

Cook's Question

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Farm Show competition. Thanks to Melissa Lapp, Cassadago, N.Y., for sending a recipe that she writes was a first-place winner in the nut category of the American Pie Council's National Pie Championship.

Honey Crunch Pecan Pie

- 2 cups all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup shortening
- 6 tablespoons cold water
- 1 teaspoon distilled white vinegar
- 4 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup light corn syrup
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 tablespoon Bourbon (optional)
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 3 tablespoons honey
- 1 1/2 cups pecan halves

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. To make crust: In a medium bowl, mix together flour and 1 teaspoon salt. Cut in shortening until mixture is crumbly. Gradually add water and vinegar. Cut together until mixture will hold together.

Press dough into a ball and flour each side lightly. Wrap in plastic and chill 20 minutes. Roll out between wax paper into a circle 1/8-inch thick and press into 9-inch pie filling.

In a large bowl, mix eggs, 1/4 cup brown sugar, granulated sugar, 1/2 teaspoon salt, melted butter, vanilla, and chopped pecans. Add bourbon if desired. Mix well. Put into unbaked pie shell. Bake 15 minutes. Remove and cover edges of pastry with foil. Return to oven 20 minutes. Topping: Combine 1/2 cup brown sugar, butter, and honey in a saucepan. Cook over low heat, stirring occasionally, until sugar dissolves 2 minutes. Add pecans. Stir just until coated. Spoon topping evenly over pie. Keep foil on edges of pastry and return pie to oven for an additional 10-20 minutes until topping is bubbly and golden brown. Cool before serving.

ANSWER A mother wanted ideas and recipes to encourage her children to eat more vegetables. Thanks to Ann Shondelmyer, Friedens, for sending many ideas that she has had success with. She writes that when her children were between six months and 3-years, she withheld sweets until they were eating well with fruits, vegetables, meats, and grains. Frozen peas and other small frozen vegetables right out of the bag are enjoyed by small children.

For toddlers and preschoolers, set up an ice cube tray of veggie snacks. Make the serving sizes small and colorful. Have fun calling the vegetables creative names such as trees for broccoli. Be sure to stay with small children

when they eat raw vegetables to ensure that they chew them thoroughly and don't choke.

Do what you can to sneak vegetables in meals your children love. For example, when making spaghetti sauce, add lots of celery, onion, and green pepper to boost the vegetable content. Add extra celery and onion to stuffing. When baking homemade bread, add leftover cooked vegetables such as winter squash to improve the nutritional content.

Don't become discouraged if your children don't like a certain vegetable. Keep encouraging them to take small serving to try. Ann remembers one of her sons did not like potatoes in any form, but for three years they made him take one bite each time potatoes were served. One day, with a grimace on his face, he took a bite and liked them. Now he eats potatoes in any form.

Remember the tastebuds of children are much more sensitive than the taste buds of an adult. If you add sugar, salt, pepper or butter to vegetable dishes, do so sparingly, as your child will taste these more sharply than you will.

Sometimes cooking a vegetable carefully so that it is on the crunchy side and retains color is more appetizing to a child than a dull slimy vegetable.

Above all be a good example for your children. Serve a variety of vegetables and eat them yourself.

As children go through the stage of losing teeth and gaining molars, their mouths are often sensitive to raw fruits, vegetables and meat. Keep aware of their difficulties and adjust. Last year Ann's daughter had four loose teeth and her molars were coming in. She couldn't chew raw carrots or bite them. Ann cooked the carrots for her, but a year later, her daughter eats raw carrots with no problem.

Here is the recipe Ann used to introduce her children to winter squash.

Squash For Children

- 2 cups cooked winter squash
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- Dash nutmeg

Mix together and serve warm. As Ann's children grew to like this recipe, she gradually reduced the butter and brown sugar.

One final hint: Grow your own vegetables, freeze and can them. Include your children in the whole process from preparing the soil, planting, weeding, mulching, harvesting, preparing for canning and freezing, labeling jars and bags, etc. The children love to cut off the ends of beans and munch on raw beans as they work. They also love to shuck corn and be involved in all that goes along with freezing corn.

They especially enjoy their own gardens, and are so pleased when something they grew can be served to the family.

Thanks to Debby Goff, Riegelsville, for sending a recipe she received from her sister, Jocelyn Kilgore, Airville. Between the two sisters, they have seven children and some of them learned to like carrots.

Cheesy Carrots

In a buttered casserole, put two pounds carrots that have been cleaned, sliced, and cooked just until tender. Set aside.

In a saucepan, melt one stick butter. Add:

- 1/4 cup milk
- 4 ounces Velveeta cheese, cubed
- 4 ounces shredded sharp cheddar cheese

Combine ingredients and cook until cheese melts.

Pour over carrots. Top with cracker or bread crumbs. Bake at 350 degrees for 35-40 minutes.

Green Beans A Snap To Store

Like most fresh vegetables, green beans (or snap beans) are at their highest quality when eaten very soon after being harvested. If there's just too much there to eat at one sitting, cool them immediately. Put the beans in a plastic bag in the refrigerator so they're stored in humid yet cold conditions. This way, their quality shouldn't be too adversely affected for five days or so.

Harvesting the beans at the right time is important, too. To eat them as green beans, they should be picked when they're tender, before the developing seeds cause the pods to bulge. If the beans are allowed to mature fully, the pods can be dried and the developed seeds used in other bean dishes.

Green beans are easy to freeze for use later. For the highest quality, they should be processed and frozen within a few hours after picking. First, remove dirt, bacteria, and any pesticide residue by rinsing the beans thoroughly in cold water several times. Snap the tips off and cut or break into the size you want, or just leave small beans whole. Blanch the beans in boiling water for three minutes. Cool by rinsing again in cold water.

When packaging beans, make sure you use moisture-proof, vapor-proof packaging designed for freezing. Examples are "can or freeze" glass jars, plastic freezing containers, heavyweight aluminum foil, plastic-coated freezer paper, and polyethylene wrap and bags. When using bags, squeeze air from bags before sealing — leaving air in the package can lead to flavor loss and freezer burn. When using rigid containers, leave a half-inch space at the top for expansion.

A half-cup of green beans contains about 20 to 25 calories and is a fair source of vitamins A and C, calcium, iron, potassium and fiber. Seasonings that go well with green beans include basil, dill, marjoram, nutmeg, savory and thyme.



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