

On Being a Farm Wife

(and other
hazards)

Joyce Bupp



(With apologies to Clement Moore)...

'Twas some days before Christmas, when all through the house, not a creature was stirring. We D-Con-ed the mouse. The Farmer and I had just just climbed into bed, when alas!, came that sound that we've long learned to dread. Next to the bed there arose such a clatter. When that phone rings at bedtime, there's something the matter. But to our great relief a loved voice we did hear; 't was our West Coast offspring greeting our ears...

"Hi, Mom! I wanted to make

Cherry Winks and I can't find my recipe. Could you get yours and read off the ingredients to me?"

I headed back downstairs to the kitchen, retrieved the recipe from the Cookie section of the file and, (holding it six-inches from my nose because I'd removed my contact lenses) deciphered the ingredients from between the splotches of butter and maraschino cherry juice splatters.

"That's what Moms for for," I laughed, to her apologies for the late night call.

Christmas isn't Christmas in our family without Cherry Winks.

But the recipe is jinxed. We all keep losing our copies.

I first tasted these as a teenager, employed by friends at their stand in York's downtown Central Farmers' Market. Christmas cookies were a seasonal specialty of the stand — and I probably ate all the profits that first week I tasted the Cherry Winks.

As a young bride, I wanted to bake Cherry Winks for The Farmer. But no one I knew had ever heard of them. So, two weeks before the holidays, I submitted a letter to a local newspaper's recipe exchange, in search of the elusive cookie ingredients. The deluge of several dozen letters, cards and cheery holiday greetings included with the flood of recipes that landed in our mailbox made Christmas very special that year.

Just a few days after the late-night call from Portland, the phone rang again. This time, it was our son's girlfriend, seeking out a Christmas cookie recipe. Guess what she wanted?

Christmas wouldn't be Christmas in our family without Cherry Winks. There are chopped dates,

pecans, and maraschino cherries on hand, waiting for the West Coast branch of the family traveling east for the holidays. We can all bake them together — if I don't lose the recipe between now and then.

Just in case, I'd like to share our family's favorite holiday cookie recipe with you. And if I do lose it again, maybe you'll let me borrow it back...

CHERRY WINKS

¼ cup butter
1 cup granulated sugar
2 eggs
2 tablespoons milk
1 teaspoon vanilla
2¼ cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
1 cup chopped pecans
1 cup chopped dates
½ cup chopped maraschino cherries
About 1½ cups crushed cornflakes
Maraschino cherries for topping

Cream butter and sugar, add eggs, milk and vanilla, and beat until light and fluffy. Blend in dry ingredients, then add nuts, dates and cherries. Drop by teaspoons into cornflake crumbs and toss until coated with crumbs. Place on greased cookie sheet, flatten slightly and top with a piece of cherry. Bake at 375-degrees for 10-12 minutes, or until lightly browned.

Cool and hide if you want any left for Christmas.

Note: Dough is easier to work with if turned out on waxed paper, formed into a roll and sliced off to shape into balls after it chills.

To you and your family and loved ones, a VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS!!



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