

Cook's Question

(Continued from Page B8)

ANSWER — Anna Joyce Martin, East Earl, sent this letter in response to the request.

Potato Candy

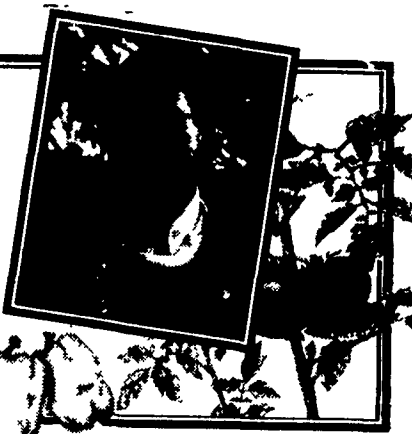
2 medium potatoes
Confectioners' sugar
Peanut butter
Pare, cook, mash, and cool potatoes. Add confectioners' sugar until mixture forms a soft dough. Roll out dough to a 4-inch thickness. Spread peanut butter over dough. Roll like a jelly roll. Cut into slices.

ANSWER — Louise Graybeal, Renick, W.V., wanted a recipe for beignets, a baked pastry made in the deep South. Thanks to Margaret Strause, Leesport, for sending a recipe. Also, thanks to Joan Pierson, who writes that if you don't want to make them completely from scratch, Cafe DuMonde in New Orleans is famous for beignets and sells a mix. Write for catalogue with prices and shipping to Cafe Du Monde, 1039 Decatur St., New Orleans, LA 70116 or call 1-800-772-2927.

Beignets

½ cup butter
1 teaspoon sugar
¼ teaspoon salt
1 cup water
1 cup plus 2 tablespoons sifted flour
1 teaspoon vanilla
4 eggs
Oil for frying
Confectioners' sugar
In medium pan, heat butter, sugar, salt, and water to boiling. Remove pan from heat and add flour all at once; stir vigorously until ingredients are combined thoroughly and dough leaves sides of pan and forms a ball. Add vanilla, then eggs, one at a time, stirring vigorously. Dough should be smooth and glossy.
In another pan, heat about 1½ -inches oil to 375 degrees on thermometer. Drop heaping teaspoons dough into hot oil and fry beignets, a few at a time, until golden. Each beignet will puff up to about 2 inches in diameter when done. Drain on paper towels. Dust beignets heavily with confectioners' sugar. Serve warm. Yields about 50 beignets.

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NEW LADYBIRD BEETLES ARE A GARDEN FRIEND

Go into any "Great and Small Garden" this year and you may see something new.

Gardeners especially with orchards, forests and Christmas trees may be seeing numerous large, black, yellow and orange ladybird beetles on their trees. In some yards all stages of the multi-colored Asian lady beetle (*Harmonia axyridis*) may be present on maples, walnuts, willow, oaks and frasier fir trees.

Dr. Al Wheeler, an entomologist for the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, tells us the Asian Lady beetle was imported from Japan to the U.S. in 1977 to control aphids and scale pests on pecan trees in the South. After establishment in the South, the lady beetles have moved steadily northward, arriving in Pennsylvania in 1993. Within the last three years, the insect has established itself in many areas of Pennsylvania.

The Asian Ladybird Beetle is

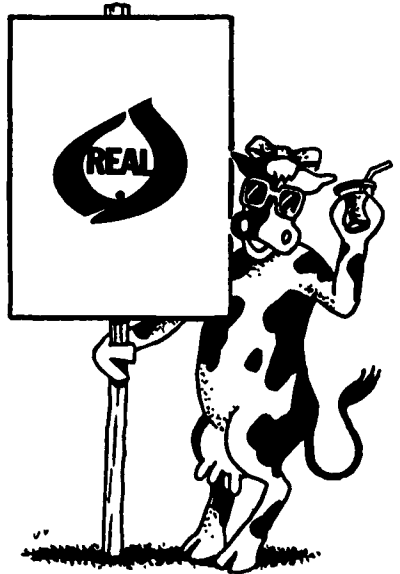
noticeably larger than the native lady beetles (two or more spots) normally found in our area. They are 9/32 inches long, oval or convex in shape and yellow to red in color. Some have irregular black spots on the wing covers, numbering as many as 19 spots. The larval stage is elongated, flattened, orange/black and covered with minute spines.

Both stages of the ladybird beetle prey on numerous insect pests: aphids, scales, mites, other soft insects, and eggs of beetles and moths. They especially like feeding on colonies of aphids on leaves and bark.

The ladybird beetle lays yellow, spindle-shaped eggs on the undersides of leaves of low growing ornamentals, roses, wheat, tobacco and other crops. When aphids are abundant, the population of this exotic lady beetle explodes. In the fall, the lady beetles congregate on windows, doors, and porch decks. Although a nuisance, they are very beneficial. Collect and release these lady beetle into the garden.

These ladybird beetles do not bite, sting, or carry human diseases; nor do they feed on wood, clothing, or food. Living up to three years, an adult lady beetle clusters in buildings over the winter. In the garden the lady beetle often becomes the only practical control for insects such as the adult balsam twig aphid on frasier fir.

Because of the benefits they provide, most types of lady beetles are beneficial and should not be killed. More than 450 species of ladybird beetles are found in North America. If found in your home, move them to a quiet area of the garden using a broom, dust pan, or vacuum cleaner. You'll enjoy their company every day you're gardening.



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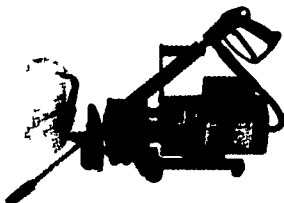
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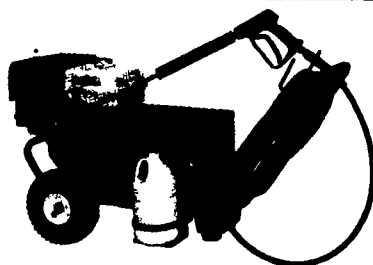
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