

# **Sauerkraut**

## **(Served With Pork and Black-Eyed Peas)**

*Recipe submitted by Joyce Young  
Nationality/Ethnicity of Recipe – German*

### **The Story Behind the Recipe**

Served with mashed potatoes, pork and black-eyed peas, this traditional New Year's Day dish guarantees good luck.

For years, many Dayton families met together the Sunday before Labor Day to make sauerkraut. My husband Fred and I were lucky enough to have as neighbors in our early married life, the son and daughter of Mary and Al Trace, who were faithful proponents of this tradition. One September Sunday in the late 1950's, we gathered together good and faithful friends to see if we could emulate the success of our forbearers. We were so successful that we continued this tradition for more than thirty years, into the 1990's.

### **Ingredients:**

1 Box of Salt (try not to use the iodized variety)  
Several crates of cabbage heads  
Beer (optional)

### **Necessary equipment:**

A stoneware crock of 6, 8 or 10 gallon capacity (which were available at Monkey Miller's)  
Old-fashioned two- or three-foot wooden grater(s)  
A baseball bat or broom handle  
A big dinner plate or plastic bag filled with water  
A heavy stone or brick

### **Preparation Directions:**

The necessary equipment is simple and job assignments are simple too. The most important people are those careful with sharp knives who remove the outer discolored leaves of the cleaned cabbage heads, and quarter and core them. Children are great at getting the cabbage heads out of the troughs where they've been soaking, carrying the cabbage to the graters and finding big rocks. The bulk of the labor is done by adults seated in lawn chairs leaning over crocks placed between their knees, trying to grate innumerable cabbage heads into the crock without grating a finger as well.

As soon as a healthy layer of 3 or 4 inches of cabbage has been grated into the crock, sprinkle, pour or shower salt on the cabbage, depending on your inclination. Children can step up to bat for the next part of the process, pounding the cabbage in the crock with the baseball bat or broom handle until it becomes a little juicy. Some people believe beer also adds flavor here.

Repeat this procedure until the cabbage level is just about 4 inches below the top of the crock.

The rule of thumb is 3 tablespoons of salt to 5 pounds of cabbage. Twenty-five pounds of cabbage will fill a 5- to 8-quart crock. After the final layer of grated cabbage, lay several inches of discarded cabbage leaves over the top, put a plate or big water-filled plastic bag over the leaves, and weigh the whole mixture down with a brick or heavy rock. Over the next two months, keep the crock as far away from people's noses as possible. It can be very smelly, especially during hot weather. The payoff comes at Halloween! Holding your breath, carefully scrape off the rotted cabbage on the top. Do not give up at this point. Under the horrible mess lie gallons and gallons of beautiful, white, delicious sauerkraut.

There are three theories to preserve the sauerkraut after it's been opened. Some cookbooks recommend canning it. Another theory is to pack all of the sauerkraut into jars to store in the refrigerator, which works if you have a spare refrigerator with lots of room. The third, which also works, is to leave the sauerkraut in the crock and scrape a little unusable sauerkraut off the top whenever you want to cook some.

## **Sauerkraut with Pork**

### **Ingredients:**

Sauerkraut (see recipe)  
Pork loin or pork roast  
White wine  
A couple of cut up onions  
A couple of cut up apples  
Caraway seeds

### **Preparation Directions:**

Cooking the sauerkraut is the easiest part of this process. Just put it in a roasting pan with a pork loin or pork roast, cover it, put it in the oven at 325 degrees and let it cook until all of your neighbors know what you're having for dinner. Purists rinse it in a colander and add some white wine. I always like to add a couple of cut up onions and apples and caraway seeds.

## **Black-Eyed Pea Casserole**

### **Ingredients**

6 strips bacon  
1 can (32 oz) black eyed peas  
1 cup chopped celery  
1 can (16 oz) chopped tomatoes  
1 cup chopped green pepper  
1 cup chopped onion

### **Preparation Directions**

Fry bacon and crumble. Brown celery, green pepper and onion in some of the drippings. Add rest of the ingredients and simmer 20 minutes.