

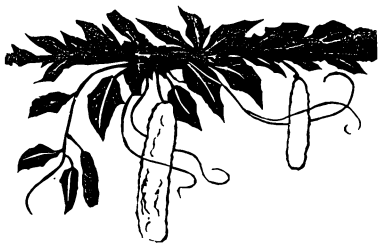
Come Into My Garden

Growing Cucumbers

In my garden this month, I am growing cucumbers. Cucumbers are good for salads. They are cool and juicy. They go very well with rich foods like *adobo*, or with fried fish or meat. When you eat a slice of cucumber during mealtime, you feel as though you have drunk cool water. But cucumber is not as filling as water and will help your appetite instead of lessening it.

Cucumbers are best grown beginning the month of May. To get good fruits, the soil must be rich and well-drained.

Place four to six seeds in holes one to two inches deep. The distance between each hole should be about a meter or more. When the seeds have grown to plants, thin each hole, leaving only about two or three plants per hill.



If you wish, you can ask your mother to make pickles of the small cucumber, which first appear on the plants. Pick them early, before they ripen. They taste very well when pickled in sweet or sour sauce. Other fruits may be allowed to grow big on the plants. These will later become good materials for salads. When the skin of the fruit becomes white and smooth, it can be picked from the plant.

The kinds of cucumbers which grow well in our country are the Native White, Native Light Green, and the Indian. The seeds of these varieties may be bought from seed stores and from the Bureau of Plant Industry.



Have you ever cooked small, native *bibingka*? If you have, then you know how enjoyable is the game of cooking them. If you have not, then it is time you learned to cook them. Gather a few of your friends and contribute for the ingredients, the utensils, and the work that will be needed for this interesting game. One of you should contribute the fuel, another should contribute the stoves, and so forth.

In this game, you will need an earthen pan, very much like the ones that professional vendors of *bibingka* use. Then, of course, you will need a tin lid which will cover the pan completely. Have pieces of banana leaves cut round to fit the pan. Also have coconut husks for fuel, as well as coal and wood. A small stove stood on the ground will serve you very well in this game.

In cooking the *bibingka* that I shall describe to you, you will need bread that is a day or two old. The ordinary *pan de sal* that were left over from the other day's breakfast will do.

Cut the bread into small pieces and soak the pieces in a little water. When the bread has softened, mix a cup of milk to a half cup of sugar. Add a beaten egg if you wish. Mix all these things together and stir for a while.

Prepare your stove. Build a good fire. Then put the earthen pan over the stove. Place a round piece of banana leaf in the pan. Pour a cup of the mixture into the pan. Cover the pan and place some fire on the tin cover. At the end of ten minutes, lift the cover carefully and see how your *bibingka* is cooking. If the top is partly cooked, moisten it with a little butter. Arrange slices of white cheese on top. Then cover it once more, and wait until the whole *bibingka* is cooked. Remove the cooked *bibingka* from the pan and place it on a piece of clean banana leaf.

Cook the rest of the mixture this way.