Green Bean Casserole

serves 6

1/2 large yellow onion, very thinly sliced

1 cup whole milk

1/2 cup sprouted whole wheat flour (or all-purpose flour)

1/2 cup sprouted corn flour (or regular corn meal)

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Lard or shortening or vegetable oil

8 ounces white button mushrooms, coarsely chopped

1/2 large yellow onion, diced

1/2 stick unsalted butter, divided

3/4 pound fresh green beans, ends trimmed
2 cups whole milk at room temperature
salt and pepper
3 to 4 tablespoons all-purpose flour OR 1 to 2 tablespoons arrowroot powder
1 cup extra sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, shredded
Preheat oven to 350º F.

Pour 1 cup milk into a medium-sized mixing bowl; in another medium-sized mixing bowl, whisk together the flour, corn flour or corn meal, salt and pepper. Add enough fat (lard, shortening or vegetable oil) to a large, heavy-bottomed skillet to measure a depth of about 1 to 1 1/2 inches; heat the fat to a temperature of 350º F.

Working in batches, drop a handful of the very thinly sliced onion rings into the milk. Using a fork, transfer them to the flour/corn meal mixture and toss until coated. Drop them into the hot fat, taking care not to crowd them, and fry until crispy and golden brown, about 1 to 2 minutes. Watch carefully so they don’t become too brown or burn. Remove them from the hot fat with a fork or slotted spoon and place on a paper-towel lined plate to drain. Repeat until all of the onions have been fried. Set aside.

Bring 3 to 4 quarts of water to a boil; add 1 teaspoon salt. Add the green beans and parboil for 2 to 3 minutes. Drain and add the green beans to a large bowl of ice water to stop the cooking process. When cold, drain the green beans again and set aside.

In another large, heavy skillet, melt 2 tablespoons of the butter over medium-low heat. Cook the mushrooms without crowding, in batches if necessary, until golden and beginning to brown at the edges. Remove from the skillet with a slotted spoon and reserve on a plate.

Add the remaining butter to the skillet if necessary, and add the onions to the skillet. Cook, stirring frequently, until the onions are a soft and translucent, and just beginning to turn golden brown. Remove from the skillet with a slotted spoon and reserve on the same plate as the mushrooms.

If using flour to thicken the sauce, pour off all but 2 tablespoons of the remaining butter from the skillet; return to the stove over medium low heat. Add the flour and whisk until a thin paste forms. Cook, stirring constantly, for 2 to 3 minutes then slowly add the 2 cups of room temperature milk, whisking continually. Continue to cook, stirring constantly, until the sauce is thick and smooth. Add the cheddar and Parmesan cheeses; stir until melted. Remove from heat; taste, and season with salt and pepper.

If using arrowroot powder to thicken the sauce, pour any remaining fat from the skillet and return to the stove over medium-low heat. Whisk the arrowroot powder into the 2 cups milk, and pour into the skillet. Cook, stirring constantly, until the sauce is thick and smooth. Add the cheddar and Parmesan cheeses; stir until melted. Remove from heat; taste, and season with salt and pepper.
Add the mushrooms, sautéed onions and green beans to the cheese sauce, stir gently but thoroughly to coat the beans. Pour into the 8” x 8” baking dish and bake for 20 minutes, or until bubbly and just beginning to brown. Remove the dish from the oven and scatter the fried onions evenly over the top of the dish; return to the oven and bake for an additional 5 minutes to crisp and brown the onions, watching the dish carefully so the onions don’t over-brown or burn.

Serve immediately.