

Red Kidney Beans and Rice - page 2 of 2

(continued from page 1)

Soak the beans overnight or use the quick-soak method: drain and put them in a kettle with 3 cups fresh water; bring to a boil, reduce the heat, cover the pan, and simmer for about 30 minutes. Add the salt, ham hocks, onion, garlic, celery, and bay leaf. Simmer 2 hours or longer. Add water if the mixture gets too thick. The beans will be tender in 2 hours, but longer simmering makes the flavor richer.

About 30 minutes before serving, remove the ham hocks, and cool them until you can remove the meat from the bones. Cut the meat into small pieces and return it to the kettle. Meanwhile, cut the sausage into the beans. Simmer over very low heat to blend the flavors. Spoon the beans over the rice on a large platter and garnish with generous amounts of chopped green onions and grated cheddar cheese.