Large limas are like a sponge and they don’t take very long to cook. I’ve found that by building a good base and letting it cook before adding the beans increases the overall flavor since the beans will rehydrate with the liquid from the base. Beans will wrinkle and float to the top when hydrating then slowly sink as they fill with liquid. When they do sink make sure you roll to keep them from burning on the bottom but don’t over stir as the beans will fall apart when they are close to ready. Have fun!!

Francis’ Savory Large Lima (Butter Beans)

3 lbs dry white large lima hand cleaned (about 6 cups)

2 - 3 medium (yellow or white) onions chopped

1 red bell pepper chopped.

6 cloves garlic minced.

3/4 lb of lean chorizo or in place of the chorizo or in place of chorizo, 1 smoked ham hock and ½ lb chopped bacon.

Or drop the ham hock and use 1 lb of bacon chopped.

1–28-ounce cans of crushed tomatoes.

16 ounces of Tomatillo (green) salsa (or fresh)

11 ounces of canned green chilies (you can spice them up more with jalapenos)

1 jalapeno diced.

1 Tbl Spoon of Honey

Beef, chicken, or vegetable stock to keep liquid level above beans (About 32 ounces)

Add your favorite herbs. I usually use fresh sage and thyme for this recipe and 2 tablespoons of dried paprika.

1. Cook chorizo until brown and spoon out grease (or bacon/ham hocks).
2. Rinse beans DO NOT soak – set aside
3. Add onions, garlic, bell pepper, and jalapeno – simmer until tender
4. Add tomatoes, chilies, tomatillos, 2/3 of the stock, and honey.
5. Bring to a boil – slowly boil for about 45 minutes with lid cracked (until ham hocks begin to break down)
6. Add beans and stir occasionally at a low boil with the lid cracked.
7. **Make sure to keep adding stock/water just above the level of the beans as they will take on 1.5 times their original weight and size.**
8. Slowly boil for about 2.5 hours, stirring occasionally, until beans are tender.
9. If hocks are used, remove bones and any unwanted rind.
10. Salt and pepper to taste (requires very little)
11. Enjoy

Note: I don’t always include chorizo. Either way these make for a hearty meal.

After cooking, leave the lid cracked to allow the beans to breathe as they ’sit’, that way they can breathe preventing fermentation and spoiling.

You can also freeze these beans in containers or ‘freezer bags’ for a later meal!

Almost Meatless Recipe (More like a hearty soup)

Great as a side dish!

Same recipe above but eliminate the use of chorizo and ham hock/bacon

If vegetarian use vegetable stock – if not use chicken or beef stock – chicken stock will make it a little lighter while the beef will make it hearty.

Increase the amount of stock to be at least 2 inches above the beans.

Cook until the beans are tender and serve in a bowl as soup. Great for lunch!!