MYANMAR MOHINGA

ABOUT THE DISH

The recipe for mohinga varies depending on regional tastes and ingredients, but you will find a typical version in the country's south where fresh fish abounds and in other parts where chickpeas abound.

The dish can be topped with an array of optional additions, including crispy fritters, chickpeas or a boiled egg—meaning each bowl of mohinga, like each individual experience in Myanmar, is unique.

LEGUME-BASED FARMING SYSTEMS IN THE CENTRAL DRY ZONE (CDZ) OF MYANMAR

At 34% of Myanmar's GDP, agriculture dominates the country's economy, to which legumes contribute \$3 billion annually. This contribution has significant potential to improve, with more than 80% of farmers surveyed indicating their crop yields were limited by poor nutrition and/or shortages of legume microbial inoculants, despite high demand. There is also significant potential to improve the retention and use by crops of soil water. Chickpea production grew substantially between 2000 and 2015; with the assistance of ACIAR this is set to continue.

THE PROJECT

This project commenced in June 2013 and is a partnership between the University of New England (lead agency) and the University of Adelaide, the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics in India, and the three government agencies that deal with agriculture in Myanmar: the Department of Agricultural Research (DAR), the Department of Agriculture and the Yezin Agricultural University. The project is breeding and releasing to farmers new crop varieties with improved yield and resistance to biotic stresses, linked to improved community seed production and distribution systems via village seed banks. Government agency staff and selected farmers are being trained in the efficient use of mineral and organic fertilisers and nutrient management, the management of crop pests and diseases, application of new technology and appropriate

cropping systems. These combined objectives are resulting in improved crop yields in Myanmar and better livelihoods for farmers in the CDZ.

A previous ACIAR-funded project (SMCN/2006/013) identified higher-yielding varieties of pigeon pea, peanut and chickpeas for systems in Myanmar's CDZ, improved facilities and expertise at the DAR rhizobial inoculant production unit and built capacity at DAR through postgraduate research and short-term staff training.

Institutional capacity building to promote long-term change included the production of resources and material to assist training in Myanmar's soil research facilities. The capacity building is designed to increase volumes of highquality inoculants to improve nodulation and legume yield. The project has also resulted in a detailed documentation of the extent of nutrient deficiencies within the project regions to assist with informed nutrient management strategies.

With the engagement of more than 3,000 farmers, the project team and project partners implemented more than 70 replicated trials and more than 380 non-replicated trials in partnership with local smallholders and Myanmar agricultural organisations. Improved genotype trials showed increases in crop yields as high as 55% over local varieties.

ACIAR PROJECT SMCN/2011/047

Increasing productivity of legume-based farming systems in the central dry zone of Myanmar.

MORE INFORMATION

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Myanmar Mohinga

Ingredients

1 tbsp vegetable oil 2 long red chillies, 1 finely chopped, 1 thinly sliced 1 tsp ground turmeric

- 1 onion, thinly sliced
- 2 cm piece ginger, thinly sliced
- 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 2 lemongrass stalks, white part only, thinly sliced
- 1 bunch coriander, stalks and roots finely chopped, leaves chopped
- 2 tbsp ngapi (Burmese shrimp paste)
- 1 tbsp tamarind pulp (liquid form)
- 150 g banana blossom, thinly sliced
- 35 g (¼ cup) chickpea (besan) flour* 100 g (½ cup) chickpeas, cooked and crushed
- 750 ml fish or vegetable stock
- 200 g vermicelli rice noodles, soaked in cold water for 15 minutes, drained 250 g firm white fish (such as barramundi), skin on, chopped
- 2 tomatoes, roughly chopped
- 2 tbsp fish sauce
- lime wedges, to serve
- * Chickpea (besan) flour is thicker and grainier than refined white flour. It is available from health-food shops, Asian food shops and some supermarkets.

Method

- Place oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add finely chopped chilli, turmeric, onion, ginger, garlic, lemongrass, coriander (stalks and roots) and ngapi. Cook, stirring constantly, for 5 minutes or until softened.
- Stir in tamarind pulp and banana blossom and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes until banana blossom has softened.
- 3. Add chickpea flour, stirring to combine.
- 4. Add chickpeas, then gradually stir in stock and simmer for 10 minutes or until soup has thickened.
- Add drained rice noodles, fish, tomatoes and fish sauce, and simmer for 5 minutes or until noodles and fish are just cooked.
- Divide fish noodle soup among six serving bowls. Scatter over coriander leaves and thinly sliced chilli and serve with lime wedges.

Serves 6

