



MICROWAVE MINUTES

By JOYCE BATTCHER

Size of food is related to microwave cooking time. Large, thick pieces of food need longer cooking time than small thin pieces.

Take zucchini, for instance. Stuffed zucchini halves take longer to cook than zucchini chunks. Chunks need longer cooking time than thin slices. And, thin slices need more cooking time than shreds of grated zucchini.

Let's say, for example, instead of making Cheesy Stuffed Zucchini (below), you decide to cut a medium zucchini into chunks, microwave it and then stir in the stuffing cubes and cheese. Those chunks would be done in about two to three minutes. Same with Summer Squash Combo. If you'd rather buzz the zucchini through your food processor's shredding disc, the shreds would cook in about half the time as slices. (Note: If you use shredded zucchini, be sure to precook the onion and pepper strips or coarsely chop them -- otherwise they'll still be uncooked and crisp when the zucchini shreds are done.)

From the above examples, you see that it's important to follow recipe directions as to size and thickness of ingredients. Or, to be aware that if you substitute smaller, thinner pieces of food, slightly less microwaving time will be needed. Anytime you vary the size of food from what the recipe calls for, you'll need to adjust time accordingly.

No matter what size pieces of

zucchini you use in today's recipes, you'll have some tasty eating.

Notice in Cheesy Stuffed Zucchini, the zucchini shells are cooked until done before adding the cheese and crouton stuffing, because only a very short microwave time is needed to heat the croutons and melt the cheese. Summer Squash Combo is a beautiful-looking combination of green-skinned zucchini, yellow-skinned summer squash, and strips of sweet red pepper. Even if you use only zucchini and green peppers, the color and flavor is outstanding. Stirring once halfway through cooking time aids in fast and even cooking. Speedy Zucchini For One, is what it's name implies -- a very quickly-prepared, fast-cooking zucchini dish. A 1/2 or even 3/4 cup of shredded zucchini is tender in less than two minutes.

Cheesy Stuffed Zucchini

1 medium zucchini (about 6 inches long, 1 1/2 inches in diameter)

Crumbled dried thyme

1/2 cup herb-seasoned stuffing cubes or croutons

1/2 cup American Process cheese spread cubes

Cut zucchini in half lengthwise. Using a sharp knife (and, if available, a grapefruit spoon), scoop out and discard seeds, leaving shells about 1/4 - to 1/2 -inch thick. Place shells, cut-side up, in a microwave-safe pie plate; cover with plastic wrap. Microwave

(High) 3 to 4 minutes or until bottom centers are tender when pierced with a fork. Sprinkle each lightly with thyme. Divide stuffing cubes between shells; top with cheese cubes. Recover with plastic wrap. Microwave on Medium (50% power, 325-350 watts) 45 to 90 seconds or until cheese just starts to melt. Makes 1 large or 2 medium main dish servings.

Each serving: 1/2 of recipe: 125 calories, 7g protein, 1g fat, 19g carbohydrate, 450mg sodium, 4mg cholesterol.

Summer Squash Combo

1 medium zucchini, unpeeled and thinly sliced

1/2 medium yellow summer squash, unpeeled and thinly sliced*

1/2 large red or green sweet pepper, thinly sliced

1 small onion, cut in thin strips

1 clove garlic, minced

1/2 teaspoon dried oregano

3 tablespoons olive oil or butter

Freshly ground black pepper

2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

In a microwave-safe 2-quart casserole, stir together zucchini, yellow summer squash, red sweet pepper, onion, garlic and oregano. Drizzle with olive oil or dot with butter. Cover with lid or plastic wrap. Microwave (High) 4 to 6 minutes, stirring once, or until vegetables are almost desired doneness. Toss with pepper and Parmesan. Serve as a vegetable or over cooked pasta for a main dish. Makes about 8 vegetable-servings.

*Or use all zucchini. There should be a total of about 5 cups of thinly sliced zucchini and yellow squash or all zucchini. If using large zucchini or yellow squash, remove seeds before slicing.

Each serving: 67 calories, 1g

protein, 6g fat, 4g carbohydrate, 25mg sodium, 2mg cholesterol.

Speedy Zucchini For One

1/2 - 3/4 cup unpeeled shredded zucchini

1 teaspoon olive oil or butter

Seasoned salt

Onion or garlic powder

1 teaspoon grated Parmesan cheese

Arrange shredded zucchini in a 4-inch flat patty on microwave-safe saucer. Drizzle with olive oil or dot with butter. Sprinkle lightly with seasoned salt and onion or garlic powder. Cover with waxed paper. Microwave (High) 1 1/2 to 2 minutes, depending on desired doneness. Sprinkle with Parmesan. Makes 1 vegetable serving.

For four servings: Evenly spread 2 to 3 cups shredded zucchini in microwave-safe pie plate. (If necessary, first drain zucchini well.) Drizzle with 1 tablespoon olive oil or dot with 1 tablespoon butter. Sprinkle lightly with seasonings. Cover with waxed paper. Microwave (High) 2 minutes; stir well, recover, and continue microwaving (High) 1 1/2 to 2 minutes or until zucchini is almost desired doneness. Sprinkle with about 1 tablespoon Parmesan and a light dusting of paprika before serving.

Each serving: 64 calories, 2g protein, 5g fat, 4g carbohydrate, 13mg sodium, 3mg cholesterol.

Questions and Answers

Q. I tried to make own angel food cake pan by setting a custard cup in the center of a casserole. The custard cup floated up in the thin cake batter, so I added water to the custard cup, but then the cake took a lot longer to cook. What did I do wrong?

A. Your idea was fine. By adding the water to the custard cup, you added more food (in this case, liquid) for the microwave to cook, so the cooking time increased. This didn't hurt the cake any. In fact, it probably aided in cooking your cake more evenly. But next time, you could try setting two custard cups - one inside the other - in the center; then cooking time would be similar to time given in the recipe.

Questions for Joyce?

Do you have a question about microwave cooking? Send it to Microwave Minutes, % Extra Newspaper Features, P.O. Box 6118, Rochester, MN 55903. Please include a self-addressed, stamped, business-size envelope.

Recipes in this column are tested in 600- and 650-watt microwave ovens. With an oven of different wattage output, timings may need slight adjustment.

Joyce Battcher is an independent home economist microwave specialist. She is author of "Microwave Family Favorites" and editor of "A Batch of Ideas" newsletter.

Copyright 1988 Extra Newspaper Features

GIGANTIC SELECTION

In Lancaster Farming's CLASSIFIEDS

HOGS DON'T HAVE TO BE SLOPPY EATERS.

Thanks To Hog Slat's Exclusive Feeder Features.

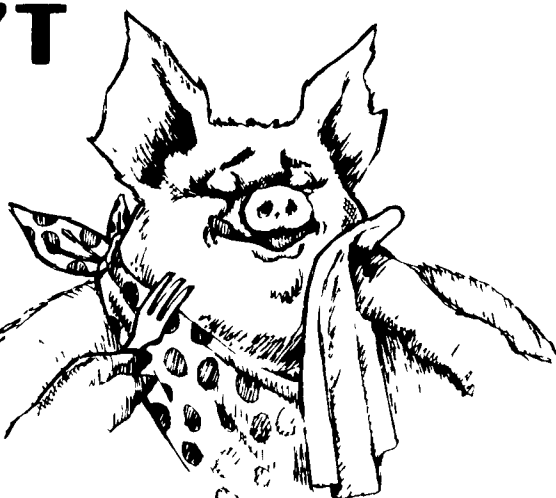
- Easy Adjusting
- Efficient Agitation
- Deeper Troughs
- Feed-saver Trough Lips

LESS FEED WASTE MEANS GREATER HOG PROFITS.

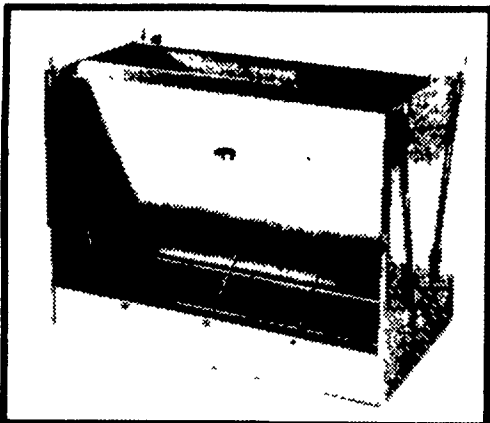
Hog Slat's new stainless steel confinement feeder is designed to keep your hogs at the trough, standing and eating. No more picking up and backing off.

That means less spillage, less waste, greater hog profits.

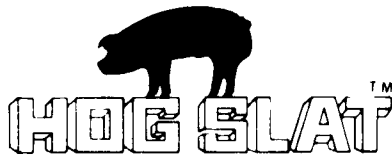
Compare Hog Slat's stainless steel feeder.



Copyright © 1984 by Hog Slat, Inc. All rights reserved.



US Patent 4306518



TRI-COUNTY

CONFINEMENT SYSTEMS, INC.

608 E Evergreen Rd Lebanon, PA 17042

PH: 717-274-3488
Hours: Mon-Fri 7:00 to 4:30

YANMAR

Super September Sale



List \$10,158

MODEL 187D

4 WD, 18 H.P., Ag Tires
P.S. Trans., Live PTO

SEPTEMBER SALE SPECIAL \$6,999

Yanmar Tractors are always a great value. And now the savings are even better than ever during our "September Clearance Sale".

- 12 models from 14 to 33 HP
- Choose 2 or 4 Wheel Drive
- Compare Yanmar quality
- Experience Yanmar's fingertip "Shuttle Power Shift"



Tractors and Implements More than You Expect

Come See! Come Save! Save during our Big September Clearance Sale.

"A Little Out Of The Way... But A Lot Less To Pay"

"SERVICE IS OUR MOTTO"

LAWN CARE OF PA.

Sales & Service

1 MI. North of Martindale on Grise Mill Rd., Martindale, PA 17548

(215) 445-4541

HOURS: Mon., Fri. 8 AM - 8 PM
Tues., Wed., Thurs. 8 AM - 5:30 PM
Sat. 8 AM - 2 PM