

Three Sweet Years of Sweet Potato Rewards

For the past three years, the Louisiana Sweet Potato Commission and *Louisiana Cookin'* have sponsored the Sweet Rewards Contest, which invites cooks from all over the country to submit their recipes using canned sweet potatoes. The recipes must fall into one of four categories: soups, sides, desserts, or bread and breakfast. This year, home cooks from 49 states entered 729 recipes.

As always, the talented students and staff of Delgado Community College of Culinary Arts and Hospitality in New Orleans narrowed down the recipes and oversaw the preparation of the 24 that made the first cut. After hours of preparation, the students finished the recipes just in time.

Celebrity judges stepped in to taste the recipes. Holly Clegg, Louisiana Sweet Potato Commission spokesperson, well-known cookbook author, and a contributing writer to *Louisiana Cookin'* was on hand, as were Jim Capparell, veteran publisher of technology and health magazines; Chef Kevin P. Bordelon, corporate chef of research and development for Bruce Foods Corporation; Tommy Simmons, food editor for the *Baton Rouge Advocate* and Mary Ann Fitzmorris, also a *Louisiana Cookin'* writer, who is currently working on a book about chain restaurants.

From the 24 recipes that made Delgado's students' cut, the celebrity judges chose the following winners based on flavor, texture, appearance and creativity. Crack open a can of sweet potatoes and enjoy cooking and eating these delicious new recipes. Better yet, get creative with some recipes of your own and submit them to next year's contest. **LC**



Jim Capparell, Tommy Simmons; Susan Ford, publisher of *Louisiana Cookin'*; Mark Fields of Allen Canning, Kevin P. Bordelon, Holly Clegg and Mary Ann Fitzmorris



Grand Prize Winner!

Iced Sweet Potato Gazpacho

From the kitchen of Sally Sibthorpe of Shelby Township, MI

MAKES 6 TO 8 SERVINGS

- 1 14-ounce can sweet potatoes, drained and diced, in all
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 1/4 cup white balsamic vinegar
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1/2 to 1 teaspoon cayenne, to taste
- 2 cups yellow tomatoes, chopped
- 1 cup red tomatoes, chopped
- 1 cup red bell pepper, diced
- 1 cup cucumber, peeled and diced
- 1 cup red onion, chopped
- 2 slices garlic bread, cubed (about 1 1/2 cups)
- 1/4 cup finely chopped parsley
- 1/4 cup chives, plus additional for garnish
- 3 tablespoons olive oil

Place half the sweet potatoes, chicken stock, vinegar and garlic in a blender. In a large bowl, mix together the tomatoes, pepper, and onion. Add half this mixture to the blender, and reserve the other half for garnish. Add 1/4 cup of the garlic bread cubes to the mixture in blender. Process on high until mixture is fairly smooth. Remove from blender and stir in parsley and chives. Chill in freezer until very slightly icy. Stir remaining diced sweet potatoes into the reserved vegetable mixture, and chill in refrigerator. When ready to serve, pour blended mixture into small serving bowls. Garnish with the chilled chopped vegetables and the remaining garlic bread cubes. Drizzle a little olive oil over each serving, and garnish with additional chives, if desired.