



Master gardeners Debbie Hartman and Barbara Binner show how holiday decorations can be made from food and garden items.

Home And Homemade For The Holidays

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LEBANON (Lebanon Co.) —
"Home... and homemade... for the Holidays was the theme at the Lebanon County Extension Holiday Program recently. More than 1,100 people attended the program, which was repeated in four sessions.

The annual program has earned the reputation of a great place to learn the latest in holiday foods, decorating, and gift making. This year was no exception. Here is a sampling of the event.

Debbie Hartman and Barbara Binner, Lebanon County master gardeners, demonstrated numerous ways to use edibles for holiday decorating.

DRYING FRUITS

Drying fruits in the oven con-

tinues to be a popular holiday decoration. After the fruits are dried, they may be used as ornaments, fastened to wreaths, arranged in floral centerpieces or used as potpourri.

Here are the directions:

- Slice apples approximately 1/4-inch thick. They can be sliced vertically, which will give you the apple's shape or they can be sliced horizontally, which will give you a star pattern.

- Dip the apples in a solution of 1 quart water, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, and 1 tablespoon Fruit Fresh.

- Cut a piece of brown paper from a grocery bag to fit a cookie sheet, and arrange the apples in a single layer on the paper. The brown paper prevents direct contact with hot metal, which can sometimes turn your apples brown).

- Set your oven at the lowest setting. Place the apples on the cookie sheet into the oven. Turn on the oven exhaust to remove the moisture or prop oven door open with the handle of a wooden spoon for the first few hours.

- Turn the apples once during the drying period to allow both sides to dry.

- Remove the apples when they become leathery, not brown. Place them on a rack in a warm, dry place to finish the drying process. The area above the refrigerator or in your furnace room often has a warm dry environment. The process will take about 4 to 6 hours. Temperature, humidity, and water content of the fruit help make this less than an exact science.

To dry citrus-fruit:

- Slice orange, pink grapefruit, lemons, limes about 1/4-inch thick.

- Cut brown paper bag to fit a cookie sheet.

- Place the cut slices on the sheet.

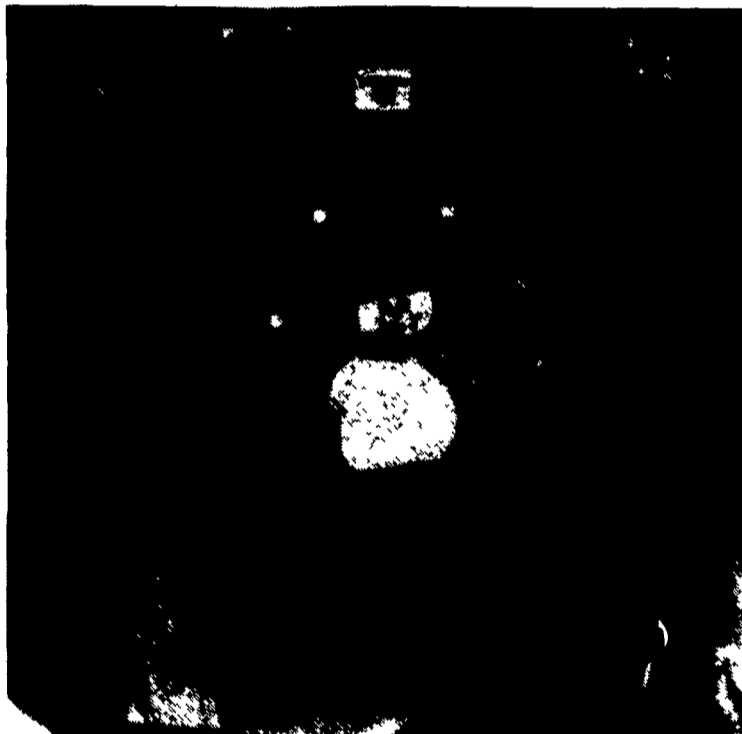
- Turn the oven to its lowest setting, propping the door ajar with a handle of a wooden spoon.

- Turn the citrus a few times during the drying process. Watch carefully to avoid citrus turning brown.

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Button up with these holiday crafts.



A plain sweatshirt is quickly transformed with a snowman cut out from scraps of fabric. Tie a fabric scarf and the rib part of a child's sock for the hat. Stitch on buttons for facial features. Snow flakes are made with additional white buttons surrounded with slashes of embroidery thread.



Fran Deltz shares the secret recipe for these "apples in hiding," which sell for \$14.95 a pair from an upscale catalogue.



Ellen Spector Platt shows how to use dried materials for wreaths and centerpieces.