

## Yellow Squash, Sausage and Wild Rice Casserole

- 1/2 pound mild or hot pork sausage
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 small red bell pepper, chopped
- 4 stalks celery, chopped
- 6 small yellow squash, quartered lengthwise and sliced
- 1/4 cup water
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 3 tablespoons flour
- 2 cups milk
- 1/2 packet Lipton savory herb with garlic soup mix
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 (8 1/2-ounce) package Uncle Ben's Ready Rice Whole Grain Medley Brown and Wild
- 1 (4-ounce) can sliced water chestnut, drained and roughly chopped
- 6 ounces Cheddar cheese, shredded, divided
- 1 tube buttery round crackers, crushed
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted

### Directions:

In a large skillet, brown sausage until no longer pink and remove with slotted spoon to a bowl. Drain off all but a tablespoon of the drippings if there are any. Add the onion, celery, bell pepper, yellow squash and water to the pan. Sprinkle with a little salt and pepper. Cover and cook until tender, about 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Meanwhile, in a saucepan, melt the butter and add the flour. Cook for a minute or two. Add the milk and whisk over medium high heat until thickened. Add the soup mix, salt and pepper. Cook the rice in the microwave as directed on package. Pour into a large bowl and add sausage, cooked vegetables, water chestnuts, half the cheese and the sauce. Stir to mix and pour into a greased 9"x13" pan. Top with remaining half of cheese. Combine cracker crumbs and butter and sprinkle over top. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes until bubbly and hot.