

(Continued from Page B8)

ANSWER — Stephanie Huger, Meyerstown, wanted a recipe for pumpkin strudel with poppy seeds and sour cream or cream cheese. Her grandmother from Hungary made it, but Stephanie lost the recipe. This request has run for a long time, and we have not received an answer. However, here is a recipe for Poppy Seed Strudel from our files. Strudel is a German term for a central European pastry of stretched paper-thin dough rolled up with a filling. It is superlatively fragile and delicious. Americans tend to be afraid of trying to make the stretched dough, but once they have done so many agree that it is no more difficult than making a good pie crust. I think with a bit of experimentation, you could adapt a cream cheese filling from another recipe and either add the pumpkin to the filling or to the strudel, whichever way you remember it. Good luck!

Poppy Seed Strudel

- 3 cups flour
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 beaten egg
- 1 cup lukewarm water

Sift flour and salt into a large bowl. Make a well in the center of the flour; place oil and egg in the depression.

Work flour gently into oil and egg and gradually add water to make a soft dough (dough will be sticky).

Turn dough out onto a lightly floured pastry board. Hold dough high above board and crash it down against the board. Repeat this about 100-125 times or until the dough is smooth and elastic and leaves the board clean.

Knead slightly and pat it into a round. Lightly brush surface of dough with oil but not olive oil.

Cover dough with an inverted warmed bowl and allow to rest from 30-60 minutes.

To stretch dough: spread a large table 3x5-feet with a clean

cloth, allowing cloth to hang down.

Spread Sprinkle cloth lightly but thoroughly with about ½ cup flour.

Place dough in center of cloth and roll it into a large oblong, turning it several times to prevent its sticking to the cloth, and rolling the outer edges as thinly as possible.

With a soft brush, lightly brush the dough with cooking oil (not olive oil); the oil aids in preventing the formation of holes during stretching.

Now reach under the dough and start stretching (do not pull) gently from the center to the outer edge.

Some people work with the backs of the hands. They turn the palms downward and stretch with slightly raised knuckles only. Others prefer to keep the palms up with fingers straight out, working with a circular motion under the dough. You will soon learn which method is most convenient for you.

Work around the table until the evenly stretched dough is as thin as paper and drapes over the edges of the table on all sides.

As you stretch, keep the dough close to the table. the dough should not have any torn spots. If some should appear, do not try to patch them.

With kitchen scissors, trim off the thick outer edges that overhang the table.

Allow the stretched dough to dry a little, about 10 minutes. It should lose its stickiness but avoid drying too long because it become brittle.

Poppy Seed Strudel

- 2½ cups poppy seeds
 - 1 cup sugar
 - ½ cup raisins
 - 2 teaspoons grated lemon rind
 - ½ cup butter, melted and cooled
- Mix poppy seeds, sugar, raisins, and lemon rind together. Set aside.

After strudel dough is stretched and slightly dried, sprinkle

cooled, melted butter over it. Spoon poppy seed mixture over the butter.

Fold over the overhanging flaps on three sides over the filling. Butter the turned-up edges, and then with the aid of the tablecloth start to roll the dough over, pulling the cloth and dough toward you with both hands. Roll fairly loosely to give room for expansion.

With the last roll slide the strudel on a well buttered baking sheet, bending it into a horsehoe shape.

Or cut the strudel in halves, and lifting each half on cloth, gently roll onto the baking sheet.

To bake, brush the surface with melted butter and bake in 350 degree oven until golden brown, 35-45 minutes. Grease and brush with melted butter several times during baking.

When strudel makes a crackly sound on touching it is done.

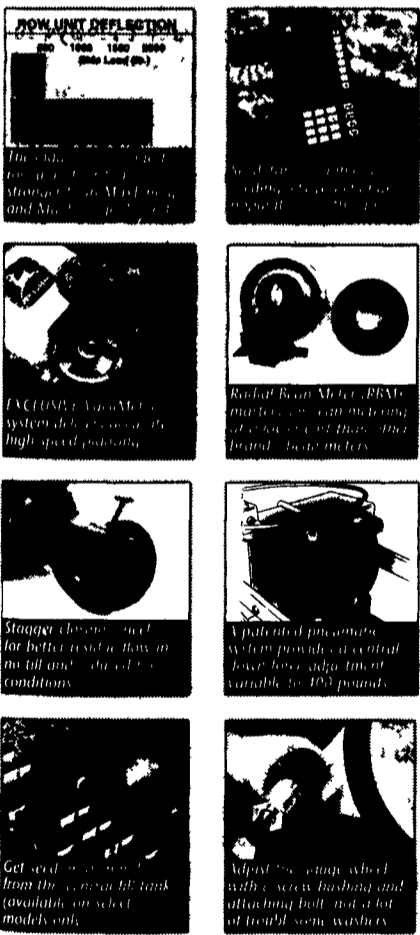
Strudel should not be smooth.

To serve, remove to cooling rack, cool slightly. Sift confectioners' sugar generously over it. Remove to a cutting board, and cut into 2-inch slices. Serve warm with unsweetened whipped cream. Makes 12 to 15 servings.

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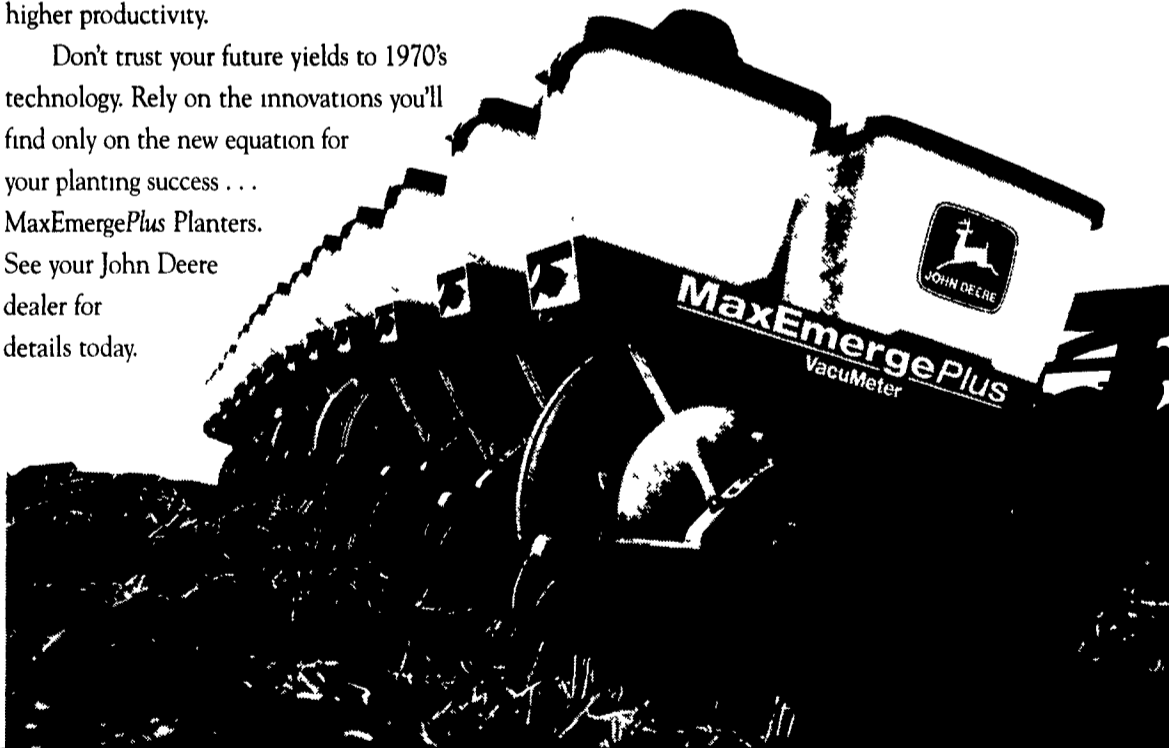


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