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Hot Stuff

Learning to like hot peppers is a Texas rite of passage. It's how we separate the real Texans from the imported, especially among men. I have male friends who will "trade bites" off habaneros as other men might trade punches. This sweaty, red-faced contest is somehow a testament to their manhood. Not so with women. Most of us like things just hot enough, but not so hot that you can't taste anything else. You have to know your peppers to strike just the right balance. Some give zing, whereas others give POW!

You can get that zing from milder peppers, such as the anaheim, poblano and jalapeño. That's right, jalapeños are actually mild on the Scoville heat index, a measurement of capsaicinoids in peppers. Below you'll find common peppers with their Scoville heat score. The highest ever recorded was a habanero that reached 577,000 Scoville units, which is about 150 times as hot as a common jalapeño. Use a habanero if you want POW!

Capsaicinoids are powerful alkaloids found in the tiny bubbles in the wall

of a pepper. When you cut a pepper and break those bubbles, heat in the form of capsaicinoids is released. The more you cut, the more are released. So, if you want a mild heat in a pot of beans, cut a jalapeño in half and toss it in. If you want a really spicy pico de gallo, chop that same jalapeño into tiny pieces and add those to your tomatoes and onions. The more you cut, the hotter it gets.

What can you do to tame that heat? Researchers have found that milk is the best remedy for a burning mouth, but a sugary drink will work, too. Those capsaicinoids not only get into your mouth, but all over anything that touches the cut pepper. Always wash your hands, knife and cutting board thoroughly after slicing peppers, or even wear gloves. Here is one of my favorite recipes that really highlights peppers, as there are few other ingredients. It is our Field Editor Cheryl Tucker's recipe for Jalapeño Fudge (named for its fudge-like consistency; there's no chocolate involved). It is popular at any gathering. In fact, she just made six batches of it for her son's graduation party.

Jalapeño Fudge

4-6 jalapeños, chopped (fresh or pickled, to taste)
1 pound cheddar cheese, grated
2-3 eggs, beaten

Mix all until it holds together; pat into 9x13-inch Pyrex pan. Do not oil pan! Bake at 300 degrees for 45 minutes to 1 hour (until slightly browned around edges). Cut into small squares. Best served when still warm.

Serving size: 1 square. Per serving: 93 calories, 6 protein, 7 grams fat, trace grams carbohydrates, 131 milligrams sodium, 67 milligrams cholesterol

PEPPERONCINI

100-500

ANAHEIM

500-1,500

POBLANO

1,500-2,500

BANANA PEPPER

2,000-4,000

JALAPEÑO

2,500-8,000



100

500

1,000

2,500

5,000

MILD

SCOVILLE



The subject for October's recipe contest is **German Food**. I know there are a lot of good German recipes out there that reflect Texas' Teutonic heritage—send us your family's favorites by July 10. The top winner will receive a copy of the *Texas Co-op Power Cookbook* and a gift pack from Adams. Others whose recipes are published will also receive a gift pack from Adams. Be sure to include your name, address and phone number, as well as your co-op affiliation. Send recipes to Home Cooking, 2550 S. IH-35, Austin, TX 78704. You can also fax recipes to (512) 486-6254 or e-mail them to recipes@texas-ec.org.

LAURA MULLEN, a member of Central Texas EC, sent in the winning recipe for this month's contest, **Roasted Five Pepper Hummus**. She writes, "This is the way we do roasted peppers: Wash and dry peppers. Rub them with a little extra virgin olive oil. On a gas stove top, turn burner on high and place pepper directly onto the grates. On an electric range, broil the peppers with the oven door slightly ajar. Use tongs to turn pepper

cool, remove from bag and scrape the burned skin from the pepper with a sharp knife. Remove stem and seeds. Slice the pepper into strips and use, or place in a container with a little olive oil to coat and store in refrigerator for 1 to 2 weeks. You may also freeze the peppers with waxed paper between the layers." Laura will receive a copy of the *Texas Co-op Power Cookbook* and a gift pack compliments of Adams, as will the runners-up whose recipes appear below.

Roasted Five Pepper Hummus

- 1 can (16 ounces) garbanzo beans, rinsed and drained
- 1/4 cup lime juice (freshly squeezed)
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon paprika
- 3 tablespoons tahini*
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 large red bell peppers, roasted, deseeded and coarsely chopped
- 2 large yellow bell peppers, roasted, deseeded and coarsely chopped
- 5 red jalapeño peppers, roasted, deseeded and coarsely chopped
- 2 red serrano peppers, roasted, deseeded and coarsely chopped
- 1 habanero pepper, coarsely chopped

Combine all ingredients in a food processor until smooth. Serve with appetizer-type crackers.

*Tahini is sesame seed paste and is used in many Middle Eastern dishes. You may substitute toasted sesame seed oil.

Serving size: 1/2 cup. Per serving: 316 calories, 13 protein, 12 grams fat, 43 grams carbohydrates, 156 milligrams sodium, 0 milligrams cholesterol

Sweet Potato Gratin With Smoked Chiles

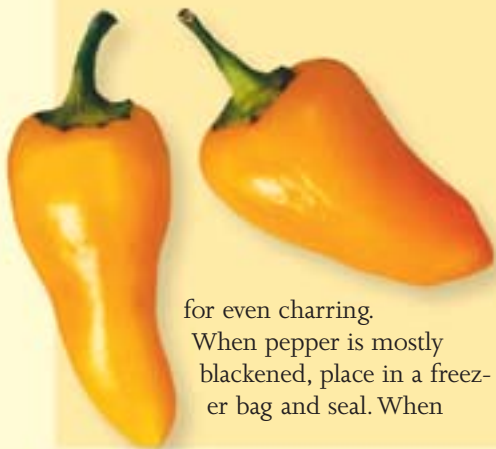
- 2 1/2 cups heavy cream
- 1 tablespoon chipotle purée*
- 3 medium sweet potatoes, peeled and sliced thin

Salt and pepper
Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine the heavy cream and chipotle purée in a small bowl. In an 8x8-inch baking dish, arrange a fourth of the sweet potatoes. Season to taste with salt and pepper and pour a fourth of the cream mixture over it. Repeat with the remaining potatoes and cream, forming 4 layers. Bake for 1 hour or until the cream has been absorbed and the potatoes are browned. Remove from the oven and let sit 10 minutes before serving. Makes 6 servings.

*You can make chipotle purée using canned chipotle peppers in adobo sauce. Purée several peppers in a food processor or blender.

Serving size: 1/6 of pan. Per serving: 410 calories, 3 protein, 37 grams fat, 19 grams carbohydrates, 142 milligrams sodium, 136 milligrams cholesterol

JUDI GIANGIULIO, Hamilton County EC
(continued on page 28)



for even charring. When pepper is mostly blackened, place in a freezer bag and seal. When

SERRANO
7,000–25,000

CHILIPIQUIN
30,000–60,000

THAI (BIRD) PEPPER
50,000–100,000

HABANERO
100,000–325,000

RED HABANERO
225,000–577,000



10,000

25,000

50,000

100,000

500,000

RATING

HOT

(continued from page 27)

Our Cilantro Pesto Spread

- 2 garlic cloves
- 1/2 cup toasted pecans
- 2 fresh serrano peppers, seeded
- 1 whole bunch washed fresh cilantro, stems and all
- 2 tablespoons lemon or lime juice
- 2-3 tablespoons good quality grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/8-1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons flaxseed oil (may substitute olive oil)
- 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

Put garlic, pecans and peppers in food processor and pulse a few times to



chop well. Add cilantro, juice, cheese and salt and process while pouring oils through opening on top of food processor. Process to a paste. Serve with corn chips, crackers, bread or pasta.

Serving size: 1/4 cup. Per serving: 145 calories, 1 protein, 15 grams fat, 2 grams carbohydrates, 63 milligrams sodium, 1 milligram cholesterol

RALPH AND ANN SMOOT, Bluebonnet EC

Yoli's Wonderful Green Enchiladas

- 5 small or 3 large whole, unseeded jalapeño peppers
- 24 corn tortillas
- 1 1/2 pounds ground meat
- Chopped garlic to taste
- Chili powder to taste
- 2 cans cream of chicken soup
- One large onion, chopped
- Grated cheddar cheese

Cut stems off jalapeños and boil in enough water to cover until soft. Set aside. Fry tortillas until soft in a little oil. Drain on paper towels.



Brown ground meat and garlic lightly. Add chili powder to taste. Blend soft cooked jalapeños and soup until smooth. Add water as needed for consistency. Roll meat in tortillas and lay seam side down in baking dish. Cover with sauce. Sprinkle with chopped onions. Cover with a layer of cheese. Bake about 20 minutes at 350 degrees. May be refrigerated and baked later. Any leftover sauce makes a wonderful dip for chips. Makes 12 servings.

Serving size: 2 enchiladas. Per serving: 352 calories, 15 protein, 21 grams fat, 26 grams carbohydrates, 349 milligrams sodium, 60 milligrams cholesterol

PATSY STEWART, Central Texas EC

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

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 FOUR RUNNERS-UP WILL EACH WIN \$500.**



We're looking for the best baked goods from your holiday celebrations. All recipes must be original and the ingredients must include an Adams Extract flavoring. Winners will be announced in our December issue.

Up to three entries are allowed per person. Each should be submitted on a separate piece of paper and include your name, address and phone number, plus the name of your electric cooperative. All entries must be postmarked by September 10, 2005. Send entries to Holiday Baking Contest, 2550 S. IH-35, Austin, TX 78704, or fax to (512) 486-6254. To enter by e-mail (recipes@texas-ec.org), you must include "Holiday Baking Contest" in the subject line and submit one recipe per e-mail, not an attachment.

For official rules, visit texascoopower.com/bakingcontest.html or send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the address above.



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