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Groundskeeper's Mystery Casserole

Who knows what our favorite half-giant's casserole was actually made of—last time I checked, cows don't have talons, they have hooves! This talonless recipe is hearty, filling, and perfect for a satisfying dinner on a brisk fall day.

Yield: 6 servings

Cook time: 1 hour

2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon kosher salt
1 (12-ounce) package wide egg noodles
2 tablespoons olive oil, divided
½ large onion, diced
2 stalks celery, thinly sliced
1 large carrot, diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 pound button mushrooms, thinly sliced
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
½ teaspoon pepper
6 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided, plus more for greasing
4 tablespoons flour
2½ cups whole milk
¼ cup sour cream
1 pound cooked chicken, shredded or diced
½ cup bread crumbs
¼ cup shredded Parmesan cheese

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F and grease a 9 x 13-inch casserole pan with butter.
2. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add 2 tablespoons of salt.
3. Add the egg noodles and cook for 5 minutes. The noodles will not be completely cooked through, but that's okay.
4. Strain the noodles, toss with 1 tablespoon of olive oil, and set aside.
5. In a large sauté pan, heat the remaining tablespoon of olive oil over medium heat.
6. Add the onion, celery, carrot, and garlic to the pan.
7. Cook for 5 minutes, until the vegetables are just starting to soften.
8. Add the mushrooms to the pan and cook for an additional 5 minutes.
9. Add the parsley to the pan and season with the remaining salt and the pepper.
10. Remove from the heat and place the mixture in a bowl to cool.
11. Return the pan to the stove and over medium heat, melt 4 tablespoons of butter.
12. Once melted, whisk in the flour. This will create a thick paste. Cook this paste for 5 minutes, whisking constantly.

13. Slowly drizzle in the milk, whisking to avoid clumps. Continue to cook the sauce until thickened.
14. Whisk in the sour cream to combine, and remove from the heat.
15. Toss the noodles, chicken, and vegetable mixture in the sauce.
16. Add this mixture to the 9 x 13-inch pan.
17. Sprinkle the bread crumbs and Parmesan cheese over the top.
18. Dot the top of the casserole with small pieces of the remaining butter.
19. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes until the breadcrumbs are golden and the cheese is melted.
20. Let cool for 10 minutes before serving.