

**Blue Cheese-Bacon Dip**  
*From the kitchen of Nancy Vondrak*

**Ingredients:**

3 tablespoons chopped walnuts  
7 bacon slices, chopped  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
2 (8-oz.) packages cream cheese, softened  
1/3 cup half-and-half  
4 oz. crumbled blue cheese or gorgonzola  
2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives  
Grape clusters, assorted crackers  
Garnish: chopped fresh chives

**Instructions:**

1. Preheat oven to 350. Bake walnuts in single layer in shallow pan 6 to 8 minutes or until toasted and fragrant, stirring half way through.
2. Cook bacon in skillet over medium-high heat until crisp. Remove bacon and drain, reserving 1 tablespoon drippings in skillet.
3. Add minced garlic to hot drippings, and sauté 1 minute.
4. Beat cream cheese at medium speed with electric mixer until smooth. Add half-an-half, beating until combined. Stir in bacon, garlic, blue cheese, and chives.
5. Spoon mixture into 1-quart baking dish.
6. Bake at 350 for 20 minutes or until golden and bubbly. Sprinkle with walnuts.
7. Serve with fruit and crackers. Garnish if desired.

**Variations:**

- Substitute pecans for walnuts, goat cheese for blue cheese and 2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme for chives
- Substitute pecans for walnuts, shredded sharp cheddar cheese for blue cheese and chopped fresh parsley for chives. Add 1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon ground red pepper