

On Being a Farm Wife

(and other hazards)

Joyce Bupp



Years ago, the cookbooks began collecting in our kitchen.

The first came as a wedding gift, a hardcover, loose-leaf version of that long-time kitchen guru, Betty Crocker. It served as a resource to answer questions, as well as provide formulas for preparing a host of foods.

Over the course of the years, Betty's spot on the cookbook shelf became crowded with an array of other cooking guides. They range from dairy-focused cookbooks acquired at professional meetings to specialties featuring cookies and candies to the popular and comprehensive country cookbook of the Society of Farm Women.

I go for the Farm Woman cookbook when looking for directions on down-home, basic, regional recipes, and know that they generally won't call for some

exotic ingredients never on hand in our kitchen. On the other hand, on those (usually) holiday occasions which call for homemade pecan pie, I yank out my old hard-cover friend Betty and turn to her brown-sugar-stained page in the pie section.

But even with several dozen cookbooks, the recipes sought out most frequently are kept between the stove and the microwave. Some, stained and ragged, are on recipe cards tucked into a sturdy wooden box, sporting a cherry red cardinal, handcrafted by a neighbor whose home overlooks the farm. Others are an assortment of clippings and scribbled directions, tucked into a magnetic-paged scrapbook.

Both these recipe organizers were gifts from The Farmer, who instinctively knew an item that

would get used to help keep our food chain up and running.

And so it was that, last weekend, I had to pause a moment and ponder where a little cardboard square was filed bearing the recipe for pound cake made from a cake mix and instant pudding mix. All I needed were the proper amounts of liquids to add. After a little thought, I plunked the directions from a section of the hand-painted box filed labeled "cake mix recipes."

You'd probably never find a section with that label on a commercially-prepared file. Nor would there be an "impossible," segmentation, where I file the ingredient lists for goodies made from a base of commercial bisquit mix. Like "Impossible Quiche" or "Impossible Pumpkin Pie."

When you make up your own files, nothing is impossible.

The search sent me off on an enjoyable side venture last weekend, when I dusted off a personal treasure never really explored in the year I've had it: my mother's cookbook. In the front is her name and the date "1939," perhaps a wedding gift they received. Though the pages of the book itself are not heavily worn—except for a page in cakes and one in muffins—it was stuffed full of recipe clippings, many similar to those in my files. Very special, though, are the hand-written "re-

ceipts" on the covers and extra pages, some barely readable from age and ingredient spatters, of favorites she added.

One is a recipe for "Picnic Pie," a special occasion treat I remember from childhood and which I intend to concoct as soon as possible to see if it tastes as delectable as in my memory. Also unearthed was a recipe for cookies we dubbed "Messy Cookies." They were sort of an oatmeal cookie which included crispy rice cereal, a dough so thick it almost took mixing with one's hands, earning them the "messy" label.

Relating this to our daughter,

Lancaster Farming, Saturday, February 22, 2003-B3

as we milked together during last week's blizzard, which left us short-handed for a day or two, she noted that she rarely ever uses any of her cookbooks. Except, occasionally, for her own updated-version of Betty Crocker or the Farm Women's home.

Instead, she goes on-line with the computer, types in the sort of recipe she's seeking, then prints out the most appropriate of the variety of responses that scroll up the screen.

I'm tempted to hit a search engine with the phrase "messy cookies."

Just to see what turns up.

Break For Breakfast

(Continued from Page B2)

¼ cup toasted pecans, coarsely chopped

1 cup Cheddar cheese, shredded

1 cup mozzarella cheese, shredded

Preheat oven to 425°F. Allow crust to stand at room temperature 10 minutes. Unfold crust and place on a 12-inch vented pizza pan that has been sprayed with cooking spray. Prebake 5 minutes. Once cooled, spread ricotta cheese over the crust. Sprinkle bacon over the ricotta. Spoon the pie filling over bacon and spread evenly.

In a bowl, combine brown sugar, cinnamon and pecans. Reserve 3 tablespoons. Crumble on top of the apple mixture. Top pizza with Cheddar and mozzarella cheeses. Sprinkle with remaining 3 tablespoons of brown sugar mixture.

Bake 8-10 minutes, or until the crust is golden brown and the cheese is melted. Let pizza cool slightly before cutting. Serves 9.

American Dairy Association

STACKED TIRAMISU PANCAKES

1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened

1 package (8 ounces) mascarpone cheese

¾ cup confectioners' sugar

1 teaspoon instant coffee granules

2 tablespoons water

12 4-inch pancakes—Unsweetened cocoa

In a large bowl, beat the cream cheese, mascarpone cheese and confectioners' sugar. In a small bowl, dissolve coffee granules in the water. Add to the cheese mixture; mix well.

Place four warm pancakes on separate plates. Dollop each pancake with cheese mixture, another pancake, more cheese mixture, a third pancake and a final dollop of the cheese mixture. Sprinkle each with cocoa and serve immediately. Serves 4.

~Use homemade or pre-made pancakes.

American Dairy Association

EGG CROQUETTES

3 tablespoons butter

3 tablespoons flour

¼ cup milk

little salt

dash paprika

4 hard-cooked eggs

cracker crumbs

1 egg, slightly beaten

Melt butter in top of double boiler. Add flour and stir until blended. Add milk and seasoning and cook until mixture is thick. Remove from heat and add chopped hard-cooked eggs. Set aside to cool. When cool, shape into croquettes, roll in cracker crumbs, and dip into egg (diluted with 2 tablespoons of water) and again roll in crumbs. Deep fry in hot fat.

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