**Crew Cooking**

An idea sourcebook and guide to eating well with your crew…

By scout phillips

**Kitchen Basics**

* **Soak your Beans!**

If you have the forethought, soak them the night before, if not at least soak them from the morning until the night you are using them. To keep them from getting too frothy, add a little (~1tbsp) oil to the beans while you soak them. If water supply is not an issue, thoroughly drain and rinse beans before cooking. This process removes some of the harder to digest enzymes that are leached out during the soaking process. (These are generally the enzymes that incite flatulence)

* **Pressure Cookers are AMAZING!**

They cut down cooking time, which equals less fuel, which equals more time, money and energy to do what you like.

* **Dehydrators are just as cool as Pressure Cookers!**

Dehydrators are often expensive to buy, but a good investment. Even better than that, they are a super-fun DIY project. Build your own! If you have a dehydrator, you can create your own veggie blends, soup mixes, etc, for adding a little something to your backcountry soups or pilafs.

* **Trust your Instinct**

If you find a recipe that you think sounds pretty good, if only it were slightly different, change it! You’re probably right. Maybe it needs a little more nutmeg, or a little less pepper, you know what you like, so don’t feel confined by a recipe.

* **Backcountry vs. the Comforts of Home**

These recipes were developed for backcountry crews. I encourage you to use fresh vegetables whenever possible. These recipes will list the use of canned vegetables for times when fresh veggies simply weren’t an option. (you can also use dehydrated veggies instead of canned, but this gets expensive unless you do your own dehydrating, which is super fun, and I highly suggest it.)

* **Spices, etc.**

When I list vegetable bullion cubes, I highly recommend Rapunzel brand with sea salt and herbs. Nutritional yeast is also an amazing thing to have on hand. It’s high in vitamin B-12, which is great for your veggie crew members. It also lends a ‘cheesy’ taste to things. Sriracha (often imitated, never duplicated, aka ‘Rooster’ sauce) is something I tend to have on hand, but I let people dole it out themselves. It’s great, but for some, it’s simply too spicy. Tapatio (aka ‘the Tap’) is also a good simple salsa/hot sauce to have on hand.

* **Cooking Oils**

For most savory meals, and especially keeping budget in mind but trying not to compromise quality too much, I tend to use olive oil. For baking and extravagant moments when the budget is not a great restriction, coconut oil is unbeatable. When using vegetable oils I try to stick to canola. Also, butter will keep pretty well in the field if stored properly. Margarine will also, but not quite as well as butter.

* **Conventional vs. Organic**

I always try to buy organic. Next in line after organic is local, and last is just general conventional. Having worked on an organic farm and recognizing the difference in taste, quality and overall environmental impact…I might use up another book completely encouraging you to be living as organic as is reasonable for your situation, considering both geographical and economic restraints. So, for now, enough said.

**BREAKFAST**

Trail crews work hard, and breakfast is a good way to jump start your morning. Food is fuel, and the quality of that fuel is important. Its easy to fall into a morning rut, or to fail to take the time to mix things up a bit in the morning. Oatmeal can be great, its quick and easy, but it also gets old real fast, same with cereal. So, here are a few breakfast ideas to help add some variety to your morning fuel.

**Rice Pudding**

* 2 cups milk or milk substitute (if using pow milk, add ¾ cup pow to 2 cups water)
* 2 cups water
* ¾ cup brown rice
* ¼ cup brown sugar or other sweetener
* 1 tsp. cinnamon
* ½ tsp. salt
* ½ cup chopped fruit (fresh or dried) think apples, pears, peaches, etc. If you don’t have fresh fruit, grab ½ cup of some fruity trail mix

Pour milk into a saucepan with a lid, place over high heat and add all ingredients except the fruit. Stir well, once the liquid comes to a boil, reduce the heat to a simmer and cover. The liquid should be absorbed in 20-30minutes.

Mix in fruit and serve.

\*For a ‘richer’ pudding, use milk for all 4 cups of the liquid\*

**Breakfast Couscous or Quinoa**

* 8 cups water
* ½ tsp salt
* ¼ cup sweetener (brown sugar, honey, syrup, etc.)
* 4 cups couscous or quinoa
* ¼ powdered milk (optional)
* 1 Tbsp. cinnamon
* 1 cup fruity trail mix

In a large pot with a lid, bring water, salt, sweetener, spices and trail mix to a boil. Add the couscous and pow milk (if using). Stir well and reduce heat to simmer, cover and cook for ~5-10 minutes. Fluff with a fork before serving.

**Simple Latkas (potato pancakes)**

* 4-6 russet potatoes, grated
* 1 onion, grated
* 1-4 cloves garlic, chopped (optional)
* 2 tsp. salt
* 1-2 tsp. ground black pepper
* ~ ¼ cup oil for cooking

Grate potatoes and onion into a bowl and add remaining ingredients. The starch from the potatoes should hold everything together well enough. Form the mixture into a small ball and gently press it into a patty, about the size of your palm. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add latkas a few at a time. When edges are brown, flip and continue cooking for ~3minutes, or until both sides are browned.

\*For cheesy latkas, add a bit of nutritional yeast (for vegans/dairy allergies) or ¼ to ½ cup grated cheese into mix before cooking. \*

**Corncakes**

* 2 cups cornmeal
* ½ tsp salt
* 2 Tbsp. sweetener (honey, sugar, etc.)
* ¼ cup oil or melted margarine or butter
* 3 cups water

Mix all the ingredients together, adding the water last. Mix the water in slowly, making sure the mixture doesn’t get too thin. This should be the same consistency as a standard pancake batter (a bit thinner than a cake batter)

Heat pan over med-high heat. DON’T pour in your first corncake until the pan is hot. If the pan is prone to sticking, add a small amount of oil to the pan to prevent the cakes from sticking. Pour in corncakes, about 3 inches in diameter. Wait for sides to look dry and bubbles to appear in center of cake before flipping. Cook for about 2-4minutes per side in a nice hot pan.

**Sweet Potato Morning Hash**

* 3 sweet potatoes, cut into small cubes
* 2 russet potatoes, cut into small cubes
* ½ onion, diced
* 2-5 cloves garlic, diced (optional)
* ½ - 1tsp. salt
* ½ tsp. ground black pepper
* ~ ½ cup water
* 1 Tbsp. oil

In a large skillet over high heat, bring sweet potatoes, potatoes, and water to a boil. Let cook for ~5minutes, until potatoes soften, stirring often. Reduce heat to med-high and add remaining ingredients. Stir regularly and cook until potatoes and onions reach desired softness. Usually, about 15-20 minutes.

\*You can make this hash without the sweet potatoes, increasing the total number of potatoes to make up for the difference, but the sweet potatoes make for a nice variety to just plain po-tay-toes\*\*

**Biscuits**

* 4 cups flour
* 2 Tbsp baking powder
* 1 1/4 tsp salt
* 1 cup margarine or butter
* 1+ cup water

Mix all the dry ingredients and cut in the butter (or rub it in with your hands, which is what I do) Slowly add the water until the dough sticks together but is not runny or super crazy sticky

Drop onto a greased baking sheet and bake at 400 in a folding oven until bottoms are slightly browned, approximately 10-20 minutes.

If you don’t have an oven, you can do skillet biscuits, so long as you have a lid that covers the skillet well. If using the skillet method, cook over med-high heat for ~10 minutes. Then, flip the biscuits over and cook for another 5-10 minutes.

\*\*\*If you really want to impress your crew, make some gravy to go with those biscuits\*\*\*

**Basic Gravy Recipe**

* 2 cups mushrooms, chopped
* 1 onion, diced
* 2-5 cloves garlic, diced
* 2 tsp. ground black pepper
* 1 Tbsp. soy sauce, tamari or braggs
* 2-4 cups water
* ½ cup almonds, pecans or walnuts, finely chopped/smashed
* 1 tsp. minced fresh sage, or ground sage
* ~ ¼ cup flour or cornmeal to thicken the gravy

In a large, deep skillet, or a medium saucepan, combine mushrooms, onion, garlic, pepper, soy sauce, sage and 1 cup water. Cook over high heat, stirring often, for ~5minutes, until mushrooms and onions begin to soften. Reduce heat to med-high and simmer, adding more water as necessary to keep it from getting too dry. Cook for another 5 minutes, add the nuts and stir well. If the gravy is too runny, slowly add small amounts of flour to thicken things up. Serve with biscuits!

**LUNCH&DINNER**

You can eat this stuff for breakfast too, no one can tell you how to live your life. These also make great leftovers…when they don’t eat it all in the first go!

**Super Awesome Nut Burgers**

* 4 cups chopped walnuts
* 2 cups sesame seeds
* 1 cup sunflower seeds
* 1 cup wheat germ
* 1/4cup dried parsley
* 2 Tbsp. Herbs de Provence
* 2 tsp. ground sage
* 1 onion, finely diced
* 5 cloves garlic, finely diced
* (8oz. sharp cheddar, grated)
* 4 eggs or see flax-eggs recipe below for a vegan option
* enough water to hold ingredients together to form patties

Crush nuts as best as possible, but not too much. You’ll find that leaving some chunks works better than pulverizing it into a fine meal.

Toss in the herbs (and cheddar, if you’re using it). Scramble in the eggs, or flax-eggs, and form the mixture into patties. I try to keep them to about 2-3inches in diameter, and about ¼-1/2’thick.

The patties can be baked, although I have had better success sautéing them in olive oil.

**Flax ‘eggs’**

If you want to make a vegan version, I have made ‘flax-eggs’ to bind the nuts together. It has worked well for me, and also adds some great Omega-3’s. To make the flax-eggs, for this recipe, combine ½ cup flax meal (or grind your own flax seeds), with 1 ¾ cup water. Let sit for 2-4 minutes, then add to the mixture, obviously omitting the cheese as well…you can add a little nutritional yeast with the dry spices if you still want that ‘cheesy’ taste.

**Chili**

* Equal parts: black beans

Red beans

Pinto beans

* 1 onion, chopped
* garlic, diced (I love garlic, so I tend to use at least 6 cloves)
* 2-4 carrots, chopped
* 1-3 jalapenos (this depends on the groups spice threshold, to keep flavor but miss out on some of the spice, discard the seeds from the jalapenos)
* chili powder, to taste (generally 3-4 Tbsp. minimum)
* 2 small cans tomato paste
* 1 can stewed tomatoes
* 3 ears corn, corn separated from the cob, or 1 can corn
* salt & pepper to taste
* olive oil

Generally, I’ll use about 5 cups of dried beans to start. **Soak the beans all day, or overnight.** Cover them completely with water with at least three inches above the beans. They will soak it all up!

Sautee the onion and garlic in a little olive oil. (Another thing I tend to do is save myself dishes, you can do the sautee in a skillet, but I prefer to use whatever large soup pot or pressure cooker I plan to make the chili in) Once the onions and garlic start to get soft & aromatic, add the carrots and jalapenos. Stir to combine. Add the beans and enough water to cover them plus another 2-3 inches. If you’re using a pressure cooker, seal that bad boy up and let it cook for 1 & ½ hours. If not, cover your pot and bring it to a boil, stirring regularly for 2-3 hours, until the beans feel soft.

With the pressure cooker, remove from heat and safely release the pressure. **SAFETY FIRST!** Read the specific instructions on your pressure cooker and know how to operate it. **NEVER** force a pressure cooker open, you **will** be burned.

Stir your beans and check for tenderness. They should be pretty close if not completely soft. Add the remaining ingredients and cook on low hear, stirring regularly and allowing the flavors to mix. (If using a pressure cooker, leave the lid unsecured at this point)

**Enchilada Casserole**

* 24 small corn tortillas
* 4 cups dry black beans (soak overnight, or all day) or 2 cans black beans
* 1 onion, diced
* garlic, diced (again, I use 6-8 cloves on this one, use your best judgment)
* 1 bunch chard, cut into strips about 1”long, ½” wide
* 1 bunch cilantro, chopped
* 2 cans stewed tomatoes
* 1 small can tomato paste
* 2 Tbsp. ground cumin
* 1 Tbsp, chili powder
* 1 Tbsp. black pepper
* salt to taste
* olive oil
* shredded cheese (optional)

Cover the black beans with 2-3” of water. Add half of the onion, garlic and cilantro. Cook in pressure cooker for 1 hour, check for softness after releasing pressure, and continue to cook until desired tenderness, if necessary. If not using pressure cooker, bring to a boil and cook for 2-3 hours

While the beans cook, make your enchilada sauce:

Heat the olive oil (about 2 Tbsp.) in a large saucepan. Add the remaining onion and garlic. Cook on medium heat until aromatic. Add the tomatoes, paste and spices. Stir regularly. Bring to a simmer for ~15 minutes, then add remaining cilantro. Cover and put on low heat. Stir occasionally to keep the bottom from scorching.

(Obviously, you can just buy canned sauce, but this is so much better)

Mix the chard and carrots into the black beans for the filling. (For my crews with more meat eaters, I tend to make a batch with canned chicken mixed into the filling)

Coat 2, 8” square pans with olive oil, or a dutch oven. Layer the bottom of each with corn tortillas. Cover with a layer of beans, then tortillas, beans, tortillas and sauce. If using the cheese, sprinkle it over the top. Cover with foil (or the lid of the dutchie) and bake for ~25 minutes.

**Quinoa Pilaf**

* 4 cups quinoa
* 1 onion, diced
* 3-4 carrots, diced
* garlic, minced (I say it again, use your judgement)
* 2-4 stalks celery, diced
* 1 sweet potato, diced into small chunks (you want it to cook well)
* 1 potato, diced into small chunks (again, cooked=better tasting)
* 1 cube bullion, if you have it
* 1-2 tbsp. oil
* salt, pepper & spices to taste
* (Worst case scenario, if fresh veggies are not an option, throw in a couple cans of mixed veggies and proceed as follows)

Throw all ingredients together in a pressure cooker and add ~9cups water. If you’re not using a pressure cooker, be sure you have a large pot with a well fitting lid.

Pressure cooker: place on high heat until pressure stopper starts to rock, then reduce heat to very low and cook for ~20minutes.

Large pot: place on high heat until all ingredients come to a boil, stir once to keep ingredients to sticking to the bottom, cover again and reduce heat to very low. Keep covered and cook for ~40minutes, or until most of the water is absorbed.

Stir well before serving to be sure veggies are well distributed.

**Shepherds Pie**

Crust:

This is enough to make 2

* 3& 1/2 cups flour
* 1 generous cup shortening, margarine, or butter (again, be aware or any allergies)
* ¾ cup boiling water
* 2 tsp. baking powder
* ¼ tsp. salt

Filling:

* 2 carrots, chopped
* 1 onion, diced
* 1 pound green beans, ends snipped & beans halved
* 1 bunch kale, chopped
* 1 can kidney beans (or 1 cup cooked)
* 1 can garbanzo beans (or 1 cup cooked)
* (this is another easy recipe to add a can of chicken to if you don’t have veggies on your crew)

Topping:

* 4-5 potatoes, diced
* enough water to cover
* ~3 Tbsp. margarine, butter or powdered milk to taste (be sure to be aware of any special diets or food allergies before adding any of these ingredients)
* Salt to taste

To make the crust:

Mix shortening, margarine or butter with water until creamy. Quickly add flour, baking powder and salt. Mix until a dough forms. Without kneading it, form the dough into 2 large balls. Each will make a pie crust. Press into a well oiled dutchie or 2 deep dish pie tins

Filling:

Mix all ingredients together well in a large bowl and pour into the crust(s)

Topping:

Boil the potatoes until very soft, drain the water, saving some in a bowl, and mash well. Add the salt, and if desired, add the margarine, butter or powdered milk. Add the leftover potato water to get desired creamy consistency.

Spread over the filling and cover either with foil or dutchie lid. Cook in a stove-top oven for ~30-40minutes. If using a dutchie, place on top of~10 hot coals and place 10-12 coals on the lid. Bake for ~30-40minutes, or until crust seems done (not burnt!) and filling is tender.

**Red Beans and Rice**

Beans:

* 3 cups dry dark red kidney beans
* 1 onion, finely chopped
* 5+cloves of garlic, diced
* 2 Tbsp. ground black pepper
* 1 bullion cube, if available
* 1 tsp. dried oregano
* 2 tsp. chili powder
* 2 Tbsp. oil
* salt to taste

Rice:

* 3-4 cups parboiled brown or white rice
* 5-7 cups water (with parboiled rice, generally I use ~1&2/3 cup water per 1 cup rice)

The beans:

Soak the beans overnight or all day. As always, be sure the beans are completely covered with water, plus an additional 2 or so inches. The beans will soak it up!

Before cooking, drain and rinse the beans.

Pressure Cooker: Place all ‘bean’ ingredients in the pressure cooker. Secure lid and place over high heat. Once the pressure stopper starts to rock, then reduce heat to very low and cook for ~50minutes. As always, USE EXTREME CAUTION with pressure cookers. Remove from heat and allow the pressure to drop. A quick way to speed this process up is to pour cold water over the pressure cooker. When it is safe to open the pressure cooker, check the beans for tenderness. If needed, continue to cook, covered but not sealed, on medium heat stirring often and checking for tenderness.

The rice:

When the beans have about 20 minutes to go, cook the rice, so that they are ready at about the same time.

(Red beans and Rice are great accompanied with corn bread and/or collard greens)

**Lasagna**

* 2 boxes lasagna (backcountry & frontcountry I tend to use ‘oven ready’ pasta, it saves time, water and fuel)
* 1 sweet potato, sliced very thin
* 1 bunch spinach
* 2 summer squash, cut in rounds or half moons, about ½” thick
* 1 onion, cut into ¼” rings
* 6 cloves garlic, diced
* 1 crown broccoli, chopped
* 1 red, yellow or green bell pepper, sliced into ¼” rings
* IF YOU’RE FEELING ADVENTUROUS, I SWEAR THIS PART WILL SURPRISE YOU IN ITS TASTINESS:
  + Tofu Ricotta
    - 2 boxes silken tofu, mashed up
    - 1 Tbsp. salt
    - 2 tsp black pepper
    - 1 Tbsp. olive oil
    - ¼ to ½ cup Nutritional Yeast flakes
    - 1 Tbsp. dried basil (or ~2 Tbsp fresh basil, diced)
      * Mash up the tofu&incorporate all the other ingredients

SAUCE:

* The easy route: use a jar of pasta sauce
* The personal touch:
  + 2 8oz cans tomato paste
  + ½ onion, diced
  + 4 cloves garlic, diced
  + 2 tsp. rosemary
  + 1 Tbsp basil
  + Salt & pepper to taste
  + Water to get proper consistency (~ 2 cups)
  + Olive oil

To Make the Sauce:

In a large saucepan, heat up ~2 Tbsp oil and toss in the onions over med-low heat. Once they get aromatic (~3-5 minutes) toss in the garlic. Cook on med-low for ~5 minutes, stirring regularly. Add herbs, tomato paste, and ~1 cup of water. Stir well, reduce heat to low. Cover, stirring every 3-5 minutes, add water as necessary. Simmer for ~10-15 minutes.

To Make the Lasagna:

Grease 2 square baking tins, if using a Coleman stovetop oven. Otherwise, grease a dutchie REALLY WELL. Layer the bottom of the tins or the dutchie with sauce, then pasta. Cover with tofu ricotta, veggies and more sauce. Place another layer of pasta, and repeat the process, until yourun out of room or veggies/filling. Cover with one final layer of pasta and a generous amount of sauce.

Cover tins with aluminum foil and bake for ~45minutes (until pasta & veggies are tender). If using a dutchie, cover dutchie with lid, place on top of 4-6 coals, and place the same on top. Time s should be about the same, possibly a nit faster with the dutchie, depending on the coals.

**Lentil Stew**

* 4 cups lentils (I prefer a mix of green & red when available)
* 1 onion, diced
* 6 cloves garlic, diced
* 3-5 red or yellow potatoes, small cubes
* 1 cube bullion (I use Rapunzel brand sea salt&herb)
* 2 carrots, chopped
* 8-12+cups water, depending on desired thickness
* 1 tsp ground cayenne
* 2 tsp dried rosemary
* Salt and pepper to taste
* 1 Tbsp oil
* Any additional spices you would like (curries work great w/this)
* Kale- If you have leftover kale or other hardy leafy greens, it’s awesome to cut into strips and throw in at the very end for a little more texture and deliciousness

In a large soup pot or pressure cooker, heat oil; sautee onions and garlic on med.low heat for ~3-5 minutes. Add carrots and potatoes and sautee for another 5 minutes. Add lentils, bullion, and enough water to cover by about 1”. Cover, increase heat and bring to a boil. Once it’s boiling, add 2 cups water and remaining spices. Reduce heat to medium. Stir occasionally, checking tenderness of lentils and potatoes. Continue to add additional water as needed to maintain desired thickness and prevent lentils from scorching. Be sure to scrape the bottom of the pot each time you stir the soup to keep it from scorching. Stew should be ready in about 30minutes. If adding kale or other greens throw into the pot when there’s about 5 minutes left of cook time.

**Curry with Rice**

* 2-3 sweet potatoes, diced
* 3 russet potatoes, diced
* 1 onion, diced
* 3-6 cloves garlic, diced
* 4 carrots, diced
* 2 crowns broccoli, chopped (I also chop up the stalks, they taste good&you have less waste)
* 1 bunch spinach or other hardy leafy green, chopped
* 2 cans coconut milk
* Olive oil
* ¼ cup+ yellow curry powder
* Sea salt & black pepper to taste
* 4 cups brown rice
* 8 cups water
* 1 Tbsp. oil

THE RICE:

Place the rice, water and olive oil in a pressure cooker. Over high heat, with the lid off, bring to a boil. Secure lid and reduce heat to medium-low. Cook for ~25-30 minutes. Release pressure, remove lid and fluff rice. Keep covered to keep warm.

THE CURRY:

While the rice is cooking: In a large saucepan or skillet, heat oil and onions, garlic and russet potatoes. Heat over medium-high heat, stirring regularly for ~3minutes. Cover with water & cover saucepan. Cook for 5 minutes. Add carrots, sweet potatoes, and ½ cup water. Keep covered and stir regularly for ~15 minutes, until potatoes start to get tender. Add coconut milk& curry. Once potatoes are soft, add broccoli and greens. Cook for another 5-10 minutes on medium-low heat, stirring regularly, until all veggies are tender. Serve over rice.

**Vegetable Barley Soup**

* ½ onion, chopped
* 8 cloves garlic, diced
* 2-4 red potatoes, or 1 large russet, cut in small cubes
* 3 cups barley
* 4 carrots, chopped
* 2 cans corn, or 3 fresh ears, kernels removed
* 1 bullion cube
* Honestly, I’d encourage you to throw just about any vegetable into this pot, the above list is just a scratch on the surface. The possibilities are endless. This is often made in the backcountry, towards the end of a trip/hitch/spike when things are borderline going bad and need to get used up
* Canned tomatoes, or 2 tomatoes, diced (optional)
* ~2Tbsp oil
* Salt & pepper to taste
* Spices to taste ( I tend to use rosemary, sage, parsley, nutritional yeast, etc.)

Heat oil in a large stock pot or pressure cooker. Add the onion, garlic, potatoes and barley. Stir regularly over medium heat for ~3 minutes, until the barley is lightly toasted. Add about 4 cups water, enough to cover everything with about 2 extra inches. Cover and bring to a boil. Stir regularly to keep barley from sticking to the bottom. Keep at a boil for ~20 minutes.

Add remaining ingredients and enough water to keep soup at your desired consistency. (Usually about 4-5 cups) Reduce heat to medium and simmer for ~10 minutes to allow flavors to meld and check barley for tenderness.

**Cornbread**

* 2 cups cornmeal
* 2 cups flour (spelt, wheat, white, buckwheat…whatever works)
* ½ cup butter or margarine, melted
* ½ tsp. salt
* 1 tsp. baking powder
* ½ cup honey, maple syrup or agave nectar
* 2 cups water or milk
* ½ cup applesauce or 2 eggs or equivalent 2 eggs replacer/flax egg

Mix dry ingredients in a large bowl, add wet ingredients and mix well with a fork, being sure to eliminate and dry pockets. Pour into a well greased square baking tin or loaf pan, if using Coleman stove-top oven. If using a dutchie or cast iron pan, be sure these are well greased. Bake at ~400 for about 30 minutes, or until a knife or stick stuck through the center comes out clean.

**Black Eyed Peas with Collard Greens**

* 1 onion, chopped
* 6 cloves garlic, diced
* 4 cups dry black-eyed peas (soak all day if you can)
* 2 large bunches collard greens, cut into strips
* Oil
* Vinegar, if you’ve got it (I use apple-cider vinegar)
  + If you don’t have it, no worries
* Pinch of sugar
* Salt & black pepper to taste

If you’ve soaked the black eyed peas, drain them and cover with 2-3 inches of fresh water. Add half of the onions, garlic and ~2 tsp oil. Cook in pressure cooker for ~30 minutes. Safely reduce pressure and check for tenderness. Add salt & pepper to taste. If not using a pressure cooker, place in large stock pot with lid, bring to a boil over high heat, stir regularly and add water as necessary to keep peas from burning.

For simple backcountry collards; heat 1 Tbsp. oil in large stock pot. Add remaining onions and garlic and sauté until soft. Add collards and ~ 2 cups water. Saute until soft, stirring regularly, ~5-10 minutes. Add pinch of sugar and salt & pepper to taste.

For down home, what we would call a ‘messa collards’ (that’s a mess of collards) you need some vinegar and a pinch of sugar. Place the onions and garlic in the stock pot and cover with water. Add 3 Tbsp. vinegar and a pinch of sugar. Cook on medium heat until tender, ~10 minutes, stirring regularly.

**Baked Tofu**

* 1 container EXTRA FIRM tofu
* 2 Tbsp. soy sauce, tamari or braggs
* 1 tsp. curry powder
* 1 tsp. honey, syrup or some other sweetener
* 1 tsp. oil
* Pinch of black pepper, or a dash of hot sauce (sriracha, tapatio, etc.)
* Water

Drain tofu and cut along the short edge into rectangles, approximately ¼” thick. In a bowl or pie tin, mix all other ingredients. Add enough water to allow the marinade to cover the tofu completely, but don’t thin it out too much. Place the tofu in the marinade, and make sure all pieces are covered. If you have a container with a lid that you can fit everything, that is even better. Leave covered for at least 1 hour. Ideally, make this in the morning and leave the tofu to marinade all day in the cooler.

To bake, if you have a collapsible oven, spread the tofu onto the baking racks and bake for about 20-30 minutes, flipping the tofu once. If baking isn’t convenient, you can also cook it in a skillet. You shouldn’t need to add additional oil, just pour extra marinade onto the tofu and check that it isn’t sticking in the cooking process. This method takes about 5-8minutes per side.

Use for sandwiches, or as a snack. This is great for making TLT’s (Tofu, Lettuce and Tomato).

**Simple Peanut Sauce**

* ½ cup peanut butter
* 1 tsp soy sauce, tamari or braggs
* 1 tsp red pepper flakes, sriracha or cayenne (optional)
* 1 tsp grated fresh ginger, or ½ tsp. ground ginger
* 1-4 cloves crushed garlic, or ½-2tsp garlic powder
* 1 Tbsp. rice vinegar, apple cider vinegar, or reg. vinegar (if available)
* Enough water to thin the sauce to desired consistency

Mix all ingredients together thoroughly. This is great on noodles, broccoli, as a vegetable dip, etc.

**Basic Pesto**

* 1 bunch fresh basil
* ½ bunch fresh parsley
* ½ cup chopped walnuts or pecans
* 2-6 cloves chopped garlic
* ½ tsp. salt
* 1 tsp. ground black pepper
* 2 Tbsp. olive oil or veg oil
* ~ ½ cup water to reach desired consistency
* ½ cup parmesan (optional)

Chop basil and parsley as finely as possible. Chop and smash the nuts as well, the smaller the better. Combine all ingredients EXCEPT the water and mix well. Once well incorporated, add the water slowly to reach desired consistency.