

# National Contest Selects Lancaster Farming Employee's Cookie Recipe

**LOU ANN GOOD**

Lancaster Farming Staff  
LITITZ (Lancaster Co.) —  
Whenever anyone would taste Karen Hoffer's Soft Sugar Cookies, they would rave about the cookies being the best.

So it was only natural when Karen, who works in advertising/sales for *Lancaster Farming*, heard about the national contest search for the "Cookie of All Cookies" that she entered the recipe passed down through four generations of her family.

Although Karen did not win the top prize in the contest sponsored by "Taste of Home" magazine, her recipe was one of those selected out of 34,000 entries to be printed in the newly-released cookbook, "Best Of Country Cookies."

This was not the mere decision of contest judges, but from 7,000 "subscriber-tasters" who actually stopped by the magazine's headquarters to taste test and rate the cookies.

According to Reiman Publications, the magazine's food staff thoroughly screened all the recipes to select the most promising. The cookies were then baked in the test kitchen at the Reiman Publication Visitor Center, Greendale, Wis.

Visitors to the center were invited to taste-test up to a half-dozen recipes baked each day. Each tester filled out a "Judge's Rating Sheet" to specify the best tasting cookie.

The magazine's food editors then singled out the top 13 recipes for prizes and 277 additional entries to be featured in the new cookbook.

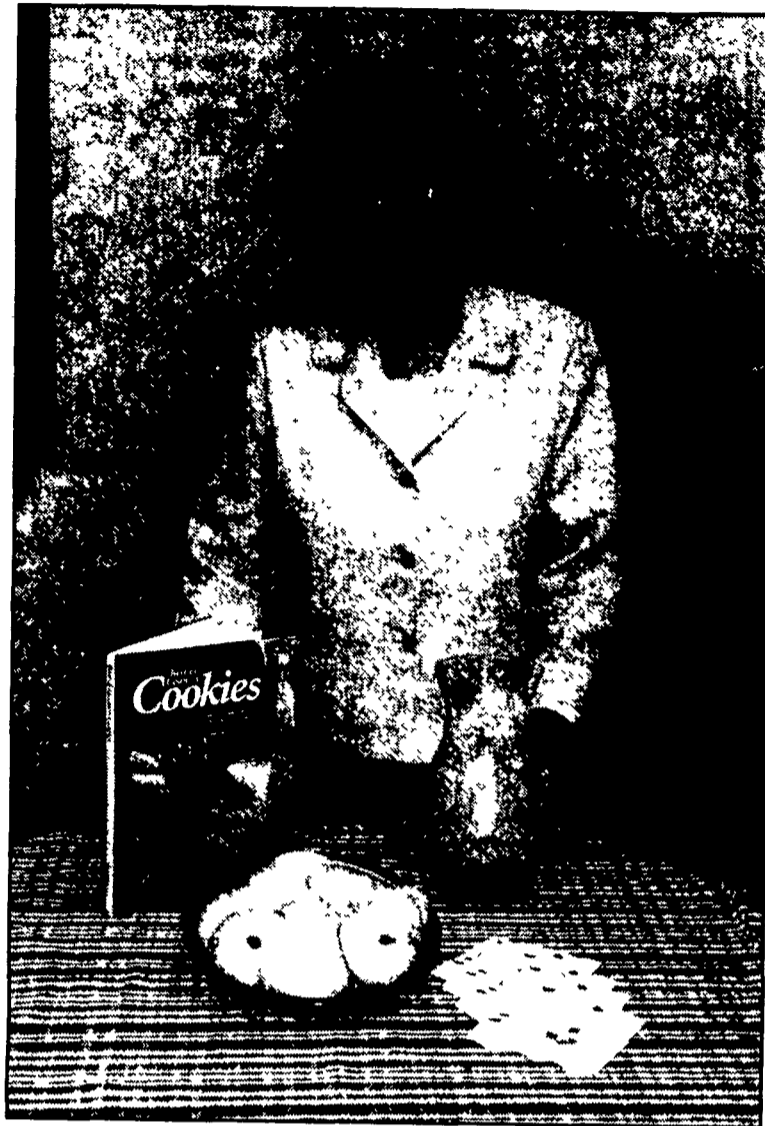
The recipe by grand prize winner Marcia Severson from Minnesota is not included in the cookbook. Instead the recipe will be kept secret and sold at the Reiman Visitor's Center.

Called Mmmminnesota Munchers, the grand prize cookies will be touted as the "Taste of Home Cookie," with the hopes that it will become nationally famous. If plans work out, Mmmminnesota Munchers will also be sold through other outlets around the country.

Out of the 277 recipes printed in the cookbook, 15 were submitted by Pennsylvanians. Chapters include an appealing assortment of shaped, sandwich, cutout, one-pan, cut-and-serve bars and brownies.

"This was my first time entering any contest," said Karen, who lives in Lititz with her husband Dave and yellow lab dog Luther.

Karen remembers her mother Ruth Keller mixing the batter the night before and storing it in the refrigerator overnight. She would



Karen Hoffer, who works in advertising/sales for *Lancaster Farming* recently got her claim to fame when her sugar cookie recipe, passed down through four generations, was selected from 34,000 national contest entries to be included in "Best of Country Cookies" published by Taste of Home magazine.

then get up in the morning and bake the cookies.

Ironically Karen insists that her cookies do not taste as good as her mother's, although they both use the same recipe.

Regardless of who makes them, this recipe is hard to beat as proven by the contest taste testing.

The vibrant-colored pictures in the 116-page hardcover cookbook and the easy-to-read type with tidbits of information about each recipe promise to be one the most successful cookbooks on the market.

To order a copy of the book, send \$15.99 plus \$2.50 for shipping to Taste of Home Books, Suite 4190, P.O. Box 990, Greendale, WI 53129. Credit card orders may be placed by calling 1-800-558-1013. When calling, specify item number 27619.

Here is Karen's recipe, courtesy of "Taste of Home's Best of Country Cookies."

## SOFT SUGAR COOKIES

- 1/4 cup shortening
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup buttermilk
- Raisins

In a mixing bowl, cream shortening and sugar. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla. Combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt; add to the creamed mixture, alternating with buttermilk.

Cover and refrigerate for at least two hours (the dough will be very soft).

Drop by teaspoonsful two-inches apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Place a raisin in the center of each cookie.

Bake at 375 for 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.



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