

Beans in Da Doh

Have you ever seen fresh navy beans in a store? I'm not talking about the dried ones. You simply cannot buy fresh navy beans. I had never heard of such a thing until I moved to southern Illinois. I had a neighbor, Leroy Phelps. He was 82 years old and had the biggest garden I've ever seen. He spent entire summers barefoot. He roto-tilled the garden by himself.

One day we were talking about the beans he had planted. He offered me some navy beans so I could make "Beans in Da Doh". I didn't know what he was talking about. And he couldn't spell it for me. I don't know if it was "beans in the dough" or what.

Beans in Da Doh is like a whole new vegetable; something from another country. It simply can't be duplicated with dried beans.

Another weird thing about navy beans is that it's hard to find "seed". You can find green beans in seed packets, but not navy beans. So just buy some beans in bulk at a natural food store or buy a bag of beans at the supermarket and save a handful for next spring. Plant them like you would any other bean. Plant them about a half inch deep, 2 inches apart in rows that are a foot apart. They can go in before the last frost.

Step 1: Grow navy beans in your garden. When the pods are getting ripe, check to see if the beans inside look like they're ready to harvest. Pick a big bowlful, shuck the pods, and rinse the beans.

Step 2: Fry up some side pork. Chop it up into little pieces if you like. A bit of bacon will do. Dice up a bit of fresh jalapeno pepper, not too much. Cook the pork till it's done. If it starts to burn, add some water. Be careful so you don't get splattered by hot grease. Then add your fresh navy beans and enough water to almost cover them. Bring it to a boil and then turn it down. Cook the beans and pork for maybe 20 minutes. Taste it now and then to see if they are soft enough to eat. They don't need to be mushy.

I rarely share Beans in Da Doh with anyone. I prefer to hog them all to myself! If I had a bigger garden, I could be more generous!

Fresh Green Beans

Cook up fresh green beans the same as for Beans in Da Doh with a bit of bacon and jalapeno.