

The Easter Issue

NC STATE

Extension Master Food Volunteer Program

April 2021

Issue 2

Volume 1

CHAT AROUND THE TABLE

Brought to you by:
The Stanly County
Extension Master Food
Volunteers



WE LOVE HAVING YOU HERE!!!

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Welcome to our brand new e-newsletter!
We are so happy to have you here!!

Although small in number, your Stanly County Extension Master Food Volunteers are mighty in our knowledge of food... and who doesn't love getting all the information on some tasty treats?!

This newsletter is more than just recipes though; we plan to provide you with knowledge and new skills to increase your confidence in the kitchen.

Please share with us as you use these tips or reach out with suggestions to FCS Agent Hayley Cowell at hayley_cowell@ncsu.edu

SEASONING OF THE MONTH

Chives are a perennial herb from the allium (onion) family. They are very easy to grow, and are rarely troubled by pests. Chives have been used in cooking for over 5000 years. Both the flowers and leaves can be used as both garnish and ingredient. Two varieties are available; regular chives have a mildly sweet onion flavor with a light purple flower, and garlic chives have a stronger more garlic flavor with a white flower.

French cuisine often combines regular chives with shallot, marjoram, and tarragon. Parsley is also a good pairing. Garlic chives are used more often in Asian cooking, ie. stir-fry. Chives complement most anything not sweet, like vegetables, salads, eggs, chicken, and fish.

The fresh herb is best, easily cut into small pieces with kitchen scissors and added to a recipe towards the end to maintain a fresh flavor.

Compound butter can be made easily in a food processor.

2T chopped fresh chives

2T chopped fresh parsley

1/4 pound cold butter

Process until smooth. Can be stored frozen or refrigerated. Use on eggs, fish, potatoes, or even meats.

Use cream cheese instead of butter and have a wonderful spread for your bagels or toast.

On the lighter side

Briefly saute 1-2 minced garlic cloves in some olive oil. Then add a pint of cherry tomatoes, saute 2 minutes more.

Then stir in 2T of fresh minced chives, remove from heat and serve.



<https://stanly.ces.ncsu.edu/extension-master-food-volunteers/>

COOKING TIP

FREEZE WITH EASE

Flash freezing keeps produce and proteins from sticking together so you can thaw what you need.

- (1) Prep: Cut the food to desired size and assemble on a parchment-lined pan so they don't touch.
- (2) Freeze: Place the uncovered pan in the freezer until ingredients are solid, at least 1 hour.
- (3) Store: Transfer the frozen food from pan to a zip lock plastic freezer bag. Label and store in freezer.

COOKING TERMS

- **Tapioca:** Extracted from the tropical cassava root and best used as a thickener if it is reconstituted with water before being added to a dish just before serving. The roots are finely grated, left to ferment, then pressed into cakes and baked. The baked cakes are then powdered into a pure starch. Tapioca is best when it is moistened, then heated, and immediately used.
- **Zest:** The oil found in the outer rind of citrus fruit (ex. orange, limes, lemon, and grapefruit). Avoid the white pith since it is bitter. The flavor of fresh zest from citrus fruit will provide an excellent flavor boost to any dish. If you decide to use both the zest and juice from a fruit, it would be best to remove the zest first. Zest will freeze for about 6 months.
- **Tomato Paste:** It is prepared from tomatoes that have been cooked for several hours then strained and reduced to concentrate. It is sold in cans or tubes.
- **Tomato Puree:** It is prepared from tomatoes that have only been cooked briefly then strained and made into a thick liquid.
- **Tomato Sauce:** It is a thinner tomato puree and sometimes sold seasoned. It is ready to use in soups, stews, etc. If you need to prepare tomato sauce from tomato paste, just combine 3/8th cup of tomato paste with 1/2 cup water.
- **Cooking An Egg:** Never fry, scramble, or make an omelet with eggs cooked in salted butter. It causes the egg to stick to the pan. It is best to use unsalted butter or vegetable oil.

INCREDIBLE FACTS ABOUT EGGS

Do you know the reason behind the connection between eggs and the spring season?

Egg-laying productivity is directly related to hours of day light. Traditionally, the longer days of spring encourage more egg laying and hatching.

A female chicken raised for eggs is called a "laying hen". A chicken raised for meat is called a broiler".

You can tell whether an egg is fresh or stale by dropping it in water. A fresh egg will sink but, a stale egg will float.

Americans eat on an average of 250 eggs per person in one year.

The hen's diet determines the color of an egg's yolk. Some producers feed their hens natural supplements such as marigold petals so, they lay eggs with brighter yellow yolks. Most eggs produced today will be at the grocery store within 72 hours.

It takes a hen between 24-26 hours to develop an egg. Once she lays the egg, the development of the next egg normally begins within 30 minutes.



VIBRANT SPRING RECIPES

GERMAN POTATO SALAD

2-2 ½ lbs. potatoes (yellow or red)
5 slices bacon, uncooked
1 small onion, chopped
1 T. flour ½ t. salt
1/3 c. white vinegar pepper to taste
½ c. water ¼ c. celery, chopped
½ t. dry mustard 2 T. parsley (fresh if possible)
1 T. sugar

Cut potatoes into bite size pieces and cook in boiling salt water until tender. Drain well.

Meanwhile, fry bacon until very crisp. Remove bacon to drain and cook onion in drippings until tender, about 3-5 minutes.

Stir in flour and cook 1-2 minutes.

Add remaining ingredients except parsley and bring to a simmer while whisking, about 2 minutes till thickened.

Place warm potatoes in a bowl and pour the dressing and celery over the top.

Fold in the parsley and top with crumbled bacon. Serve warm, room temperature or cold.

UPCOMING...

Summer Issue: will be released Monday June, 14th

This will have a Preservation Theme.

All special requests for the upcoming newsletters should be emailed to FCS Agent, Hayley Cowell at hayley_cowell@ncsu.edu

VINTAGE AMBROSIA

1 c. shredded fresh coconut or sweetened flaked coconut
1 c. chopped pecans
2 grapefruits, preferably one pink and one yellow
4 sweet oranges
1 small pineapple, peeled, cored, and cubed
Sugar to taste

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place coconut and pecans on separate rimmed baking sheet. Toast until lightly brown. Immediately transfer to a heat proof dish and let cool completely.

Use a sharp, thin bladed knife to cut just enough of the tops and bottoms of the grapefruit. Set the grapefruits cut side down on cutting board and slice off the peel and pith. Follow the shape of the fruit with knife. Working over a bowl to collect the juice, cut between the pith to release the fruit with juice, discarding any seeds. Repeat with the oranges.

Add the pineapple, coconut, pecans. Reserve about

2 T. of coconut and pecans. Taste ambrosia and sweeten to taste with sugar. Cover to chill up to 1 hour. Taste again for sweetness, the just before

Serving sprinkle the reserved coconut and pecans.

Ambrosia was such a treat that many families Looked forward to when fresh fruit was in season in North Carolina since it was only available once a year many years ago.
Serves approx. 8