



Upping the Flavor Factor of School Meals with Braising Pans

Get more out of your braising pans – and budget – with simple recipes that will keep students coming back for more.

Sometimes keeping students excited about school meals can be a lot like preparing for a marathon – it can be overwhelming, exhausting, and sometimes a little painful. But with a little dedication, training, and the proper tools, crossing the finish line is never as hard as you think.

One tool in particular, the braising pan (also known as a tilt skillet), has the greatest potential to help busy school cafeteria staff narrow the gap between regular school meal participants and those who prefer alternative food options. It's also extremely simple and straightforward to use.

With the braising pan on hand, you can prepare large batches of nutritious chicken and squash soup, delicious chili or all of the ingredients needed for chicken fajitas and burrito bowls in no time. And with the ability to cook food from scratch quickly, these workhorses of the kitchen represent the best option on the market for obtaining the critical balance of restaurant-quality taste while meeting strict USDA nutritional standards.

But don't just take our word for it – try these recipes below to see how simply and quickly you can use the braising pan to add a new tasty meal to your menu that everyone will love.

Chicken Fajitas Recipe

Serving Size

108 servings

Ingredients

1 cup soybean oil
4 pounds onions
3 pounds green peppers
16 pounds chicken, defrosted
1 package fajita seasoning
3 cups water
108 tortillas

Directions

1. Cut peppers and onions into long strips
2. In Groen Braising Pan, heat oil and sauté peppers and onions until they start to soften
3. Add chicken
4. Let mixture sauté for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking
5. Add water and seasoning mix to the chicken mixture, stirring constantly for 3-5 minutes
6. Cook until chicken reaches an internal temperature of 165°F
7. Serve



Chicken and Squash Soup in a Groen Braising Pan

Serving Size

About 16-20 cups per gallon of soup. We'll base this recipe on one gallon – just multiply for more, because this one is easy.

Ingredients

2 pounds – pulled chicken (diced for soup)
 3 quarts – chicken broth (powdered or base)
 3 pounds – diced yellow onion
 3 pounds – diced yellow squash
 1 pound – diced tomato
 1 head – chopped parsley
 1 teaspoon – white pepper (or 2 teaspoons black pepper)
 Salt based on school guidelines

Directions

1. In a Groen Braising Pan, caramelize onions for just a few minutes
2. Add squash, salt, white pepper to braising pan for just a few minutes with no oils or fats
3. Add stock, chicken, tomato and bring to simmer
4. Add parsley to taste
5. Cook until chicken has internal temperature of 165°F
6. Serve

Southwestern Beef and Bean Chili

Serving Size

39 servings

Ingredients

5 pounds beef crumbles
1 can pinto beans
1 cup soybean oil
4 cups chopped onions
2 cups tomato paste
3 tablespoons vegetable base
8 cups water
3 cups drained green peppers
3 cups diced canned tomatoes
2 tablespoons hot sauce
3 tablespoons chili powder
1 tablespoon paprika
1 tablespoon salt
2 teaspoons black pepper
1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 pound cheddar cheese

Directions

1. In a Groen Braising Pan, cook onions in oil over medium heat until they start to turn see-through
2. Add tomato paste and let cook for 2-3 minutes, stirring constantly to prevent sticking and burning
3. In 1-gallon pitcher, mix vegetable base and water. Slowly add the vegetable base mixture to the tomato paste, continuing to stir until completely blended
4. Add the rest of the ingredients
5. Cook for 60 minutes
6. While cooking, stir occasionally and smash some of the beans against the side of the braising pan to help thicken the chili
7. Ensure internal temperature reaches 165°F
8. Serve with cheddar cheese