granola

recipe: adapted from a family recipe

Yields 16 cups.

Dry ingredients:

- 6 cups rolled oats (not the quick cooking sort)
- 1 cup wheat germ
- 1 cup bran
- 1 cup ground flax-seed
- 1 cup toasted sesame seeds
- 1 cup golden raisins
- 1 cup unsweetened shredded coconut
- 1 cup hulled, raw, unsalted sunflower seeds
- 1 cup hulled, raw, unsalted pumpkin seeds
- 1 cup dried cranberries
- 1/2 cup slivered almonds
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans

For the granola goo:

- 1 cup honey
- 2 tablespoons milk
- 1/3 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 1/2 cup canola oil
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon

Mise en place - begin by getting organized. Measure out all of your ingredients. Ensure that you have a roasting pan/casserole dish that is large enough to hold 16 cups of granola (with room for stirring and turning the ingredients over during baking) and a container large enough to store your granola in.

Pre-heat oven to 300°.

Place the dry ingredients into a large roasting pan, and mix to combine.

To make the granola goo, place the honey, milk, applesauce, canola oil, butter, salt and cinnamon in a small saucepan over medium heat. Heat until the butter has completely melted, the ingredients are well incorporated, and the mixture is hot to the touch.

Pour half of the granola goo over the dry ingredients and mix well. Add the remainder of the goo, and mix well to combine. This incorporation is important - you don't want dry patches of ingredients. Insure everything gets moistened by the goo.

Bake for 50-60 minutes, stirring every 15 minutes. When stirring, ensure that the ingredients get well rotated in the pan - bring the granola from the bottom up to the top to ensure even baking.

The granola is done when it has turned a golden brown throughout. It will be very hot, and still somewhat moist throughout. Remove from the oven and place the roasting pan on a cooling rack. Because the granola is very hot, there will be carry-over baking - keep stirring the granola frequently as it cools to ensure the heat escapes, and the bottom layer of granola doesn't overcook. The granola will dry somewhat as it cools, but it is not a crunchy, clumpy granola.

Let the granola cool completely before storing in a tightly lidded container.

Note: My roasting pan is deep and not very long/wide. My ingredients fill it to the top. I need an hour to get my granola cooked up nicely. If you use a shallow baking dish, and your ingredients are spread more thinly, you may need to shorten your bake time.