

Pacific Daily News

COCONUT CHICKEN SALAD

By Therese Padua Howe For Pacific Daily News

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Nutrition education specialist Lahaina Phillip knew she had a good kelaguen recipe. She had originally written it while creating diet plans for Pacific Island elders in Oregon battling diabetes and other chronic illnesses.

A community health specialist for the Portland-area Micronesian Islander community, Phillip's formal title is education program assistant for the Oregon State University Extension Service for Clackamas County. She later used the recipe in a series of healthy cooking classes that she coordinated with OSU Extension colleague Elena Illescas.

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The classes were successful, and the recipe is the first Pacific Island inspired dish to be added to Food Hero, an multi-channel social marketing campaign to help low-income Oregonians improve their health by increasing their consumption of fruits and vegetables.

All recipes that make it into Food Hero first go through rigorous testing, and Phillip's recipe was no different.

She explained how the dish's name evolved: "Our Coconut Chicken Salad recipe went through many trials and tribulations before its submission to Food Hero. One of those trials and tribulations was consulting with colleagues and friends who are community members from Saipan, Tinian and Guam to seek advice on the best way to deliver our recipe respectfully.

"This part of the process is where we came up with the name Coconut Chicken Salad. (From) our community members from the Marianas, one of the respected opinions we received was: 'If there's lettuce in it, it's no longer chicken kelaguen.'

"Upon hearing this, we knew it was crucial that we honor the opinion of our community members and come up with a new name. There, we arrived at Coconut Chicken Salad."

Pacific Daily News

FOOD HERO plans to create a Pasifika page on the website FOODHERO.org and devote one of its monthly newsletters to Pacific Island recipes, according to Lauren Tobey. She is the initiative's social marketing coordinator and nutrition education program coordinator at OSU Family and Community Health Extension.

Coconut Chicken Salad

Prep time: 20 to 30 minutes

Makes: 5 cups

Ingredients

- 2 cups shredded or chopped rotisserie cooked chicken (about 1/2 chicken)
- 1/4 cup finely-chopped onion
- 2 green onions, white and green chopped small
- 1/2 cup finely-chopped carrot
- 1 cup thinly-sliced cabbage
- 1/2 cup shredded fresh or frozen unsweetened coconut flakes (or 1/4 cup dried)
- 1 to 3 teaspoons red pepper flakes or 1 hot pepper, finely chopped (Thai bird, serrano or jalapeño)
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 cup lemon juice (juice from about 1 lemon)

Directions

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. In a large bowl, mix together chicken and vegetables. Add red pepper flakes, salt and pepper and mix well.
3. Add lemon juice and mix again.
4. Serve right after preparing.
5. Refrigerate leftovers within 2 hours.

Pacific Daily News

Add more cabbage, carrot and green onion or other vegetables such as chopped bell pepper.

Serve with titiyas (or flour tortilla) or rice.