

Wood Lane Farm

January 13, 2012. Week 12. Winter Share

I have been watching the weather forecast a lot lately and I think that winter might truly be here to stay. I am a firm believer that there are only two reasons for snow, the first being to have a white Christmas and the second to delay or cancel school. Since Christmas is over and I am no longer a teacher, there really is no good reason to have snow. It can all just stay way in my opinion, but it is apparent that Mother Nature doesn't listen to me. But the forecast of cold weather and the treat of snow, always makes me want to make a big pot of Chili.

With that said, I started searching high and low for the best chili recipes to include in this week's newsletter and I found some very interesting information. Most of the great Chilies recipes I found have over 700 calories per serving. That is just plain crazy, so I then went in search of their low calorie counterparts. I found a couple that I am including this week. I am also including the history of Chili and why it is good for us. So the whole newsletter is all about Chili to help us deal with this lovely weather.

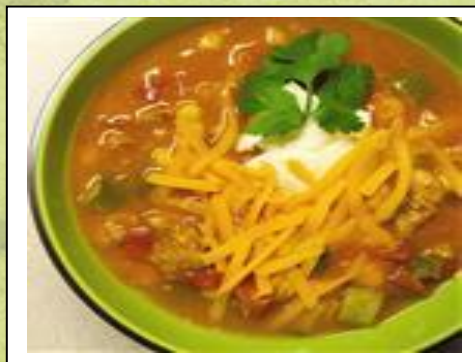
Besides researching Chili, Lauren and I are getting ready to leave for the OPGMA conference next week. We will be attending classes on marketing, food safety, soil health, pest prevention and lots of other topics. We are going to be gone for three days and that means that Ian is stuck at the farm by himself (the crew will be here too). I just don't know what he is going to do with himself (I am laughing as I am writing this, I am sure he will enjoy his time without us). He will be handling all of the shares on Tuesday by himself so the delivery schedule may be off slightly, but everyone will still receive their shares shortly after lunch on Tuesday and Lauren and I will be back later in the week with all kinds of new information to share with everyone.



What's in this Week's Share?

(What we are planning)

- *Lettuce*
- *Potatoes*
- *Radishes*
- *Bell Peppers*
- *Tomatoes*
- *Hot Peppers*
- *Pumpkin*
- *Herbs – Basil, Oregano, Sage*
- *Baby Spinach*
- *Broccoli*
- *Celery*
- *Onions*



Pumpkin Chili – One of this week's feature recipes.



White Chili – The second of the feature recipes. This has 400 calories per serving.

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Remember to Return Your Share Boxes!!!!!!

Ten Healthy Reasons to Eat Chili

1. Chili contains lots of protein.

The meat used in cooking chili is a great source of protein for anyone. If you happen to use beans in your chili, then they do provide a second source of protein.

2. Chili has a lot of fiber. The chilies and the beans in your chili are excellent sources of fiber. In addition to keeping you regular, fiber also slows the rate that sugar is absorbed into the bloodstream. This keeps your blood glucose levels from rising and falling too quickly.

3. Chili contains Vitamin C. The chilies you use to flavor your chili, even the mild red peppers, provide a tremendous amount of Vitamin C. If you use a tomato base, it too can provide extra Vitamin C for you.

4. Chili is high in iron, even the veggie versions. Chili is a great source of iron, especially the red meat versions. Don't worry though if you prefer turkey or even meat free chili. The beans used to make chili are also an excellent source of iron.

5. Chili can help you lose weight. The capsaicin found in the chilies used to season your dish can increase your metabolic rate simply by raising your bodily heat production. Even sweet red peppers can increase heat production for up to 20 minutes after eating them.

6. Chili can make you happy! Chilies promote endorphin and serotonin release, both of which inflate your mood. The capsaicin is the trigger for increasing the serotonin and endorphins. These two raise your mood levels so you can actually feel happier just by trying a new chili recipe! What an added bonus!

7. Chili can curb your cravings for fatty foods and sweets. Some recent research has given some proof that the capsaicin in chilies actually curbs your cravings for fatty foods and sweets. Who knew chili could help you control your appetite?

8. Chili can help boost your immune system. Chilies are high in Vitamin A, which can naturally boost your immune system. The more chilies you use in flavoring your chili dish, the more Vitamin A you are putting into your body. The boost to your immune system from the Vitamin A is a welcome plus during the winter cold and flu season.

9. Chili may help regulate blood sugar after eating. Apparently the capsaicin in chili peppers also can help regulate your blood sugar. A July 2006 study in the Journal of Clinical Nutrition found that the amount of insulin that was needed to lower patients' blood sugar after a meal is lower if the meal contains chili peppers.

10. Chili can help clear congestion. The capsaicin in chilies stimulates mucous secretions to help clear mucous from your stuffy nose. The next time you feel a cold coming on, prepare a big batch of chili to help you breathe easier. It will help keep you warm too!

Do You Know What Makes Your Chili Hot? Capsaicin!

Ever wonder why some chili is mild and other chili recipes are so hot that your eyes water and your lips burn? It all comes down to one specific chemical called capsaicin.

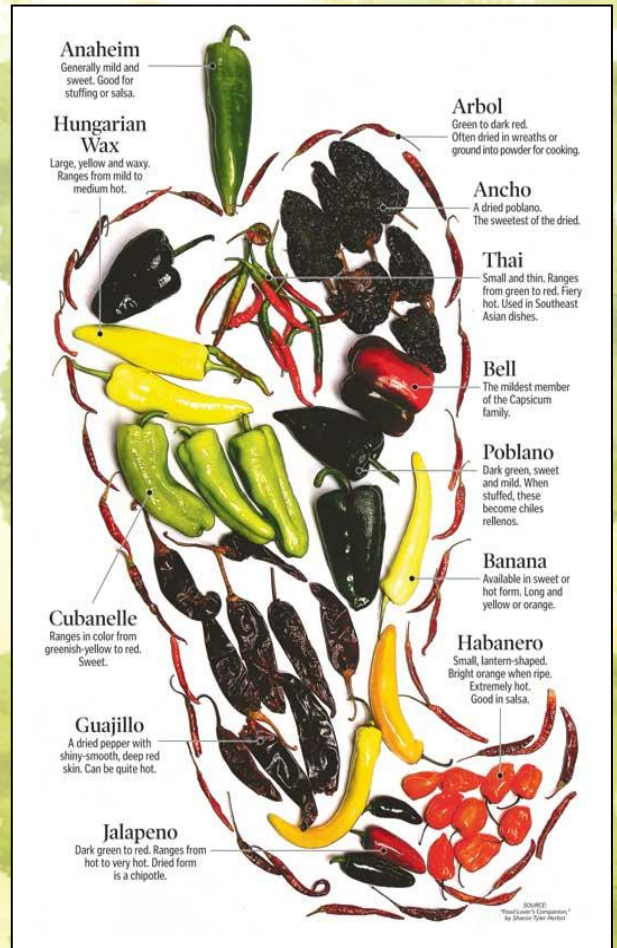
Capsaicin is produced by chili peppers as an irritant to mammals. The irritant properties of capsaicin cause heightened levels of endorphins in the body, which could explain why some humans enjoy the burning sensations that accompany the ingestion of capsaicin. To further explain, the high levels of endorphins cause a natural high which some people can't seem to get enough of. Capsaicin is found in the parts of chili peppers that are white and vein like, also known as the placental parts of the chili. The white covering which holds the seeds in place in the chili peppers has the highest concentration of capsaicin, and the lowest concentration can be found in the fleshy parts of the peppers.

So exactly how hot is capsaicin? The heat value is usually measured in a somewhat subjective way by Scoville Heat Units. The method used in determining the heat value involves diluting various amounts of dried chili peppers in sugar water and measuring how hot it is when someone sips the liquid concoction.

While Scoville Units are still widely used today, more and more scientists are leaning toward high performance liquid chromatography to accurately measure the amount of capsaicin in chili peppers. While this method is more accurate, you must keep in mind that the levels of capsaicin in certain peppers will vary according to soil, water, and other growing conditions.

The mild bell pepper ranks the lowest on the Scoville scale with habanero and scotch bonnet ranking as two of the hottest peppers. The Scoville units for habaneros and scotch bonnets range from 100,000 to 500,000. The more commonly known jalapeno falls in the middle with a range of 2,500 to 8,000 Scoville units. So if you're looking to heat up your chili recipe today, then add a finely chopped habanero to the chili during the cooking process. If you want a mild chili with just a bit of pepper flavor, then use red, green and yellow bell peppers. These also add some great color to any chili recipe.

It is said that the burning sensation from capsaicin is addictive. It is also said that one becomes conditioned to this sensation. The reason is that during the eating of chilies, a chemical in the chili pepper called Capsaicin irritates the trigeminal cells. These are pain receptor cells located throughout the mouth, the nose and the throat.



When your body's nerves feel the pain induced by the chemical on these cells, they immediately start to transmit pain messages to your brain. Your brain receives these signals and responds by automatically releasing endorphins (the body's natural painkiller). These endorphins kick in and act as a painkiller and at the same time, create a temporary feeling of euphoria, giving the chili pepper eater, a natural high.

The body's other responses include increasing the heart rate to increase the metabolism, increasing salivation in order to try and refresh the mouth and by increasing the rate of sweating by the body. Your nose also starts to run and the gastrointestinal tract slips into high speed. Hot & spicy food lovers soon begin to crave these feelings and are soon hooked.

On a final note, there are a few safety issues that you should be aware of when handling the hotter chili peppers. Capsaicin will burn your eyes (after all it is an irritant and is the main ingredient in police pepper spray). Capsaicin is not water soluble which means that it will not rinse off with water. With that said, **wear gloves while handling the peppers and keep your hands away from your eyes!**

Recipe Corner

White Chili

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| 1 1/2 pounds skinless, boneless chicken breast halves – cubed | 2 bell peppers, chopped |
| 1 bunch green onions, thinly sliced | 1 clove garlic, minced |
| 4 fresh jalapeno peppers, seeded and minced | 2 teaspoon fresh sage |
| 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger | 1/2 teaspoon ground white pepper |
| 1/2 teaspoon salt | 3 tablespoons butter |
| 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin | 2 cups chicken broth |
| 1 tablespoon olive oil | |
| 1/4 cup all-purpose flour | |
| 2 (14 ounce) cans great Northern beans, undrained | |

In a large skillet, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add chicken, and sauté until cooked through. Remove the chicken from the pan.

Sauté the onion, red bell pepper, yellow bell pepper, jalapeno chili peppers and garlic in the same skillet. Return the chicken, along with the ginger, salt, sage, cumin and white pepper. Mix thoroughly.

In a separate small saucepan or skillet, melt butter or margarine over medium heat. Stir in flour to make a roux. Whisk in the chicken broth and mix all together. Stir this mixture into the sautéed chicken and vegetables.

Stir in the beans with can liquid, and simmer all over low heat for 15 to 20 minutes or until cooked and heated through.

Pumpkin Turkey Chili

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| 1 tablespoon vegetable oil | 1 cup chopped onion |
| 1/2 cup chopped green bell pepper | 1/2 cup chopped yellow bell pepper |
| 1 clove garlic, minced | 1 pound ground turkey |
| 1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes | 2 cups pumpkin puree |
| 1 1/2 tablespoons chili powder | 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper |
| 1 dash salt | 1/2 cup shredded Cheddar cheese |
| 1/2 cup sour cream | |

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat, and sauté the onion, green bell pepper, yellow bell pepper, and garlic until tender. Stir in the turkey, and cook until evenly brown. Drain, and mix in tomatoes and pumpkin. Season with chili powder, pepper, and salt. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer 20 minutes. Serve topped with Cheddar cheese and sour cream.

Only 285 calories per serving