

# Cooking With Ted, The Vegetable Expert

**LOU ANN GOOD**

Lancaster Farming Staff  
MOUNT JOY (Lancaster Co.)

— If you'd like to prepare nutritious vegetables that your family and friends devour, Ted Shenk is the person to see.

This Mount Joy produce farmer offers "Cooking With Ted" programs that you will love.

For more than 50 years, Ted and his wife, Doris, have operated Donegal Gardens, a produce stand at Root's Country Market, Manheim, and at Central Markets, Lancaster.

Ted said, "I like to promote vegetables and show people how good they taste."

Kids don't turn up their noses at vegetables if Ted cooks them. This father of four and grandfather of six, has always loved to cook. Since his seasonal business is slow during the months of January through March, Ted wanted something different to do with his time. When his wife's Farm Women Society asked him to demonstrate stir frying, Ted was hooked on food demonstrating. Since then, this affable, jolly couple have been busy traveling to many organizations to show others how good and attractive vegetables can taste and look.

"Stir fry is great served over rice and it's something different from the usual meat and potatoes," Ted said. "I'm not trying to compete with Chinese stir fry. I use fresh vegetables found in Lancaster County and sold at my stand year-around."

Ted's programs are not limited to stir frying. So far, he has four programs to choose from:

- Introducing Fresh Vegetables Thru Stir-Fry
- Introducing the Four Popular Squashes (acorn, spaghetti, zucchini, and butternut)
- Ten Hors D'Oeuvres and Appetizers Made From Fruit and Vegetables
- Filling (stuffing) — learn Ted's special recipe.

Ted is proud that his program is different than the usual organizational meetings, but he is especially pleased that his program gives vegetables a positive plug.

"Seeing is doing," Ted said. And that's what many of his guests

do after tasting Ted's specialties.

Ted tries to keep his recipes easy to make. Most of his ideas were gathered from fabulous buffets that appear on the cruises that he and his wife often escort.

For stir frying, Ted generally uses chicken breasts, but pork, beef, and other lean cuts are sometimes incorporated.

Ted is the sixth generation of produce farmers in his family. Since Ted took over the operation in the 1950s, consumers' demands have changed from peas and potatoes to favorites such as broccoli, squash, and tomatoes.

"We used to grow 75 varieties of vegetables," Ted said. The Shenks now buy some of the produce from other farmers.

The Shenks use their acreage to its maximum by concentrating on double and triple cropping. They start and finish each season with spinach planting, plant sugar peas in the spring and again in August, and expand their broccoli crop by cutting out the center head of broccoli so that side shoots develop and can be picked about 10 days later.

"It takes a lot of picking," Ted said. The parents and the four children worked at the business together as the children were growing up. Now, the Shenks hire school kids for much of the summer harvesting. Some of their grandchildren are now old enough to help.

The Shenks, like many produce growers, find the labor end of produce growing is expensive. Ted said, "California produce growers use machines and migrant workers for harvesting. In the East, we need to pay higher wages."

Ted said with three working together, they can cut a bushel of spinach every five minutes.

To control weeds, the Shenks mulch with dried sweet corn stalks.

Leaf lettuce, is grown in hot beds, spring onions are wintered over, and radishes, sugar peas, hull peas, and strawberries are harvested in the spring.

Doris grows dill, flowers, meadow tea, mints, sunflowers, gourds, and parsley. They continue to grow purple cabbage, endive, and brussel sprouts.

The Shenks do not limit their love for growing things to pro-



Ted and Doris Shenk show off the spinach that they grow with other produce on 10 acres of beautifully landscaped hilly terrain. In their love for growing things, the Shenks have designed gardens of beauty along the Donegal Creek in Mount Joy.



Samples of Ted's specialties are sure to convince tasters that vegetables are not only nutritious but delicious.

duce. They built their own home near a creek, and have landscaped the hilly terrain with hundreds of colorful shrubs, trees, and plants for year-around beauty. They also raise Christmas trees and red leaf maples to sell.

Write Ted and Doris Shenk at 1461 Marietta-Mt. Joy Pike, Mt. Joy, PA 17552 or call (717) 653-5204.

Here are a few of Ted's recipes for vegetables and fruit.

### RED BLISS POTATOES

Red-skinned potatoes, diced, unpeeled

Pan boil, drain, and roll the potatoes in melted margarine. Shake with Mrs. Dash's Salt-Free Seasoning. Stir. Sprinkle with grated Parmesan cheese.

### BROILED GRAPEFRUIT

Section grapefruit, but let it remain in shell

Brush with margarine. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon. Broil until it bubbles on top. Garnish with a cherry or strawberry in center of grapefruit.

### EXTRA-SPECIAL SPINACH DIP

In medium bowl, blend:

- 1 envelope Lipton vegetable recipe soup mix
  - 16-ounces sour cream
  - ½ cup mayonnaise
  - ½ teaspoon lemon juice
- Stir in:
- 6 ounces fresh spinach, steamed and chopped
  - 3 whole spring onions, chopped
- Chill. Makes 3 cups dip. Good with fresh vegetables and crackers.

### TIPS FOR STIR FRY

Use peanut oil. Slice boneless, skinless chicken breast while still slightly frozen. Prepare fresh vegetables by cutting in toothpick shapes.

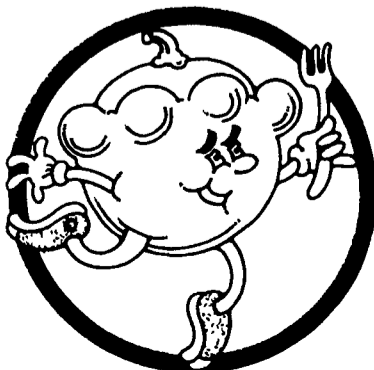
Stir and steam vegetables in ½ cup chicken broth in the following order:

- Spring onions
- String beans
- Carrots
- Broccoli, chopped
- Cauliflower
- Zucchini
- Sugar peas
- Snow peas
- Mushrooms

Season with Soy sauce, herb mix, and Mrs. Dash's seasoning.



Ted Shenk loves to cook — especially vegetables that he grows and markets at Roots Country Market and Central Market, Lancaster.



**Vegetables are good — take one to lunch.**