

Emu Receives Big Promotion At Farm Show

LOU ANN GOOD
Lancaster Farming Staff

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Samples of emu were offered to visitors during some of the cooking demonstrations held at the Pennsylvania Farm Show.

"It tastes similar to beef," said one participant.

"A bit like beef heart," said another.

Emu is a red meat, high in protein and similar to beef but lower in fat, calories, and cholesterol.

"It's the health food of the 90s," say Emu breeders.

At this point emu is extremely high priced and difficult to purchase in the area. But emu breeders plan to change that.

"Right now it is a breeder market, not a slaughter market," Judy Congreve said.

She works at Bernie's Flying Emu Farm in Etters and was one of several persons telling Farm Show visitors about emu.

Chicks cost \$2,000 to \$2,500 a piece. A yearling emu cost \$5,000 to \$7,000.

"Once they reach three months of age, emu are disease resistant and very hardy," Judy said.

"Emu are very cost efficient, having a high food to weight conversion factor and can be maintained with a minimum of labor and space," According to Judy, the emu is a gentle, flightless bird similar to an ostrich. They are docile and have an amusing curiosity.

The emu grows to a height of 5 to 6 feet and weighs up to 150 pounds. They begin to breed at 18 to 30 months of age and can produce more than 30 eggs a year.

After 48 to 60 days of artificial incubation, hatched chicks are kept in a brooder until they learn to eat and then are moved to a larger area for exercise with shelter.

In addition to meat, emu provides a hypo-allergenic, deep penetrating oil used in cosmetic cream and for medicinal purposes.

Leather is similar to ostrich hide, although softer and more pliable, the appearance and durability are the same. It is used for boots, shoes, briefcases, purses, clothing, and accessories.

The feathers are used for fashion clothing, dusters, and fishing lures.

Broken or hatched egg shells can be made into jewelry or other fashion accessories.

The birds are slaughtered at 14 months for use as meat. About 50 pounds of breast meat comes from a bird.

Marcia Sharp, who was in charge of the food demonstration, said that emu and chicken are wonderful cooked together.

"You should treat emu similar to beef. It has the flavor but no saturated fat," she said.

Here are the recipes for emu that were served at the Farm Show cooking demonstrations. Contact a breeder if you would like to purchase emu.

Tarragon 'n Thyme Chicken & Tarragon 'n Thyme Emu*

2 (2½ to 3 lb.) broiler fryer chickens, quartered
2 teaspoons salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
2 teaspoons tarragon leaves (or sprig over each quarter)
3 tablespoons lemon juice
½ teaspoon ground thyme
2 tablespoons chopped parsley
2 tablespoons Old Cider Mill Tarragon Vinegar
Thin slices of lemon
3 tablespoons lemon juice

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Rinse chicken, pat dry. Place chicken, skin side up, in shallow baking pan in foil. Sprinkle salt, pepper, tarragon, thyme, lemon juice and tarragon vinegar over chicken. Cover tightly with foil. Bake 40 minutes. Remove or open foil and bake 20-25 minutes longer, or until tender. Sprinkle with juice, chopped parsley and garnish with lemon slices.

FOR EMU: Substitute 1 lb. well trimmed sliced Emu.

Vegetable Pasta

1 (2-3 lb.) spaghetti squash
1 small zucchini
2 medium onions, chopped
2 tablespoons butter
1 (16 ounce) can stewed tomatoes
¼ pound mushrooms, sliced
16 ounces shredded cheddar cheese
Salt and pepper to taste

Cut squash in half and place down in a shallow pan. Put water to bottom of squash and cover with foil. Bake about 1 hour at 350 degrees. Take out seeds and, with a fork, scrape out the squash into spaghetti shreds. Put into a greased baking dish. Fry zucchini and onion in butter. Add mushrooms and saute a few minutes. Mix remaining ingredients except ½ of the cheese. Mix with squash. Top with remaining cheese. Bake at 350 degrees until cheese is melted and bubbly.

Chicken Country Captain & Emu Country Captain*

2 tablespoons butter and vegetable oil
1½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
¼ teaspoon Spanish paprika
¼ cup flour
4 chicken thighs, skinned and deboned, cut into strips
3 cups steamed white rice
Sauce:
1 small onion, diced
1 small red and/or green pepper cored, seeded and cut batonnet
1 clove garlic, minced
1 tablespoon fresh minced parsley
¼ teaspoon thyme
½ teaspoon curry powder
¼ teaspoon black pepper
¼ cup water
1½ cups tomato juice
9 ounces canned tomatoes, cut concasee
¼ cup currants
½ cup almonds toasted

Mix the seasoning mixture. Dredge the chicken pieces in the mixture, shaking off excess flour. In a large skillet, heat the butter and oil. Saute chicken to a golden brown. Remove from the skillet and keep warm. Add more butter if necessary. Saute onion, red and/or green pepper, garlic and parsley, just until the onion is translucent. Add water, thyme, curry powder and black pepper. Stir in the tomato juice and tomatoes. Simmer the sauce over medium heat for 10 minutes or until slightly thickened. Add the chicken to the sauce. Simmer 10 to 15 minutes longer. Stir in 3 tablespoons of currants. Serve mixture over steamed rice. Dust with currants and almonds.

FOR EMU: Substitute 1 pound well trimmed diced Emu.

Cajun Chicken and Shrimp Cream & Cajun Emu and Shrimp Cream*

Seasoned Flour:
¼ cup flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon white pepper
1 teaspoon onion powder
¼ - 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper



This culinary dish features chicken and emu, a dark meat that is high in protein and low in fat. Holding the meat are emu growers from Bernie's Flying Emu Farm in Etters. Visitors at the cooking demonstration sampled the meat.



From left, Joanne Cissel, Ann Cissel, Bill Cissle and Judy Congreve with Nancy Hulsizer and Rita Liptz, seated, eagerly tell Farm Show visitors everything they should know about raising emu.

2 teaspoons sweet paprika

Recipe:

1 pound fettuccine, cooked, drained and buttered
2 full chicken breasts, skinned, boned and cut into 1 inch cubes
8 ounces large shrimp, shelled and deveined
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
4 tablespoons unsalted butter
6 scallions, cut into ¼ inch rounds including the green leaves
1 (6 ounce) jar marinated artichoke hearts, quartered, juice reserved
½ to 1 cup chicken broth
1 cup heavy cream

Prepare the seasoned flour. Place in a zip lock style plastic bag. Prepare the chicken and shrimp as described above. In small batches, add to the seasoned flour. Shake to coat evenly, removing excess flour. Heat oil and butter in a heavy skillet over high heat. Add the chicken and shrimp pieces. Saute until golden, about 4 minutes. Add the scallions. Saute 2 minutes. Add chicken broth. Stir to mix and dissolve the brown flavor bits. Cook mixture over medium heat for 4 minutes. Add the heavy cream and reserved marinated liquid. Cook over medium heat until sauce thickens and reduce. Add the artichokes and heat

through. Serve mixture over cooked pasta, garnished with minced parsley and/or scallions. Serves 4.

FOR EMU: Substitute 1 pound well trimmed, small diced Emu.

Spicy Garlic Chicken & Spicy Garlic Emu*

2 pounds boneless chicken breasts
2 tablespoons vegetable oil
15 cloves garlic, peeled and split
½ cup Old Cider Mill Hot Pepper Vinegar
2 tablespoons honey
1 ounce soy sauce

Wash chicken and cut in half. Brown all in vegetable oil in heavy skillet. Add garlic and cook a little longer, until browned. Add remaining ingredients and cook over medium heat until chicken is done and glazed with sauce. Turn chicken several times during cooking.

FOR EMU: Substitute 1 to 2 pounds well trimmed diced Emu.

Chicken Cerubi & Emu Cerubi*

1 whole chicken breasts, skinned, boned and cut into 1 inch cubes
8 oz. Italian sausage, cut into ½ inch slices
8 oz. fresh mushrooms, sliced
emincer

Dash of oregano, basil, salt and white pepper

4 tablespoons butter, divided
3 scallions, cut into ¼ inch pieces
2 slices ham, cut batonnet
3 ounces snow peas, stringed
¼ cup all purpose flour
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon white pepper
¼ cup dry white wine
Cooked fettuccine, angel hair or rice

Skin, bone and cut chicken into pieces as indicated above. Mix together the flour, salt and white pepper. Dredge the chicken in the seasoned flour, shaking off excess flour. Melt 3 tablespoons of butter in a saute pan. Saute chicken pieces until light colden in color. Add the sausage pieces. Saute until firm to the touch. Remove and set aside. Add the remaining butter to the skillet. Saute the mushrooms and green peppers. Add the ham, snow peas and scallions. Saute 3-5 minutes. Deglaze the skillet with the white wine. Add the reserved chicken and sausage, along with the seasonings. Cover and simmer over low heat for 10 minutes or until chicken is firm to the touch. Serve chicken mixture over hot pasta or rice. Serves 2.

FOR EMU: Substitute 1 pound well trimmed diced Emu.