



Cook's Question Corner

If you are looking for a recipe but can't find it, send your recipe request to Lou Ann Good, Cook's Question Corner, in care of Lancaster Farming, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522. There's no need to send a SASE. If we receive an answer to your question, we will publish it as soon as possible.

Answers to recipe requests should be sent to the same address.

QUESTION — Mae Pugh would like a recipe for chicken rice soup like that served at Ponderosa.

QUESTION — Mrs. Kenneth Ulmer, Waymart, wants a recipe to can a mixture of mushrooms, onions, green peppers, and oil in pint jars.

QUESTION — R. Smith, Jonestown, heard about hunter green pumpkins, not squash or gourds, sold at a roadside market in Lancaster County and would like to know where to buy the seeds.

QUESTION — Mark Kopp, Tower City, would like to know what happened to sauerkraut. She said today it is shredded cabbage rather than the kraut she remembers.

QUESTION — May Ozinek, Flemington, N.J., wrote that on a recent trip to Florida, she and her husband ate at Shoney's the whole way down and back. At the breakfast buffet, Shoney's serves a delicious sheet cake that is spicy and filled with raisins and chunks of apples. The cake has a crumb topping and is very moist. Does anyone have a recipe?

QUESTION — Gloria Fready, Mount Joy, would like to know how to make French fried sweet potatoes. She tried making them, but they tasted soggy.

QUESTION — Evelyn Reinfeld, Halifax, would like recipes using buckwheat flour without yeast.

QUESTION — Patricia Corkell, Henderson, Md., would like a recipe for pickled garlic.

QUESTION — Patricia Davis, Dillsburg, would like a recipe for hard sugar cookies like those made by Archway.

QUESTION — Patricia Davis, Dillsburg, wants to know where to buy pasteurized egg whites.

QUESTION — Alverna Martin, Wellsboro, would like a recipe for mock pecan pie made with dried beans.

QUESTION — A reader from Potter County would like a recipe for fudge made out of goat's milk.

QUESTION — Mary Snyder, Manheim, writes that she planted hot Senano peppers by mistake. She froze them but has not used them. She would like recipes using this type of pepper, which could perhaps be used for gift jars of sauces, relishes, etc.

QUESTION — Karen Yourga is looking for a recipe to can strawberries in a glaze that can be poured right from the jar onto a cake. She has tried several recipes that bleed and turn pink. She would like one with a dark red color in which the strawberries are not mushy.

QUESTION — Edith Vuxta, Elizabethtown, would like a recipe for red velvet whoopie pies.

QUESTION — Sue Pardo, Jarrettsville, Md., would like recipes to use in a bread machine.

QUESTION — Sherry Craner, Bridgeton, N.J., would like a recipe for chocolate pasta, made with wheat flour. It is used for a dessert topped with sauteed strawberries and white chocolate.

QUESTION — Cissy McKeon, Birdsboro, would like a recipe for hand-dipped chocolate-covered strawberries such as those sold at Kaufman's in Pittsburgh. Cissy writes that it appears as if a layer of cream is between the strawberry and the chocolate.

QUESTION — Ralph Johnson, Sewell, N.J., would like a recipe for green tomato pie with raisins and a top crust.

QUESTION — Lisa Kerrigan, Bath, would like a recipe for Kosher Dill pickles that taste like the Claussen pickles that are stored in the refrigerator.

QUESTION — Peg Koser, Lancaster, wrote that in this column she learned how to make a tea concentrate using spearmint leaves and freezing for later use. She asks if there is a similar way to make a concentrate using fresh blue grapes?

QUESTION — Mary Lehman, Elizabethtown, would like recipes for rhubarb and a cookbook on rhubarb. One, that I'm aware of is "Rhubarb Cooking for All Seasons." For a copy, send \$6 to Rhubarb Cookbook, Box 392, Hopkins, Minnesota 55343. It is small, but has 150 recipes in it.

QUESTION — L. Weaver, Ephrata, would like recipes or ideas to prepare cubed steak.

QUESTION — Fay Leslie, Woodstown, N.J., would like a recipe for spoon bread, which is soft and of pudding texture.

QUESTION — Maureen Wheeler, Kirkwood, would like a

yummy recipe for baked beans that uses dried Great Northern Beans (not canned), molasses, brown sugar, onions, salt pork, dry mustard, and cooked in a slow cooker. She said that her mother had made them this way and unlike most bean recipes, this recipe had a sweeter molasses base and not a tangy catsup/tomato base. When cooked the baked beans were deep, dark brown. She thinks the recipe might have appeared in a '70s Rival Crock Pot recipe booklet.

QUESTION — Maureen Wheeler, Kirkwood, would like a lemon pudding cake recipe. She said her mother made it before cake mixes were invented. She remembers her mother poking holes in the top of the warm cake, just removed from the oven, with a toothpick and drizzling lemon glaze over the top. When the cake cooled, the lemon glaze hardened and "was mighty tasty."

QUESTION — Melanie Kozlowski, Kingsby, would like a recipe for chocolate muffins, a deep, dark chocolate muffin that is very heavy and moist.

QUESTION — Melanie Kozlowski, Kingsby, would like a recipe for mousse such as that served at Ponderosa.

ANSWER — Barb Hicks, Hawaii, wanted a recipe for homemade beef jerky, the spicier, the better. Thanks to Ted Wills, Frederick, who sent a recipe in which beef, deer or goose breast can be used to make excellent jerky. Also, thanks to Melanie Kozlowski, Kingsby, for sending a recipe.

Jerky

Cut strips with the grain (about the size of a piece of sliced bacon). Remove all fat. Prepare pickling solution.

1. Add enough cool water to an earthen crock to cover meat you want to brine (about 2 gallons).

2. Add kosher or pickling salt to water until a raw egg (in shell) floats.

3. Add about 12 bay leaves, small handful of peppercorns, 2 large tablespoons dry mustard, 2 cups brown sugar, stir until dissolved. Soak venison in brine solution for 24 hours in a cool place.

Remove from brine, wash meat in water, rinse out crock, add 2 gallons fresh water. Soak venison in clear water for 8 hours.

Remove from water and trim off any fat you missed the first time.

Dry meat: this step is very important. You want to dry smoke the meat — you do not want to cook the meat. If too much moisture is present, the jerky will not store well. However, if you choose to keep it refrigerated when completed, drying the meat completely is not that important. Use one of the following methods to dry the meat:

1. Hang meat on clothesline in basement (paper clips make handy hooks).

2. Hang meat outside on a cool windy day.

3. Place several layers of paper towels, repeat process, alternating layers of meat and towels. Place in refrigerator, uncovered. Change towels if necessary after 8 hours. (This is Ted's favorite method).

Place in smoker and smoke for 8 hours, usually about 3 pans of chips are required over that period of time.

Beef Jerky

1½ pounds meat (flank, top round, etc.)

1 teaspoon seasoned salt

1 teaspoon liquid smoke

½ teaspoon garlic powder

½ teaspoon pepper

1 teaspoon Accent

1 teaspoon onion powder

¼ cup Worcestershire sauce

¼ cup soy sauce

Trim excess fat. Cut meat into thin strips. Marinate overnight in a shallow glass dish thoroughly covered with sauce made from above ingredients. Lay strips of marinated meat in a single layer on oven racks. With oven door open a crack, roast meat at lowest possible temperature for 8-12 hours. Taste occasionally, until it is as chewy as desired. Makes ½ pound.

ANSWER — Pauline Sensenig wanted to know where she may purchase Washington's Golden Seasonings and Broth. Someone wrote that it can be purchased from Dutchway stores in the gravy and broth section. Rose Blessing wrote that she purchased it at Karns Grocery Store in Harrisburg. For those who do not live near these stores, you may want to contact American Home Foods, Inc., General Offices New York, N.Y. 10017 or Milton, PA 17847, which packs the broth.

ANSWER — Mary Lehman, Mifflintown, wanted a brownie recipe that uses mashed potatoes. Thanks to Rose Blessing, who sent a recipe for a cake made from mashed potatoes.

Idaho Potato Cake

1 cup butter, softened

2 cups sugar

2 eggs

1 cup cold mashed potatoes

1 teaspoon vanilla

2 cups all-purpose flour

¼ cup baking cocoa

1 teaspoon baking soda

1 cup milk

1 cup nuts, chopped

In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar until fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, heating well after each addition. Blend in potatoes and vanilla. Combine flour, cocoa, and baking soda; add alternately with milk, blending well after each addition. Stir in nuts. Pour into a greased 13x9x2-inch baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 40 to 45 minutes or until cake tests done. Cool on wire rack. Yields 12 to 16 servings.

Reduced Fat Cheeses

LEESPORT (Berks Co.) — In response to consumer demand for reduced-fat foods, the dairy industry has produced a variety of lower fat cheeses. "Light" versions of American, cheddar, Swiss and mozzarella are now widely distributed. There are also fat-reduced versions of Muenster, Havarti, Monterey Jack and provolone, but at present, these are not as widely available.

Fat levels among these products range from about 20% less than full-fat to virtually fat-free, with most at about 33 to 50% under that of their traditional counterparts. At present, the terms "low-fat," "reduced-fat" and "light" are not standardized by law, so the only practical way to determine actual fat savings is to read and compare nutrition labels.

Butterfat gives cheese its characteristic consistency, texture and rich flavor. To compensate for the loss of fat, reduced-fat cheese is formulated and processed differently. Some manufacturers add milk solids, while others use natural gums or fat substitutes. Reduced-fat cheeses do not "age" as well as their full-fat counterparts and as a result are usually milder in flavor. Also, as fat levels decrease, texture becomes firmer.

Generally, cheeses with fat reductions up to 33% are quite close in taste, texture and performance to the full-fat versions. However, as more fat is removed, the differences become more pronounced.

Cooking With

Reduced-Fat Cheese

Here are some suggestions for cooking with reduced-fat cheeses, recognizing that the variations in fat content and formulation affect performance:

- When making a sauce with reduced-fat cheese, keep heat exposure to a minimum, using grated, diced or slivered cheese and adding it at the very end of the cooking. Remove from heat and stir until melted. The addition of such condiments as mustard, or salsa, or various spices will complement the cheese's mild flavor.

- Most reduced-fat cheeses melt smoothly when layered in a casserole.

- Top casseroles and baked pasta dishes with reduced-fat cheese near the end of the baking time and heat until just melted. Serve immediately. Cheeses with very low fat levels take longer to melt and may produce a "skin" when baked.

- When broiling reduced-fat cheese slices on an open-faced sandwich, place it as far from the heat as possible or use a lower broiling temperature.

- To "lighten" a favorite recipe without altering the flavor or texture of the dish, replace up to one-half of the full-fat cheese with a reduced-fat variety.

Storing Of

Reduced-Fat Cheese

Because these cheeses have a shorter shelflife than their traditional counterparts, it is important to keep them well wrapped, refrigerated and use them as soon as possible.

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