B2-Lancaster Farming, Saturday, Novemb

Letie Schadler shows off an impressive array of foods for holiday entertaining.

Celebrate At The **Table**

LOU ANN GOOD Lancaster Farming Staff

LEBANON (Lebanon Co.) — Perhaps you think it's too early to think about the holidays. But Thanksgiving is less than two weeks away!

Some forethought and preparation can go a long way in eliminating last-minute stress when the house is filling up with guests.

Ideas for tablesettings, centerpieces, menus, and home decor abounded at the holiday workshop sponsored by the Penn State Cooperative Extension last week at the Lebanon Valley Expo Center. About 1,070 people attended the day-long program repeated three days.

One of the first things to decide is whether you want a formal sitdown dinner or a buffet.

Regardless of what you decide, here are some ideas to incorporate into your plans.



centerpiece and handmade napkin holders.

TABLE TOPPERS

Use a square tablecloth or piece of fabric or lace and place diagnonally on top of a tablecloth. Or use a cloth runner that either matches or coordinates with cloth napkins.

If you need a long tablecloth, make one. Double knit and drapery fabric come in wide widths. Use a quilt or quilted fabric.

Rent a tablecloth. In fact, everything imaginable can be rented nowadays. In addition to typical rent-it companies, check with flower shops and those that cater to weddings.

At the program, a silk floral design shop called Expressions displayed numerous items that they rent. Expressions is located two miles north of Myerstown on Rt. 501 or 4 miles south of I-78 Bethel on Rt. 501.

CLOTH NAPKINS

Cloth napkins lend an air of luxury to table settings. But you don't need to spend a fortune on napkins.

An easy and economical way to make napkins is to buy cotton teatowels. Cut in half and hem the raw edge. Or you can purchase material by the yard, cut out, and either hem the edges or, if you have a serger, use it to serge a finished edge.

DISHES

Forget the rule that you need matching dishes for a sit-down meal. You can mix different patterns if they are in the same style or period.

Heirloom glassware and colored glass can be mixed if the colors blend with the dish colors. To make this work, you need to have a variety of things to mix-not just one or two different items.

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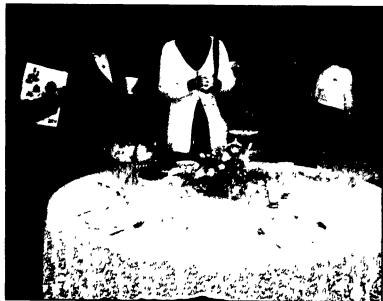


Get a head start on holiday entertaining by preparing make-ahead foods and freezing until ready to use.



Marian Hummel, center, instructs guests how to set the table for a formal sit-down Thanksgiving dinner.





Use Depression glassware and other heirloom pieces with your china. You can mix different patterns of china and glassware if they are of the same style or period.