

Rhubarb Fest Celebration

Consuming Thoughts
by
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LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.)
— Each year, the third Saturday in May, the tiny village of Intercourse is filled with the sweet aroma of rhubarb jam and with people from around the world who come to experience one of America's most unusual festivals. It is a magical time when the tender shoots of rhubarb have reached rosy pink, to be picked at peak flavor as the first harvest of the spring season. To local folks, rhubarb is nature's annual harbinger of the area's rich agricultural heritage.

The 12th annual Rhubarb Festival is set for May 20 at the Kitchen Kettle Village, where the making of homemade jellies and jams began as a home business over 40 years ago. Today over 60 different varieties of seasonal jams, jellies, preserves and relishes—made from all-natural ingredients—are still produced in small batches in stainless steel kettles, in an open kitchen that attracts over one million visitors each year. And the Village has grown to include 32 food, furniture and artisans' shops that reflect a heritage of culinary creativity and craftsmanship.

Every inch of Kitchen Kettle Village will be tied into the Rhubarb celebration, from the World's Only Rhubarb Race Car Derby (yes the mini dragsters are made of rhubarb stalks and electronically timed for the fastest finish) to the "Best Rhubarb Pie in Lancaster County" Baking Contest, Rhubarb Pie Throw and Rhubarb Arcade of Games. It's a family affair that offers something to see, taste and do—as long as it involves Rhubarb.

At stands and shops throughout the village visitors can enjoy Strawberry and Plain Rhubarb Pie, Strawberry Rhubarb Cookies, an Almond Rhubarb Pastry as well as Rhubarb Pecan Muffins. New this year is a kettle-shaped Soft Pretzel served with a Rhubarb Dipping Sauce.

For breakfast there will be Strawberry Rhubarb French Toast and Berry Rhubarb Parfait, while lunch and dinner menus will spotlight Chilled Strawberry Rhubarb Soup, Spiced Rhubarb Ham, Rhubarb Pork Chop Casserole, Easy Spicy Hot Rhubarb Sauce, plus Rhubarb Glazed Chicken Kabobs and Ham Balls.

Another new item, at the Fresh & Simple Drink Stand, is "Bluebarb Delight"—a smooth concoction that just may topple Strawberry Rhubarb Frost as the fest's most popular beverage.



Although Helen "Grammy" Groff is now semi-retired from Kitchen Kettle Village, she still helps out at festival time. Anyone who's tasted her Strawberry Rhubarb Pie always comes back for more!

Then there are the special events, where Village employees, friends and neighbors pitch in to help raise funds for charity. This year's beneficiary is the Four Diamonds Fund, which provides for the care and treatment of children with cancer at the Hershey Medical Center.

The Rhubarb Arcade will feature a Rhubarb Regatta, Rhubarb Bulls-eye Toss, Rhubarb Pick-up Sticks, a Rhubarb In-the-Jar Guessing Game, a "Which is the Real Rhubarb?" game, and the World's One & Only Rhubarb Tree. Fresh rhubarb plants will also be sold, along with a Rhubarb Recipes booklet that offers cooking tips and recipes. And who can resist getting their photo taken with the festival's costume characters, Yummie the Gingerbread Man and Rupert Rhubarb?

By the end of the day a quilting bee by local farmwomen will produce and sell a handmade crib quilt that will work in the Four Diamonds theme. The Retreads, an over-40s motorcycle club that

annually visits Intercourse for a regional convention, have adopted the Rhubarb Pie Throw as their own event.

Entertainment will be provided by "Banjo Jimmy" and his Band, and master storyteller Alan Irvine, whose extraordinary characters will weave in local history along with folk tales from around the world.

The 12th Annual Rhubarb Festival will run from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., rain or shine, on Saturday, May 20. Finals for the Rhubarb Race Car Derby with prizes in speed and design categories, will be held at 11 a.m. and cars will be on display following the race. Judging for the Best Rhubarb Pie Contest begins at 10:15 a.m.

Kitchen Kettle Village is located on Rt. 340 in the Village of Intercourse, 10 miles east of Lancaster City. A free color brochure is available that outlines all activities and events scheduled throughout the year. Call or write: Kitchen Kettle Village, Rt. 340, Intercourse, PA 17534. Telephone: (800) 732-3538.

Crunchy chocolate bars, lickable lollipops, and bubble gum are all part of the fun of being young. But too many sugary treats for children can cause problems.

Candy, soft drinks, cookies, cakes, and chips are frequent snacking choices. These foods are often high in sugar or fat, and contain little protein, vitamins, or minerals. Eating lots of high-calorie, low-nutrient snacks can contribute to tooth decay, obesity, and extra calories at the expense of other nutrient needs.

Choosing snacks with nutritional benefits is important for people of all ages, but it can be especially critical during the growing years.

If a child consumes about a quarter pound of sugar each day, that's 500 calories worth of sugar.

Suppose your ten year old needs 2,400 calories a day. This means that more than 20 percent of the child's calories are coming from sugar.

That much sugar may not be a problem for kids who eat a variety of nutrient-rich foods. But for the finicky eater, meeting nutritional requirements with the remaining 80 percent of his calorie intake could be very difficult.

Yesterday's caloric desserts frequently become tomorrow's snacks. Instead of having chocolate cake accessible to snackers, bake up a batch of muffins. Chopped apples, bananas, or pumpkin added to the batter give plain muffins flavor and nutritional variety.

Make snacking fun and let the kids have a piece of the action. With cookie cutters or paper patterns in place they can create animal, people, or other shapely creations from whole wheat bread. Top the bread with a fruit or vegetable spread such as grated carrots and raisins moistened with yogurt, crushed pineapple and cottage cheese, or grate cabbage combined with crushed pineapple. These spreads also make great dips for carrot sticks.

Quench your toddler's thirst with a fruit shake. Mix one cup milk with 1/4 cup grape juice or orange juice. Add one scoop vanilla ice cream, and shake or blend until smooth. This vitamin C, protein, and calcium combination can please the youngster as easily as a soft drink.

Eating between meals can be a good thing for growing children. A child's stomach is small and usually can't hold enough at one meal to last until the next meal. If you consider snacks as being mini-meals, then it may be easier to think nutritiously.

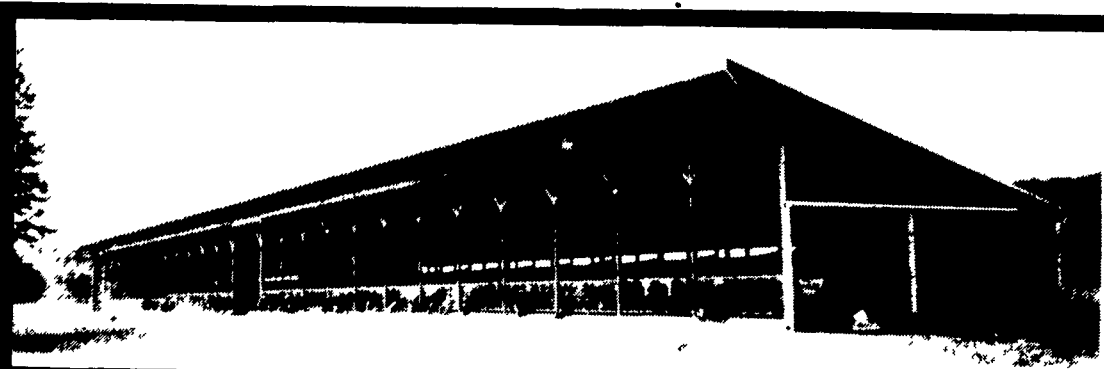
Calories, or food energy, is not all a growing youngster needs. Do the snacks you serve your child contribute protein, vitamins, or minerals to the diet? If not, then explore the many nutritious snacking options. You may quickly conclude that candy is really not so dandy.

If you're going to serve cookies to children, look for recipes with reduced sugar and/or recipes that have whole grains and fruit or vegetables as ingredients. Here's a recipe to get you started.

Oatmeal Peanut Butter Cookies

- 1/4 cup shortening
- 1 cup grated carrot
- 1/4 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1 cup flour
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup peanut butter
- 3 cups rolled oats, quick cooking
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

Preheat oven to 375°F. Cream shortening and sugar. Blend in water, eggs, peanut butter, vanilla and carrot. Sift flour, soda, and salt together, and stir into other ingredients. Stir in oats until completely moistened. Roll dough into 1-inch diameter balls and place on greased baking sheet. Press balls flat with a fork. Bake 10-12 minutes. Makes 5 dozen. Calories: 59 per cookie.



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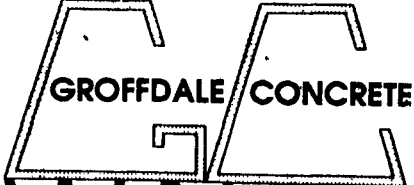
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