



Home on the Range



Onions For Every Occasion

Onions spark up the blandest dishes to enhance the flavor and make them more tasty. Many onion varieties, which are mostly interchangeable in recipes, are found in supermarkets. Some people prefer spring onions sliced into salads and soup. Some want the tangy "bitey"-ness of cooking onions that enliven cooked dishes. For some, it's a mild onion such as the Vidalia that attracts their culinary fancy.

Speaking of Vidalias, did you know they were discovered by accident?

The story is told that a farmer named Mose Coleman planted some onions on his Georgia farm in 1931.

Instead of the "hot" flavor he expected, the mature onions tasted sweet. The mild flavor was attributed to the unique combination of soil and climate in Vidalia and 20 counties surrounding it.

In the 1940s, the State of Georgia built a Farmers' Market in Vidalia, and because the small town was at a juncture of some of South Georgia's most widely traveled highways, the market developed a thriving tourist business. Work spread about those "Vidalia onions," which gave the onions their famous name.

In 1990, the Vidalia was named Georgia's Official State Vegetable.

Today's selection of recipes includes some featuring these mild onions. If you want more recipe ideas using onions, send a stamped, self-addressed business-size envelope to Vidalia Onion Committee, P.O. Box 1609-FF, Vidalia, GA 30475.

SWEET ONION SUMMER TACOS

1 1/2 pounds lean ground beef
1 envelope taco spice
1/4 cup water
12 corn tortilla taco shells
2 cups lettuce, torn into bite-size pieces
1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded
1 large sweet onion, chopped
1 large tomato, chopped
Brown ground beef and drain. Add taco spice and water. Simmer on low heat, uncovered, for 10 minutes. To serve, fill each taco shell with two tablespoons of meat and sprinkle with lettuce, cheese, chopped onion, and tomato. Serve with onion salsa. Makes 4 servings (about 12 tacos).

ONION SALSA

Chop one large onion, one large tomato, and two fresh jalapeno peppers. Stir together with one 16-ounce can chopped tomatoes, undrained. Add salt and pepper to taste. Refrigerate one hour before serving. Makes 3 cups salsa.

HEAVENLY ONIONS

2 large onions, sliced, separate
2-4 tablespoons butter
1/2-pound Swiss cheese, grated
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1/2 cup milk
1 teaspoon soy sauce

1 can cream of chicken or mushroom soup, undiluted
1/2 cup Stove Top stuffing
Simmer onions in butter in heavy pan on low until tender, stir constantly. Put in one-quart casserole, top with cheese and pepper. Heat soup, milk, and soy sauce until blended. Pour soup mixture over all. Stir with knife, gently and well mixed. Put on stove top stuffing. Bake 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Mrs. Harold Smith
White Hall, MD

CHEESY BAKED ONIONS

3 medium onions
3 tablespoons butter
3 tablespoons flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 cups milk
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
Slice onions and separate into rings; place in a greased 3-quart baking dish and set aside. In a small pan over low heat, melt butter. Stir in flour and salt until smooth. Gradually add milk; bring to a boil. Cook and stir two minutes. Remove from heat; stir in cheese until melted. Pour over onions. Bake, uncovered, at 350 degrees for 45-50 minutes or until onions are tender and cheese is browned. Yield: 6 servings.

Jennifer McWilliams
SUN Area Dairy Princess

VIDALIA ONION SOUP

4-5 large Vidalia onions, chopped
3 tablespoons butter
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
4 cups beef broth
1 1/2 cups water
1 bay leaf
8 slices French bread, toasted
1/2 cup shredded Swiss cheese
In a Dutch oven or soup kettle, saute the onions in butter until lightly browned. Sprinkle with pepper and flour. Cook and stir one minute. Add broth, water, and bay leaf; simmer 30-40 minutes. Discard bay leaf. Ladle into ovenproof soup bowls; top with bread and cheese. Bake at 400 degrees for 10 minutes or until cheese is golden brown. Serves 8.

Jennifer McWilliams
SUN Area Dairy Princess

MICROWAVE DOUBLE ONION SOUP GRATINEE

1 tablespoon butter
2 green onions, thinly sliced
1 can French onion soup
1 soup can water
2 tablespoons dry vermouth
1 cup onion and garlic croutons
1 cup shredded Swiss cheese
In 4-cup glass measure, combine butter and onions. Microwave, uncovered, on high one minute or until onions are wilted.



Win one of these prizes offered to readers who participate in the annual Dairy Recipe Contest. Lou Ann Good, staff writer for Lancaster Farming, said this year's prizes are the best ever and include more than those displayed.

Enter Dairy Recipe Contest To Win One Of These Prizes

Lancaster Farming salutes dairy farmers by holding an annual dairy recipe contest during June Dairy Month. The recipes remind us of all the wonderful dairy products available to produce culinary delights.

To enter the drawing, select your favorite recipe, which must include a substantial amount of at least one dairy product. Dairy ingredients include milk, cream, sour cream, whipped cream, butter, yogurt, buttermilk, dry milk, ice cream, and all hard and soft cheeses.

Please check your recipe ingredients carefully. Margarine and non-dairy substitutes such as whipped topping do not qualify as dairy products.

Dairy recipes are needed for ap-

petizers, soups, breads, entrees, vegetables, desserts, beverages, snacks, and salads.

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Makes 3 cups or 3 servings.

Amanda Grossman
Chester Co. Dairy Princess

SWEET VIDALIA ONION, STEAK AND WILTED SPINACH SALAD



petizers, soups, breads, entrees, vegetables, desserts, beverages, snacks, and salads.

Clearly print or type your recipe entry. Be sure to give accurate measurements, temperatures, times, and sizes of baking dishes to use. We reserve the right to disqualify entries if these guidelines are not followed.

The difference between this contest and the weekly recipes is that you are asked to include a few paragraphs about yourself and your family. Although it is not required, a photograph of you or with your family adds a wonderful touch to accompany the printed submission. Photos will be returned if you write your name and address on the back of the picture.

Only one entry per family allowed. This contest is for adults who are 18-years-old or older, not children. Send your recipe, photo, and accompanying information with your complete address. If we do not have your complete mailing address, we cannot send your prize if you win.

Send entries immediately. Entries must be postmarked by June 1 to be eligible for the drawing. The state dairy princess and alternates will select the winners through a drawing. Recipe entries will be printed throughout the month of June. A list of the winning names will be printed in the July 1 issue.

Send entries to Lou Ann Good, Lancaster Farming Dairy Recipe Contest, P.O. Box 609, 1 E. Main St., Ephrata, PA 17522.

10-ounces spinach, trimmed, washed, and dried, about 6 cups
1/2 red bell pepper, cut into thin strips
3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
1/2 pound boneless top sirloin steak, trimmed of fat, thinly sliced
3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
2 tablespoons water
1 teaspoon each: honey, Dijon mustard, and grated fresh ginger
Salt and pepper to taste
Place spinach and red pepper on large serving platter or divide evenly among four individual salad plates; set aside. In large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon oil over medium-high heat. Saute steak quickly until medium rare; remove from pan. Add remaining oil and saute onions slices until softened and translucent. Stir in vinegar, water, honey, mustard, ginger, salt, and pepper.

Bring to a boil, quickly stir in meat. Spoon over spinach. Serve immediately. Makes four main dish servings.

RECIPE TOPICS

If you have recipes for topics listed below, please share them with us. We welcome your recipes, but ask that you include accurate measurements, a complete list of ingredients, and clear instructions with each recipe you submit. Send your recipes to Lou Ann Good, Lancaster Farming, P.O. Box 609, Ephrata, PA 17522. Recipes should reach our office one week before publishing date listed below.

May:

- 13 - Mother's Favorite Recipe
- 20 - Grill It
- 27 - Strawberries

June:

Dairy Contest Recipes