

Triple Crown wins beef cook-off

BY SHEILA MILLER

SHIREMANSTOWN — For the second time in its five year history, Rosemary Gentilcore captured first place on Monday in the Pennsylvania Beef Cook-Off Contest.

Her entry, 'Triple Crown Mini Loaves' beat 28 other Pa. entries and will go on to the national contest to be held in Scottsdale, Arizona this summer.

Gentilcore, from Bethlehem, Northampton Co., explained she was familiar with the contest since its 'birth' and was the state winner in 1975 with an eye-of-the-round 'gourmet-ish' recipe. This recipe didn't do well at the national contest, held in Colorado that year, she said, because "they were looking for a more economical recipe."

With that in mind, her entry for the following year was 'Sauerbrauten Italiano', but that was still "too fancy", she sighed, and only placed 2nd in the State contest.

About three weeks before the May 15 entry deadline, Gentilcore said she began working on her mini-loaves recipe. This recipe features a three-layered meal used ground beef, cheese, and onion rings, hence the name 'Triple Crown'.

Gentilcore noted the cooking time on her recipe calls for 25-30 minutes. The 25 minutes, she said, leaves the loaves with a slight pinkish-color inside. This is the way she prefers her beef, she said, because when it is cooked on the rare side the meat dish is "more moist and you can taste the beef more."

The beef cook-off is sponsored by the Pa. Beef Council, along with the Pa. Department of Agriculture, and the Pa. Cattlemen's Association.

The contest is open to any resident of the state who is 18 years-old or older. However, no one with a professional food status is eligible to compete, according to Mary Wilson, chairman.

Each recipe has to contain 2-5 pounds of

beef chuck, round, rump, fresh brisket, or ground beef. A maximum cooking time of 4 hours was set for the recipe entries, however this does not include time needed for preliminary preparations such as marinating.

Out of the 28 entries received, eight were selected as finalists. These contestants, armed with their necessary ingredients, cooked up a storm at Trinity High School. Judging the prepared beef delights were Betty Rode, PDA; Mrs. Thea ... Germanville, Lehigh Co. and owner of an Angus farm and meat market in Schnecksville; and, Fay Strickler, home economist for the Cooperative Extension Service in Berks Co.

The entries were judged on taste, with a possible 40 points; ease of preparation and practicality, 20 points; originality, 20 points; and appearance, 20 points.

Helping with the day's festivities and taste-testing the completed entries were Laura Weinberger, the Pa. Cattlemen's Queen; Lowell Wilson, secretary of the Pa. Cattlemen's Association; and Luther Snyder and Chester Heim, Deputy-Secretaries for PDA.

The second place award went to Nancy Gutekunst, Allentown, with her Yorkshire Pub Beef with English Parsley Sauce. Ruth Roberts, Bensalem, was the third place winner with Beeflower Au Gratin; and fourth place went to Norma Broderick, Waterford, for her Italian Style Beef Amores.

Copies of the contest recipes will be available within two weeks from the Pa. Cattlemen's Association or the PDA, said Lowell Wilson.

For a sneak preview, here's the first-place recipe:

Triple Crown Mini Loaves

1 (3 oz.) can french fried onions, finely crushed and divided
2 tablespoons brown sugar
4 teaspoons prepared mustard
2 tablespoons butter or margarine
2 tablespoons flour
¼ cup catsup
2 pounds lean ground beef
1 egg, slightly beaten
4 slices American cheese, cut in half

(A) Combine ¼ cup crushed french fried onions and 2 tablespoons brown sugar. Put 1 tbl. of preceding mixture into each of 8 (6 oz.) well-greased oven-proof custard cups. Top each with ½ tsp. prepared mustard.

(B) Melt butter or margarine in small saucepan. Remove pan from heat - stir in 2 tbl. flour to form smooth paste. Add ¼ cup catsup - stir to blend.

(C) Combine in large bowl: 2 pounds ground beef, beaten egg, catsup mixture and remaining crushed french fried onions, mix lightly, but thoroughly.

(D) Press ⅓ cup meat mixture into each dish. Place ½ slice American cheese, folded into quarters in center of each. Press remaining meat into each dish to fill within ½ inch of top. (Can be prepared several hours before serving, if desired).

(E) Place dishes on cookie sheet for easier handling.

Bake uncovered in preheated 350°F. oven for 25-30 minutes. Remove from oven. Allow to set in dishes a few minutes. Run spatula around outer edge of each dish before inverting onto serving platter.

Garnish with parsley & cherry tomatoes if desired. Yields 8 servings.

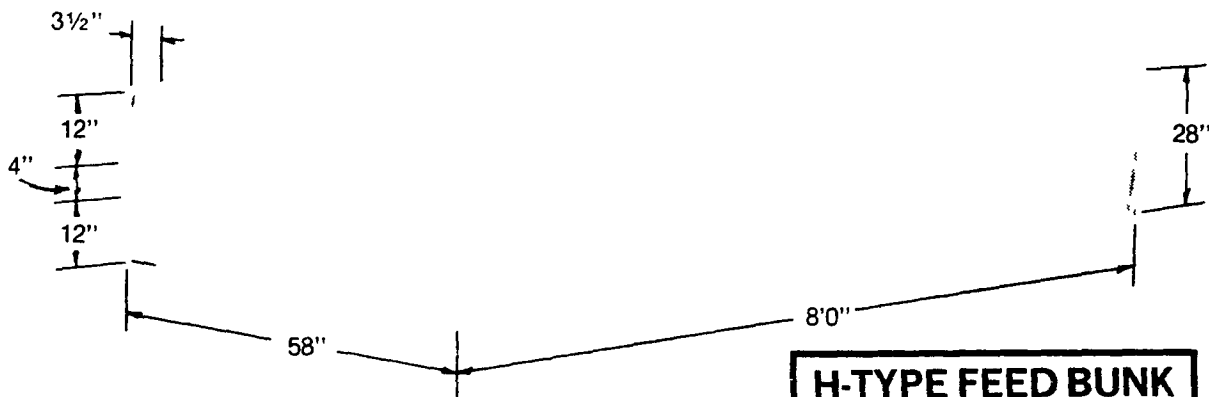


Sampling the tasty entries are, from left, Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Chester Heim; Betty Rode, PDA judge; Mary Wilson, contest chairman; Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Luther Snyder; and Lowell Wilson, secretary of the Pa. Cattlemen's Association.



First place in the 5th Pa. Beef Cook-Off Contest went to Rosemary Gentilcore, Bethlehem. She received congratulations and the winner's check from Pa. Cattlemen Queen Laura Weinberger.

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