



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Raleigh woman wins Not Your Mama’s Chicken Casserole Challenge presented by House of Raeford

RALEIGH - A recipe for Cajun Chicken Casserole took first place in the N.C. State Fair’s Home Chef Not Your Mama’s Chicken Casserole Challenge, presented by House of Raeford. Julie Truelove of Raleigh won \$500 for the winning recipe.

Harriet Carter of Durham took home second place and \$300 for her Aunt Eula’s Mexican Chicken Casserole. Gail Fuller of Raleigh won \$200 and third place for her Southern Country Chicken Casserole.

The winning recipe follows:

Cajun Chicken Casserole

serves 6

1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breasts, poached and shredded
4 tablespoons butter, divided
½ cup plain bread or cracker crumbs
1 large onion, diced
1 jalapeno, finely minced
1 red bell pepper, diced
2 celery stalks, diced
3 cups fresh or frozen corn kernels
2 ½ teaspoons Cajun or Creole seasoning, divided
3 tablespoons flour
1 cup milk
1 cup half & half
1 ½ cup shredded Pepper Jack cheese, divided

Instructions:

Preheat the oven 350 degrees. In a small bowl, microwave 1 tablespoon butter for 10 seconds, then stir in breadcrumbs, ¼ teaspoon of Cajun seasoning and ½ cup Pepper Jack cheese. Set aside.

In a large skillet over medium heat, melt remaining butter and add the onion, jalapeno, bell pepper, celery, corn and 2 ¼ teaspoons Cajun seasoning. Saute until onion is tender, then stir in flour and cook for 1 minute. Slowly stir in milk and half & half. Cook, stirring until sauce begins to thicken, then add 1 cup Pepper Jack cheese, stirring until cheese is melted. Remove from heat, add in shredded chicken and stir until all ingredients are well combined. Pour into a buttered 9x13 dish, top with bread crumb mixture and bake for 30 minutes until top is golden and casserole is bubbling. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving.

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