



This photograph shows the richness of Chester County's agriculture. Commodity groups worked with the Chester County Agricultural Development Council to publish a cookbook showcasing the variety of fruits and vegetables grown in the county. Commodities include mushrooms, dairy, eggs, grains, meat, fish, poultry, vegetables, herbs, fruit, and wine.

According to Joyce Hershey, who co-edited the cookbook, the purpose of the cookbook is to show countians that agriculture is the backbone of the county, and the best way to keep open spaces and fields is to keep farming successful.

Cookbook Showcases Chester County Bounty

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COCHRANVILLE (Chester Co.) — Cookbooks are published for many different reasons, but the recently released "Bounty of Chester County, Heritage Edition," is intended to help keep agriculture thriving in Chester County.

"Agriculture is the backbone of our county. People move here because they like the green open spaces and fields, but sometimes they don't like the smells and inconvenience of farm machinery on the road. We want to educate people, to show them how agriculture commodities have made the county what it is. The best way to keep the open spaces and fields is to keep farming successful," said Joyce Hershey, who co-edited the cookbook.

County commissioners had approached Joyce, who had published a cookbook in 1983, with the need for a new cookbook. Betty Collins, a retired home economics teacher and gourmet cook, served as co-editor.

"We were a good mix because we are diverse," Hershey said. "I'm of Pennsylvania Dutch descent and an 'early' farm wife.

Betty is of Italian descent and a gourmet cook."

Betty did not want to have just ordinary recipes in the cookbook, but Joyce knew that many residents like the old recipes. The cookbook blends preserved family recipes from the diverse ethnic groups who settled in the area and contemporary recipes that reflect the sociological climate of the county.

Recipes featured are those from outstanding cooks, fine area restaurants such as the Terrace Restaurant at Longwood Gardens, and well-known residents such as Joyce's husband — Pennsylvania State Representative Art Hershey.

Joyce said decisions were not always easy. For example, a recipe passed down through her family for pig stomach was unusual in that it called for oysters, and was served for holiday dinners. When the recipes were sent to the publishing house, editors called — askance that a recipe for pig stomach was included.

Joyce insisted that the recipe needed to be included because it was typical ethnic Pennsylvania Dutch fare.

"At least change the name," Joyce was instructed.

Joyce's mother told her that pig stomach had previously been called Dutch Goose — a name much more receptive to those unfamiliar with pig stomach.

The cookbook is suitable for a coffee table book because it includes many photographs of historical importance and interesting history.

Jane Davidson, county historical preservation officer, compiled the historic accounts including original receipts of barrels of flour deposited during the Revolutionary War and the French and Indian War. The county's Historical Society provided photographs of many of the area's former grist mills and harvesting.

About the quest to help people understand agriculture's importance, consider this excerpt from the cookbook: *As you drive through Chester County in the fall and spring, those bright green fields are wheat—winter wheat. Winter wheat has been a staple of the county since its settlement. Fall is the time to sow winter wheat, which is harvested the following summer. The harvest rush is typically the week after the 4th of July, as trucks brimming with wheat line up for blocks at the mills.*

"If it will cover a rabbit by Thanksgiving, you'll have a good crop," has been the saying for years among farmers in this rich land. Winter wheat is a tough crop, able to withstand prolonged spells of dry weather. It is also a good "cash" crop for Chester County farmers....

The cookbook is unusual in that it is divided into chapters highlighting each commodity in the order of its importance. For example, mushrooms are the county's largest commodity. Therefore recipes using white mushrooms appear in the first chapter, and recipes using exotic varieties appear in the second chapter.

Commodity groups helped finance the cookbook by sponsoring a chapter. In addition to mushrooms, other commodities include dairy, eggs, grains, meat, fish, poultry, vegetables, herbs, fruit, and wine.

Consumer science classes at Downingtown High School tested many of the recipes.

Perhaps the most welcomed comment by those reviewing the cookbook is one made by Joyce's husband, State Representative Art Hershey, who read the book while Joyce was away for the afternoon. When she returned home, he greeted her with these words: "I read the whole book, and I'm hungry."

Profits from the cookbook are used to fund programs sponsored by Chester County Agricultural Development Council, including scholarships to a high school senior pursuing an ag-related degree and one for a local teacher to attend the annual Ag in the Classroom workshop at Penn State. Each year an award will also be

presented to a Farmer of the Year and to a public figure for distinguished service to agriculture.

Since its publication, the cookbook has been named a Mid-Atlantic regional winner in the Tabasco Company's Community Cookbook Award. The award recognized the cookbook for featuring a wonderfully diverse recipes celebrating 300 years of farming and agricultural heritage, and for its interesting narrative and selection of historical photographs.

For a copy of the "Bounty of Chester County, Heritage Edition," send a check for \$26.45 plus \$3 for shipping and handling payable to CCADC Cookbook/Heritage Edition. Include your name, complete address, and phone number and mail to CCADC/Heritage Cookbook, Government Services Center, Suite 270, 601 Westtown Rd., Box 2747, West Chester, PA 19382.

Here are a few recipes from the cookbook. Don't forget to check out B6 for some mushroom recipes from the cookbook.

Art Hershey's Barbecue Sauce
This barbecue sauce can be served at a pig roast or mixed with roast pork for pork barbecue sandwiches. When roasting a pig, we prepare five gallons of bread stuffing for the pig. The 200-pound pig is stuffed and put into a charcoal-fired oven for 12-14 hours.

Art Hershey
State Representative
2 beef bouillon cubes
2 cups boiling water
10-ounce bottle ketchup

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