- ½ cup fresh parsley, chopped

1. Place the lentils, lemon half, carrots, water, oregano, salt and pepper in the slow cooker. Cover and set on low, and cook for 6 hours.
2. At 6 hours, take off the lid and stir in the spinach and parsley. Stir for 1 minute to wilt, adjust seasonings and serve.

*Add oregano and a crumble of feta to give this lemony soup a Greek flavor profile. Serve with pita wedges and hummus.*



## Crockpot Red Beans and Rice

Serves: 4 – 6. Prep time: 15 minutes active; 7 hours, 15 minutes total.

- 1 cup dried kidney beans
- 5 cups water
- ½ cup long grain brown rice
- 1 large red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 large carrot, chopped
- 2 tablespoons Cajun seasoning
- 1 bunch collard greens, chopped
- 1 teaspoon salt

1. Heat a pot of water to boiling, add kidney beans and boil beans for ten minutes. Drain beans.
2. Combine 5 cups water, drained kidney beans, brown rice, bell pepper, carrot and Cajun seasoning in a slow cooker. Cover and set on low, and cook for 6 hours.
3. Open the cooker, add the collard greens and salt, and stir. Cover and cook for another hour.
4. When the beans are tender, serve or transfer to containers to refrigerate or freeze.

*This New Orleans classic is incredibly easy to prepare in a slow cooker. Try it as a side dish to roasted chicken, or as an entrée with a slice of cornbread.*



## Split Pea Soup with Spinach

By: Robin Asbell

Serves: 4 – 6. Prep time: 30 minutes active; 2 hours total.

- 1 ½ cups split peas
- 7 cups water
- 1 medium potato, cubed
- 3 ribs celery, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 medium carrot, chopped
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 teaspoon thyme
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 4 ounces baby spinach, chopped
- ½ teaspoon black pepper

1. Pick over the peas for any stones or twigs, if necessary, then put in a large pot with the water and bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer, and add the potato, celery, onion, carrot, bay leaf, thyme and salt. Simmer for an hour and a half, checking occasionally to stir and add water if needed.
2. When the split peas are falling apart, stir in the spinach and simmer just until the spinach is wilted. Add black pepper. Serve hot.

*Paired with a hunk of crusty bread, creamy split pea soup is comfort food that will warm you from the inside out.*



# Winter Squash

## Cinnamon Apple Stuffed Squash

Serves 4-6. Total Time: 60 minutes.

- 2 acorn squash, cut in half, seeds removed
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 3 cups diced yellow onion
- 2 celery stalks, diced
- 3 cups diced apple, cored and seeds removed (about 2 large apples)
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- ⅓ cup water
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- Pinch each of salt and black pepper

*Slice the stuffed squash halves into wedges to serve as a side with ham, turkey or chicken, or serve each half as a vegetarian entrée.*

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Place acorn squash halves face down on a rimmed sheet pan or baking dish and add ½ inch of water to the pan. Bake squash for 40 minutes.
2. While the squash is baking, heat the butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion and celery and sauté for 5 to 10 minutes until soft. Add the apples, cranberries, maple syrup, water and cinnamon; stir well and cook another 5 to 10 minutes until the apples begin to soften. Season with salt and pepper. Remove from heat.
3. After the squash has baked for 40 minutes, remove from the oven, turn them cut side up and fill each with the apple stuffing. Place back into the oven and bake another 15 to 20 minutes until the squash is tender. Serve warm.



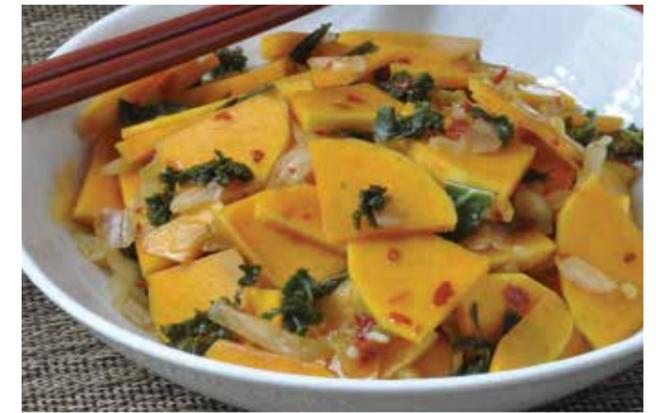
## Winter Squash and Apple Bake

Serves 8. Prep time: 1 hour 20 minutes; 20 minutes active.

- 2 pounds winter squash, peeled, seeded and cut into ¼-inch thick slices
- 2 Granny Smith apples, cored and cut into ¼- to ½-inch thick slices
- 3 tablespoons maple syrup
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons flour
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon ground allspice
- Pinch of salt and black pepper
- ¼ cup cold butter, cut into small pieces
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted

1. Preheat the oven to 375° F. Grease a 9 x 13 inch casserole dish with melted butter. Evenly layer the squash and apple slices in the casserole dish, alternating and slightly overlapping the squash slices with the apple slices, until all slices are gone. Drizzle the maple syrup over the squash and apples.
2. In a small bowl, mix together the brown sugar, flour, spices, salt and pepper. Mix the butter into the flour/sugar mix with your fingers to make a crumbly mixture. Sprinkle the mixture evenly over the top of the squash and apples. Cover the dish with foil and bake for about 40 minutes or until the squash and apples start to become tender. Remove the foil, and let casserole brown for another 15 minutes. Serve warm.

*Use your choice of local apples and winter squash in this recipe*



## Squash, Cabbage and Kale Kimchi

Makes 4 cups. Prep time: 1.5 days; 30 minutes active.

By Robin Asbell.

- 1 ½ pounds butternut or other squash, peeled
- 4 cups water
- 2 tablespoons kosher salt
- 2 cups slivered cabbage
- 2 cups slivered kale
- 1 ½ teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon fish sauce or tamari
- 3 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 tablespoons red pepper flakes
- 1 teaspoon sugar

1. Peel and thinly slice the squash, no thicker than ⅛ of an inch. In a large bowl, mix the water and 2 tablespoons kosher salt until the salt is dissolved. Add the squash slices and stir, then let stand for 2 hours to soften.
2. Drain the squash, reserving the brine. In a medium bowl, toss the cabbage and kale with 1 ½ teaspoons salt and massage, squeezing, for a minute. Let stand for at least 15 minutes, then massage and squeeze again, the leaves give off liquids when squeezed. Rinse with cool water and wring out the shreds and put in a bowl with the drained squash slices.
3. In a cup, stir the fish sauce or tamari, garlic, red pepper flakes and sugar and pour over the squash mixture. Toss to mix well. Transfer to a large jar or glass storage tub and pour the reserved brine over just to a cover the lower half of the vegetables. Cover and let stand for a day at room temperature, then refrigerate and serve for up to a week.

# FBFC CALENDAR

## FEBRUARY

## APRIL

**5**  
MONDAY

**5% on the 5th.** All active **coop** Owners get 5% off their purchases

**15**  
THURSDAY

**Community Appreciation Day** 10% off the entire store, for Everybody

**17**  
SATURDAY

**Homestead Dreams: Design & Plan for Living on Your Land** 10:00 am - 5:00 pm

Homestead Dreams is an entry-level, exploratory workshop designed to help you incorporate small-scale, self-sufficiency and sustainability into all aspects of your life. Regardless of whether you own or rent a home, or live in a rural or urban setting, you can move towards more self-reliance NOW!

Living Web Farms  
176 Kimzey Rd • Mills River, NC 28759 United States  
828.891.4497

**5**  
THURSDAY

**5% on the 5th.** All active **coop** Owners get 5% off their purchases

**21**  
SATURDAY

**Truckload Sale,** In the Co+op Warehouse, 10-6

## MARCH

**1**  
MONDAY

Co+op open Noon to 9 pm

**5**  
FRIDAY

**5% on the 5th.** All active **coop** Owners get 5% off their purchases

**6**  
SATURDAY

**IMPROVE YOUR DIGESTION WITH AYURVEDA**  
(10:30 to noon in the Community Room at the Hendersonville Community Co-op)

Ayurveda teaches that our digestion is the foundation for our health... Our AGNI (digestive fire) transforms our food to nourish body & mind. In this session we will discuss common imbalances (impaired agni), and learn how to eat to support and strengthen the digestive energy.

\$20 fee/ \$15 owners • Payment at the cash register only in the store.

Any questions: Gretchen 828.693.0505 ext 102  
outreach@hendersonville.coop

*Tish Hilyer is a Certified Ayurvedic Health Counselor and Professional Member of NAMA (National Ayurvedic Medical Association) She has studied with Vishnu Dass at the Asheville School of Yoga & Massage and trained in Ayurvedic Bodywork Therapies.*

**8-9**  
MON-TUES

**Holistic Financial Planning 2-Day Workshop** 9-5pm  
Where: Burnsville Town Center, 6 South Main Street, Burnsville NC 28714

Cost: \$100 per person, or \$150 for two farm business partners (\$75 each).

Register here: [www.organicgrowersschool.org/farmers/holistic-financial-planning/registration](http://www.organicgrowersschool.org/farmers/holistic-financial-planning/registration)

**9-11**  
FRI-SUN

**Organic Growers School Spring Conference, UNCA**

**11**  
SUN

**Daylight Savings- Spring Forward**

**20**  
TUES

**Spring Equinox**



### VISION

Our Vision at the French Broad Food Co-op is to be a transformative force in our community and in our work, and to serve as a model of a sustainable business alternative that nurtures social and economic well-being in an environmentally sensitive manner.

### MISSION

The French Broad Food Co-op is dedicated to serving our owners and the Western North Carolina community by providing high quality natural foods and personal care products through a mutually beneficial exchange.

We support consumption of healthful and organic foods, grown or produced locally with ecological and social responsibility.

We encourage informed choice and consumer empowerment, with an emphasis on education and customer assistance.

We are committed to use profits to strengthen and improve the Co-op community, and to provide a livable wage to our employees. We pledge to maintain a pleasant environment that fosters goodwill, cooperation, and participation.

The Co-op defines “cooperative” according to the following principles, as articulated by the International Co-operative Alliance, copyright 2005 - 2010:

1. Voluntary and open membership
2. Democratic member control
3. Member economic participation
4. Autonomy and independence
5. Education, training, and information
6. Cooperation among cooperatives
7. Concern for community

### NONDISCRIMINATION

The Co-op shall not discriminate on the basis of race, nationality, religion, age, gender, sexual preference, or other arbitrary basis.



**Celebrating 25 Years of Education**

March 9–11, 2018  
UNC Asheville

150+ classes on organic farming, gardening, eating, and living



OrganicGrowersSchool.org

## Sustainability CONSULTING

- Site assessment
- Landscaping
- Renewable energy
- Garden design
- Orchards
- Soil testing
- Ponds
- Forestry
- Farm planning
- Land design



**(828) 214-7833**

OrganicGrowersSchool.org



# Elizabeth Tatarinoff's Winter Borscht

By: Lynne Vea



Total Time: About 4 hours; 30 to 40 minutes active • Servings: 6-8

Beets are delicious and full of nutrition but are all too often apathetically cast aside. This delightful borscht makes these jewel-colored root vegetables shine.

## INGREDIENTS

- 4 small to medium beets
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil or butter
- 2 yellow onions, peeled and finely chopped
- 1 carrot, finely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 quarts beef broth or vegetable broth
- 1/2 head cabbage, shredded
- 1 turnip, peeled and shredded
- 1 celery root, peeled and shredded
- 3 to 4 red potatoes, diced
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill, plus extra for serving
- 2 teaspoons red wine vinegar or lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Sour cream for garnish

## PREPARATION

1. In a heavy pot, heat oil or butter over medium heat. Sauté onions, carrots and garlic for 5 minutes or until onions are tender and lightly golden. Stir in tomato paste and sugar and cook for 1 minute more. Pour in stock and blend well with onion mixture.
2. Add cabbage, turnips, celery root and potatoes and simmer for 10 minutes. Stir in beets and cook for 5 minutes more. Stir in dill and vinegar or lemon juice. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Serve garnished with sour cream and chopped dill, and pass the pepper mill

**Nutritional Information:** 240 calories, 7 g. fat, 0 mg. cholesterol, 680 mg. sodium, 37 g. carbohydrate, 6 g. fiber, 9 g. protein

<http://strongertogether.coop/recipes/elizabeth-tatarinoffs-winter-borscht>

Recipe modified with permission from PCC Natural Markets.

The French Broad Food Co-op is bringing back the buying club!

# TRUCKLOAD SALE

Crazy low prices on cases of your favorite foods.

## Stock Up For Spring!

**SATURDAY, APRIL 21ST • 10AM-6PM**  
IN THE CO+OP WAREHOUSE



OPEN TO THE PUBLIC • ALL SALES FINAL • WHILE SUPPLIES LAST  
90 Biltmore Ave. Asheville, NC 28801 • [www.frenchbroadfood.coop](http://www.frenchbroadfood.coop) • 828.255.7650

# WHAT HAPPENED TO THE PATRONAGE REBATE?

By Bobby Sullivan

Some of you noticed that no rebate was issued in 2017. So, what happened? Is the co-op broke? Far from it! We bought the property next door, so our normally thin net profit of 1% - 4% (industry norms) didn't materialize. We figured that rather than owners receiving a minor financial kickback from their community owned enterprise, they'd rather we invested in a safe and secure future, in this tumultuous time.



Here's the backstory: In the last few years, the French Broad Food Co-op faced unprecedented competitive forces, in what the Asheville Citizen Times dubbed "Asheville's Grocery Invasion." After Earth Fare had already opened a second store in town, Whole Foods bought Greenlife, opening another store on Tunnel Road, and Trader Joe's & Harris Teeter parked new stores on the other side of downtown. In addition to all this, Hopye & Co. moved into the neighborhood with an additional store, and Ingles has continued their focus on also selling natural and organic products.

After the "invasion," the co-op continued to thrive. The prior decade's debacle of meager sales figures for the co-op, due to Greenlife's emergence on the scene, made it so there was a great potential for growth and our revitalization as a solid business - and that is exactly what happened. We recapitalized the business and year-after-year we experienced much more growth than was the norm. Now this has us poised for expansion. But if the "invasion" wasn't enough to challenge us, today's "retail apocalypse" along with locals

not wanting to come downtown, makes profits much harder to come by.

Part of the issue is our quirky and sometimes inconvenient facility. Both of our last two market studies warned us that if we don't expand into a full-service store and provide adequate parking, we won't be able to effectively compete with the competition. And they said that before all these other stores showed up!

All this has us in a cautious mode until we get that new store open. The good news is that more and more local restaurants are buying from us and this is offsetting our lack of sales growth in 2017. 2018 promises to be a big year for the co-op, as we reboot our current space and plan for the new one. Keep your eyes open for all the exciting promotions we're planning for this year and please, spread the word about how great we are.

There has never been a more important time for thriving cooperative enterprises, and your co-op is poised to expand its footprint. In so doing, we'll be able to preserve some of the things we all love about Asheville, right on the edge of downtown. Now's the time to put your money where your heart is.

# ~ CROCKPOT ~ BLACK BEAN CHILI

By: Co+op, stronger together



Total Time: 6 hours, 10 minutes; 10 minutes active • Servings: 4-6

This is one of our High Five recipes, made from five main ingredients or less. Set it and forget it, and you'll be so glad when this crockpot full of chili is ready. This meatless classic has a little extra texture thanks to quinoa, which simmers in the black bean broth and gives it body.

### INGREDIENTS

#### The High Five

- 1 cup dried black beans, rinsed
- 2 large carrots
- 1 medium green pepper, chopped
- 1 15-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 1/4 cup quinoa

#### Pantry and Kitchen Items

- 4 cups water
- 1 1/2 tablespoons chili powder
- 1 teaspoon salt

### PREPARATION

1. Combine all the ingredients in the slow cooker and close the lid. Set the cooker on low and cook for 6 hours.
2. After 6 hours, test the beans for doneness. If they are not quite tender, cover and cook for another half an hour.
3. Serve hot or transfer to containers to refrigerate or freeze.

Nutritional Information: 210 calories, 1.5 g. fat, 0 mg. cholesterol, 670 mg. sodium, 40 g. carbohydrate, 10 g. fiber, 12 g. protein

<http://strongertogether.coop/recipes/crockpot-black-bean-chili>



# SOW WHAT?

## Choosing to Grow from Seed

By: Seed Matters

There are many reasons to start vegetable plants from seed: it is less expensive, you have control over both quality and organic status of plants and you can pick a healthy, chemical-free potting soil. But best of all, when you grow your own plants from seed, a world of unique plants opens up to you. Growing from seed gives you access to the thousands of varieties available in seed catalogs, garden stores, seed swaps and seed libraries.

In fact, the sheer variety may feel overwhelming at first, but if you imagine how you want to use the produce, it will be easier to choose which to grow. Do you want to grow tomatoes for salsa or sauce? Pick a paste-style tomato. Maybe you want savory thick-skinned roasting tomatoes or Italian stuffing tomatoes with a hollow interior? Pick a classic red slicer tomato. Most seed catalogs and garden stores can offer you advice on what varieties are good for which use.

More choices also means you can select plants that will do well in your specific environment. Look for varieties that flourish in your growing conditions, whatever they may be. Shorter season veggies do well in cooler climates and dwarf varieties can thrive in tiny spaces.

If culinary use and growth habit can't convince you to start growing from seed, try thinking about it historically. Find a variety that connects you to your community. Seeds, after all, are a living connection to all those who have come before us. An old variety such as "Djena Lee's Golden Girl" tomato, is still as tasty today as it was when it won first place at the Chicago Fair 10 years in a row during the 1920s.

If you're looking for something more modern, find farmers, gardeners and seed savers who have been growing and saving seed for decades in your region. Not only are these people a wealth of information, but they might be willing to share some of their favorite varieties. Seed swaps and seed libraries are great places to meet local seed savers. Seed Matters partners

with Seed Savers Exchange, the oldest and largest seed saving network in the U.S. They can help connect you to local seed savers through community seed projects and their membership network.

Now that you're on your way to discovering new and old varieties suited for your growing conditions and uses, consider using organic seed. Organic seed, like organic fruits and vegetables, are grown without the use of harsh synthetic chemicals and are GMO-free. Unlike organic fruits and veggies, seed crops stay in the ground much longer than those grown for market produce, and are able to complete their life cycle and produce seed. For conventional seed, more time in the field means more exposure to pests, diseases and applications of chemical treatments and sprays.

Purchasing organic seed also encourages the future development of organic seed varieties. When seed is bred, grown and harvested, selection for certain traits can occur. For example, if it's an abnormally cold growing season, individual plants with strong cold hardiness may produce higher yields of fruit and seed. Though this won't change the variety in one season, varieties can adapt and change after many years of selection. The same goes for disease. Organic seed developers focus on selecting and saving seeds from crops that have proven to be naturally hardy and resistant to disease.

Creating varieties well-suited for organic agriculture is a slow process; it takes years for breeders to create varieties and release them to the public. Breeders take on risk by guessing what will be important and desirable for farmers, gardeners and eaters in the future. Purchasing organic seed today is your way of telling plant breeders what kind of food you want grown for future generations.

Learn more and support regional organic seed development at [www.seedmatters.org](http://www.seedmatters.org).

## 7 Co-op Principles

### 1. Voluntary & Open Membership

Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

### 2. Democratic Member Control

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions.

### 3. Member Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their co-operative. At least part of that capital is usually the common property of the co-operative.

### 4. Autonomy & Independence

Cooperatives are autonomous organizations controlled by their members. If they enter into agreements with other organizations, including governments, or raise capital from external sources, they do so on terms that ensure democratic control by their members and maintain their co-operative autonomy.

### 5. Education, Training & Information

Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their co-operatives.

### 6. Co-operation Among Co-operatives

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

### 7. Concern for Community

Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.







# Organic Revolution

Trip to Cuba, March 26–April 3, 2018



[OrganicGrowersSchool.org/Events/Travel-to-Cuba/](http://OrganicGrowersSchool.org/Events/Travel-to-Cuba/)

Join Organic Growers School, Food First, and AltruVistas on a 9-day agroecological tour of Cuba. Learn about Cuba's intensive and sustainable agricultural practices and how its national policies are addressing food sovereignty and hunger remediation through organic farming.



BECOME AN  
**OWNER**  
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