

# CHOP

## Recipe One

I learned how to make my first batch of chop from watching the video Patricia Sund made <http://parrotnation.com/2010/08/08/chop-shot-by-shot/>. To help those of you who are a bit intimidated by not having a recipe with more exact measurements, I made a second batch and wrote everything down. Here's how I made my "Chop".

### INGREDIENTS:

#### Cooked grains & pasta:

- 7 cups cooked Whole Grains
- 2 cups cooked Whole Grain Pasta

#### Fresh Greens and Vegetables:

- 8 cups finely chopped Fresh Greens
- 20 cups finely chopped Fresh Vegetables

#### Dry Ingredients:

- 2 cups Quick Cooking Oats
- 1 1/2 cups Quinoa Flakes
- 1 1/2 cups Barley Flakes
- 1 cup hulled Millet
- 3/4 cups Dulse Flakes
- 1/4 cup Kelp Powder
- 1/2 cup Chia Seeds
- 1/2 cup Ground Flaxseed



**Optional:** I added cooked beets to this particular mix.

### METHOD:

For the cooked grains I used a combination of:

- 3 cups of Kamut
- 3 cups of Spelt
- 1 cup of Farro

The yield for cooked grains is about the same as when cooking rice. For example 1 1/2 cups of dry Kamut will yield about 3 cups of cooked Kamut.

I cooked the Kamut and Spelt for about 35 to 40 minutes. Just until tender but not mushy, still had a little bit of crunch to the grain.

The Farro I bought was pearled Farro so it cooked tender in about 10 minutes.



Cooked Kamut & Spelt

You could use 6 cups of Spelt if you can't find Kamut. Or substitute other whole grains like brown rice.



Cooked Farro  
Barley or Oat Groats can be substituted for the Farro.

**METHOD Continued:**

For the cooked pasta I used whole wheat Orecchiette. I used 2 cups dry and cooked according to package directions for al dente pasta.

*Al dente refers to the desired texture of cooked pasta. It literally means “to the tooth”. When pasta is cooked al dente, there should be a slight resistance in the center when pasta is chewed.*



Just like the grains, I want it cooked done, but firm not mushy.

For the Greens I used:

- Red Swiss Chard (Could sub Collard, Turnip or Mustard greens; Kale)
- Baby Bok Choy
- 1 bunch Cilantro (You could sub Parsley)

For the Vegetables I used:

- Broccoli (about 1.5 pounds)
- 1 small bag Brussels Sprout (about 14 medium)
- 8 Carrots
- 1 Butternut Squash
- 1 Chayote Squash
- 1 Fennel (Anise) - using bulb, stalk & leaves
- 1 Red Bell Pepper
- 1 Anaheim Pepper
- 2 Poblano Peppers



**METHOD CONTINUED:**

I washed the greens and spun them dry in a salad spinner. If you don't have a salad spinner, pat them dry with paper towels as best you can.

I also washed the vegetables, spinning dry the smaller ones like Brussels sprouts in the salad spinner and drying the others with paper towels.

Using a food processor, finely chop the greens and vegetables. I used 8 cups of chopped greens and 20 cups of chopped vegetables in this mix.



You also want to wash the outside of the butternut squash before cutting into it. To prepare the butternut squash, cut the bulb end off and set aside. Then cut the long end into a couple pieces and cut the tough outer skin off with a knife. Cut the squash into manageable pieces and finely chop in the food processor with the rest of the vegetables.



The bulb end is more trouble than it's worth to try and cut the skin off and get any useable flesh out of. I cut it in sections, leaving seeds in use them to put on food skewers for cage toys along with other vegetables.

**METHOD CONTINUED:**

My parrots love cooked beets so I added about 3 medium beets to my mix.



I boiled the beets with skin on until just fork tender, about 35 minutes for the medium size beets pictured above. Then peeled off skin and chopped into 1/4 inch dice. You will have to chop cooked beets by hand since they are cooked.

Some people grate or chop raw beets and add to the mix, but I prefer to cook them. My parrots like picking out the pieces of beets in the mix. And I've read that root vegetables are more nutritious if slightly cooked first.

I added the ingredients in layers into a large plastic dishpan. For the dry ingredients I guessed at the amount of Dulse flake and kelp powder and thought a proportionally smaller amount would be better to experiment with.

I liked adding the quick cooking oats instead of baby cereals. That was my personal preference. But you could experiment with the baby barley and rice cereals as a substitute for the barley flakes or quinoa flakes. And you certainly don't have to use Dulse flakes or kelp powder.



For humans, flaxseed, when eaten whole is more likely to pass through the intestinal tract undigested, which is why I use ground flaxseed in this batch of "Chop". You can buy ground flaxseed or grind it yourself in a coffee or spice grinder.

Pictured are dry ingredients, oats, quinoa flake, barley flake, millet, Dulse flake, kelp powder, chia seed and ground flaxseed.

And there you have it. How I made “CHOP”. I really like this method of feeding my parrots. As you can see in the photo above the greens and vegetables are chopped fine enough that even if they pick out the pasta, they still get some vegetables that cling to the pasta.



Also adding the type of dry ingredients like Patricia Sund suggests helps absorb the moisture from freezing and thawing the finely chopped vegetables. This particular batch was plenty dry enough after I thawed it out the next day.

You need to add a cooked bean mix to this to make a complete protein. I like to make a bean mixture of pinto and garbanzo and adzuki, with more garbanzo in the mix. And I like to freeze that mix in a separate baggie in a smaller portion then combine the two together when I dish up the meal.

I will also sometimes add a little bit of chopped fresh apple, berries or other fruit to the bowl of “Chop” I am serving in the morning. I also add fresh sprouts to the bowl of “Chop”, if not everyday at least 3 to 4 days out of the week. I use the Easy Sprouter from [www.sproutpeople.com](http://www.sproutpeople.com) and make only enough sprouts to be used up within 2 days.



I have also used canned beans when I forgot to soak and cook my own. I buy organic, no salt beans. Rinse and drain them and freeze in baggies same as my cooked beans.

I hope this recipe helps get you started. I would encourage you to experiment with your own ingredients. You may also need to adjust the amount of wet and dry ingredients to come up with a mix you and your parrots like.