

# African-American Cooking

## "WORD MATCH"

Fruits and vegetables are some of the many treasures taken from Africa by slave traders. Unknown to most people, many popular foods eaten in the US today are of African origin. Below are some African words and Soul Food cooking terms.

Instructions: Match the column on the right with the column on the left by placing the appropriate alphabetical letter next to the food term it most closely represents.

\_\_\_ goober

\_\_\_ yam

\_\_\_ gumbo

\_\_\_ benne

\_\_\_ trotters

\_\_\_ bobwhite

\_\_\_ cracklins

\_\_\_ flapjacks

\_\_\_ likka

\_\_\_ chit'lins

a. pork rinds

b. pig's small intestine

c. quail

d. pot likker

e. pig's feet

f. sesame

g. okra

h. sweet potato

i. peanut

j. pancakes



## African-American Cooking “Word Match”

### Background Information For the Leader

**Goober** is an African word for peanut. Peanuts are sometimes referred to as goober peas.

**Yams** are not really sweet potatoes but in the southern part of the US (New Orleans especially) the name “yam” is used to distinguish the southern red sweet potato from the more yellow Carolina variety. A true African yam is actually white-fleshed with a dark brown outer skin. Most people in the U.S. have never seen a “true yam” which can also be found in Asian markets.

**Gumbo** is the name for okra in Angola. It comes from the root word *ngombo*. Gumbo is also the name of a dialect spoken by blacks and Creoles of the French West Indies and Louisiana. Gumbo is also a thick soup; a luscious stew; a Louisiana specialty—and a direct gift from the African slave culture to the Southern States. In some recipes gumbo is thickened with okra pods. In other gumbo recipes, it is thickened with gumbo file (ground sassafras), a spice used by the Choctaw Indian tribe.

**Benne** is African for sesame. In the Carolinas sesame seeds are still called benne. They are said to bring good luck when eaten.

**Trotters** are pig’s feet—pronounced trodders in some parts. Trotter, walk, feet—get it? It is a term used in Southern Soul Food cuisine.

**Bobwhite** is another name for a quail. In some parts of the south a bobwhite is also called a partridge.

**Cracklins** are the crisp part left after all the lard has been fried out of pork skin or rind. It is baked into cornbread batter, used to flavor beans and vegetables.

**Likka** is pot liquor, the juice resulting from the simmering of a big pot of greens (mustard, turnip or collards). Highly seasoned and rich in vitamins and minerals; the greenish liquid is sometimes sopped up with cornbread or biscuits.

**Flapjacks** are pancakes.

**Chit’lins** or properly spelled chitterlings, are the small intestine of pigs. Some folks say they are an example of soul food at its finest. They are thoroughly cleaned and cooked to tenderness with onions, vinegar and other seasonings and always served with hot sauce.

## Answers to “Word Match”

- |              |                          |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| i. goober    | a. pork rinds            |
| h. yam       | b. pig’s small intestine |
| g. gumbo     | c. quail                 |
| f. benne     | d. pot likker            |
| e. trotters  | e. pig’s feet            |
| c. bobwhite  | f. sesame                |
| a. cracklins | g. okra                  |
| j. flapjacks | h. sweet potato          |
| d. likka     | i. peanut                |
| b. chit’lins | j. pancakes              |



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
**EXTENSION**  
FAMILY NUTRITION PROGRAM  
EXPANDED FOOD AND NUTRITION  
EDUCATION PROGRAM

**University of Illinois \* United States Department of Agriculture \* Local Extension Councils Cooperating**  
University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

The Family Nutrition Program is funded with Food Stamp Administrative funds by the Food, Nutrition &  
Consumer Services of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.