

Grange Cookbook

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The members of the Grange learned how profitable selling cookbooks could become. But it wasn't until the early '50s that another cookbook was assembled and sold. Since then the famous white-covered cookbook and the current red-covered cookbook have been published in 1972 and 1984, respectively. Both the white and the red have sold well over 130,000 copies each.

Miriam Forney, a member of Star Grange and chairwoman of the red cookbook, feels the Grange cookbooks are so popular because they reflect local ways of cooking.

"Our cookbooks are popular because they go back to the basic recipes, not boxes and mixes. Most start from scratch," says Women's Activities Director Becky Michalka.

Forney and Michalka both said a lot of work goes into preparing a cookbook — more than most people realize.

"You say you're publishing a cookbook and people expect it to be out and ready to sell the next week," Michalka commented. For this new cookbook, she received more than 4,000 recipes. That number had to be brought down to about 1,000 to fit into the cookbook.

Cookbooks have changed quite a bit since when the first Grange cookbook was published, notes Forney. The first cookbook might say a pinch of this and a pinch of that. Today most cooks want to have specific measurements so their recipe comes out right. But lifestyles have also changed.

"Today you need to include

low-fat and low-sugar recipes as well as microwave recipes for today's young couple who wants to cook fast meals for their fast-paced lives," Forney said.

The Pennsylvania State Grange cookbooks aren't restricted to Pennsylvania. Copies of the book can be found in states across the country. Lola Mefford, of Bell Flower, CA, has been baking and cooking for 45 years. She owns over 250 cookbooks and time and time again returns to the Pennsylvania State Grange cookbooks.

"I've won first place at the Los Angeles County Fair (the largest fair in the world) with Grange jam bars, lemon tart bars, and brownies," Mefford said. "And I won first runner up in the California Crisco Pie Bake Off with a lemon pie recipe from the book."

Mefford, a regular contributor to the Los Angeles times food section, even aroused the interest in the Pennsylvania Grange cookbook from a free-lance writer at the paper. After trying some of the recipes, the free-lance winter "had to get a copy."

Stories are told of how the cookbooks pass down from generation to generation. And their popularity continues. Cookbooks are the number one selling kind of book, next to the Bible, and the Pennsylvania Grange cookbooks are just as popular as any. If you would like information for ordering a book please call 1-800-552-3865.

Praline Brunch Toast

8 eggs
1 1/2 cups milk
1 tablespoon brown sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
8 1/2 -inch thick slices of French bread

1/4 cup butter
1/2 cup packed brown sugar
1/4 cup maple syrup
1/2 cup chopped pecans

Beat eggs, milk, 1 tablespoon brown sugar and vanilla in bowl. Pour half the mixture in 9x13-inch dish. Layer bread slices over mixture. Pour remaining egg mixture over top. Chill, covered, for several hours to overnight. Melt butter in 9x13-inch baking dish. Stir in 1/2 cup brown sugar and maple

syrup; sprinkle with pecans. Remove bread slices from egg mixture and layer over sugar mixture. Pour any remaining egg mixture over top. Bake at 350 degrees for 30 to 35 minutes or until puffed and golden. Yield: 4 servings.

Ham Crepes Ensenada

12 thin slices of ham
12 flour tortillas
1 pound Monterey Jack cheese, cut into 1/2 -inch sticks
1 4-ounce can green chilies, cut into 1/4 -inch strips
1/2 cup flour
1/2 cup melted butter
1 quart milk
3 cups shredded Cheddar cheese

1 teaspoon prepared mustard
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
Paprika to taste

Place 1 slice of ham on each tortilla. Top each with 1 stick Monterey Jack cheese and 1 chili strip. Roll up; secure with wooden picks. Place in greased 9x13-inch baking pan. Stir flour into melted butter in saucepan. Add milk, Cheddar cheese, mustard, salt and pepper. Cook until blended and smooth, stirring frequently. Pour over crepes. Sprinkle with paprika. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes. Yield: 6 servings.

Best-Loved Lemon Bars
1 cup butter or margarine, softened

1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
2 cups flour
1/4 teaspoon salt
4 eggs, slightly beaten
5 tablespoons lemon juice
1 tablespoon grated lemon rind
2 cups sugar
1/4 cup flour
Confectioners' sugar

Combine butter, 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar, 2 cups flour and salt in bowl; mix to form soft dough. Press evenly into ungreased 9x13-inch baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 to 20 minutes or until gold brown. Reduce oven temperature to 325 degrees. Combine eggs, lemon juice, lemon rind, sugar and 1/4 cup flour in bowl; mix well. Spread over baked layer. Bake for 25 minutes longer or until set. Cool on wire rack. Sprinkle with additional confectioners' sugar. Cut into bars. Yield: 3 dozen.

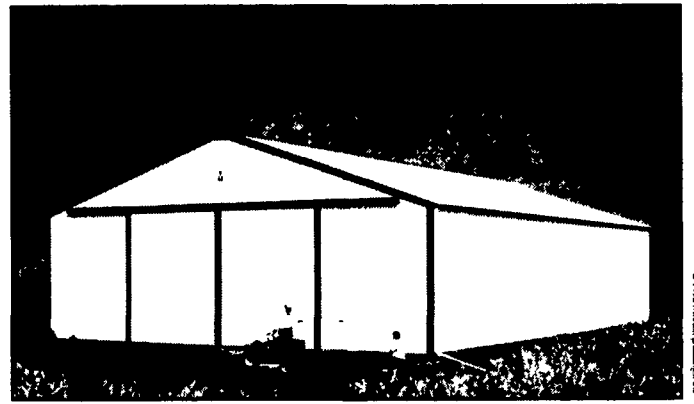
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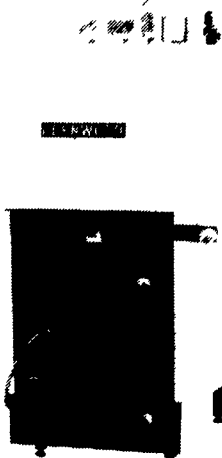
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