

RECIPES FROM TRIXIE MATKOWSKI AND HER  
FRIENDS AND RELATIVES

## BIG JIM KOCIK'S POTATO SOUP

*(Big Jim was Uncle Porky's golfing partner and had to make this soup  
each time he lost to Uncle Porky-which was a lot of times!)*

### **Ingredients:**

- 6-7 cups Red potatoes peeled and diced (about ½ inch cubes)
- 7-8 strips Thick cut slab bacon (diced into about ½ inch pieces)
- 2 cups Sweet onion (diced into about ½ inch pieces)
- 3 cups Swanson chicken stock (not broth)
- 1 ½ cups Half and half
- 12 ounces Velveeta cheese (cut into ½ inch cubes)
- 3 tbsp. Butter
- 2-3 tsp. Jalapeno slices (chopped fine)
- ½ tsp. Black pepper
- ½ tsp. Accent
- 1tbsp. Dried chives

### **Notes:**

- Use red potatoes...they hold up best in soups. After dicing, rinse 2 or 3 times to remove excess starch. Soak in cold water until needed.
- Easy way to dice bacon: cut stack of strips lengthwise, then cut about ½ inch slices.
- After frying bacon, do not drain away all the grease. Easy method: push fried bacon to one side of the Dutch oven or pot and absorb about half the grease with 5 or 6 paper towels.
- 2 tsp. chopped jalapenos just barely registers in this recipe, but adds to the flavor so don't leave it out. If you want a little more heat, add more 1 tsp. at time. Just remember that you can always add more, but can't take it out.
- Swanson chicken stock comes in a 26 oz. container, use the whole thing. Home made stock (frozen from left over strained chicken soup) is best if you have any.

**Making the soup:**

- Fry bacon until crisp (med. High heat) and remove about ½ of the grease.
- Add diced onions to bacon and continue cooking until onions are translucent (about 5 min.)
- Add chicken stock, butter, jalapeno, pepper, Accent and drained potatoes and simmer on med-low heat until potatoes are just tender (about 20 min.)
- Add Velveeta cheese, half and half and dried chives and turn up heat to bring soup back to a simmer. Stir soup until cheese is well melted and blended into the soup. Adjust heat to low and simmer for an additional 10 min., stirring frequently.

**Don'ts**

- Don't be tempted to substitute cheddar or any other hard cheese for Velveeta, because Velveeta does not curdle and provides a very creamy texture to the broth. If you want more cheese favor, garnish soup with shredded Asiago or some other favorite cheese.