

Flavors of the Holidays!



FCE County Wide Meeting Fall 2017

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Apple Cider Food Safety:

- ♦ Look for apple cider that has been pasteurized to avoid problems with bacteria that can cause illness.
- ♦ This is especially important for the young, elderly, pregnant women and those with weakened immune systems.

Fall Cider Punch

1/2 cup sugar
1/8 teaspoon ground ginger
1 cup water
6 lemons, juiced
2 cups cranberry juice
1 quart apple cider
1 quart ginger ale

Combine sugar and ginger in a saucepan. Add water and bring to a boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Cool. Add lemon juice. Combine sugar mixture, cranberry juice, cider and ginger ale. Serve over ice.



APPLES

Apples are synonymous with fall. Choose an apple suited for the use. Good cooking apples retain their texture and include Golden Delicious and Granny Smith. Jonathon, McIntosh and Rome apples don't hold their shape well and are good for applesauce. Good eating apples are firm and include Braeburn, Honeycrisp, Gala, Pink Lady and Fuji. Honeycrisp don't turn brown as quickly so are good for fruit trays. Dip apples in a lemon lime soda or in a lemon juice/water mixture to prevent browning.

When baking, try mixing varieties together including some sweet and some tart to create a balanced more intense apple flavor.

Store apples in a dark, cool place or in the crisper in a ventilated plastic bag. Store away from other strong flavors as apples will pick these up.

Apple Fig Goat Cheese Spread

8 ounces cream cheese, softened
10 ounces goat cheese, softened
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
1 tablespoon butter
2 cups finely chopped, peeled apples
12 dried figs, finely chopped
1/4 cup water
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1/4 cup brown sugar
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
pinch kosher salt
1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar
1/2 cup chopped walnuts, toasted
crackers or pita chips

In a medium bowl, stir together cream cheese, goat cheese, pepper, salt and thyme. Spread into the bottom of a serving bowl or small casserole. In a medium skillet, melt butter. Add apples, figs, water, lemon juice, brown sugar, cinnamon and salt. Cook over medium high heat until apples are tender and liquid is syrupy and almost evaporated, about 10-15 minutes. Stir in balsamic vinegar and cook another minute or so. Let cool. Spread over the cheese mixture (if serving later, cover and store in the refrigerator, bring to room temperature before serving). Sprinkle with toasted walnuts and serve with crackers or pita chips.



CRANBERRIES

Cranberries are a fall treat and are only around for about the last three months of the year. Stock up and put a few bags in the freezer for use throughout the year. These tart berries need some sugar to balance the flavor and are great in breads, relishes and main dishes. Dried cranberries are good in salads, hot cereals, mixed into rice and sprinkled on vegetables.

Festive Cranberry Appetizer Spread

1 cup water
1 cup sugar
1 (12-ounce) bag fresh or frozen cranberries
1/2 cup apricot preserves
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1/3 cup slivered almonds, toasted
8 ounces cream cheese
Crackers

In a saucepan, bring water and sugar to a boil over medium heat without stirring. Boil for 5 minutes. Add cranberries, cooking for 10-15 minutes or until berries pop and sauce is thickened. Remove from the heat. Cut apricots in the preserves into small pieces and add preserves to cranberry mixture. Stir in lemon juice. Cool. Add almonds. Spoon over cream cheese block and serve with crackers.

Easy Cranberry Relish Salad

1 (16-ounce) can whole berry cranberry sauce
1 (8-ounce) can crushed pineapple, drained
1/2 cup coarsely chopped, toasted walnuts

Combine all ingredients.

Spiced Butternut Cranberry Bread

3 1/3 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 1/2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground cloves
3 cups sugar
4 large eggs
1 cup vegetable oil
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups roasted, mashed butternut squash
1 (12-ounce) bag fresh cranberries (can substitute dried)

In a medium bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, ginger, nutmeg, cinnamon and cloves. Whisk well. In the bowl of an electric mixer, combine the sugar, eggs, oil and vanilla. Mix on medium speed until creamy, 2 minutes. Add the roasted squash and mix until combined. With the mixer running on low, gradually add the flour mixture until just combined. Remove the bowl from the mixer and stir in the berries by hand. Transfer the mixture to three 8"x4" greased loaf pans. Bake at 325 degrees for 55-70 minutes or until a toothpick comes out with just a few crumbs. Let cool and remove from pans.

Roasting Winter Squash for Puree:

- ◆ Cut squash in half lengthwise and scoop out seeds and fibers
- ◆ Place cut sides down on parchment paper or silpat lined baking sheet
- ◆ Bake at 400 degrees until tender: about an hour for butternut, 30 minutes for acorn
- ◆ Scoop out flesh and mash

Roasted Butternut Squash Salad with Warm Cider Vinaigrette

1 butternut squash, peeled and cut into 3/4" cubes

2 tablespoons olive oil

4 tablespoons maple syrup, divided

Kosher salt and black pepper to taste

3/4 cup apple cider

2 tablespoons cider vinegar

2 tablespoons minced shallots

2 teaspoons Dijon style mustard

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon black pepper

1/2 cup olive oil

Fresh arugula

1/4 cup dried cranberries

1/2 cup walnut halves, toasted

3/4 cup shredded Parmesan cheese

6 slices bacon, cooked and coarsely crumbled

In a large bowl toss together the butternut squash, olive oil, 2 tablespoons of the maple syrup and a couple pinches of salt and pepper. Pour onto a parchment lined baking sheet and bake at 400 degrees until tender, about 20-30 minutes. Meanwhile, combine apple cider, vinegar and shallots in a saucepan and bring to a boil. Cook for 6-8 minutes until the cider is reduced to about 1/3 cup. Off the heat, whisk in the mustard, salt and black pepper. Whisk in the olive oil in a slow stream. If the dressing is too thick, thin with a little apple cider. When the squash is tender to a fork, but still holds its shape, remove from oven and toss with remaining 2 tablespoons maple syrup. In a bowl, toss the arugula with enough dressing to moisten. Place arugula on serving plates and top with squash, cranberries, walnuts and bacon. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and drizzle a little more dressing over the top.



BUTTERNUT SQUASH

Butternut squash is full of sweet goodness with a bonus of nutritious vitamin A. Butternut squash is best when roasted. It is a little difficult to peel, so if using as a puree, roast the halves as on the previous page. If using cubes, as in salads and sides, cut in half crosswise where it starts to bulb out so you can stand it up on the flat cut side and cut down the outside to peel.

Butternut Squash Soup with Smoked Sausage

7 ounces fully cooked smoked sausage, chopped

2 tablespoons butter

1/2 butternut squash, cut into 1/4" cubes

1/4 red onion, chopped

1/4 teaspoon ground sage

1/4 teaspoon dried thyme

1/4 teaspoon black pepper

3/4 teaspoon kosher salt

1 tablespoon honey

1 1/2 teaspoons lemon juice

1 teaspoon whole grain mustard

1 1/2 -2 cups chicken broth

In a medium to large skillet, brown the smoked sausage pieces over medium high heat until well browned. Remove to a bowl and set aside. Add butter to any drippings in the skillet and add the squash and onion. Sprinkle with sage, thyme, pepper and salt and cook over medium high heat until the squash is tender and browned, about 10 minutes, stirring frequently. In a small bowl, combine the honey, lemon juice and mustard. Pour over the squash mixture and cook a few more minutes to reduce liquid. Remove the squash mixture from the heat and let cool slightly. Add cooled squash to a blender and pour in about a cup of the chicken broth. Carefully blend until smooth, adding remaining chicken broth until desired consistency (about the texture of heavy cream). Pour back into pan and heat again. Serve in bowls topped with the browned sausage pieces.



BRUSSELS SPROUTS

Brussels sprouts have a bad reputation but can be oh-so-good when cooked the right way. First of all, don't overcook them to grey mush. Instead, try roasting or pan searing to create caramelized goodness. But Brussels Sprouts can also be used in raw applications like salads. Slice them thinly and add to slaws, vegetable salads and green salads for a boost of flavor and texture.

Shaved Brussels Sprouts Salad

1/4 pound bacon, finely chopped
1/4 cup red onion, finely chopped
3/4 tablespoon spicy brown mustard
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 tablespoon sugar
2 tablespoons olive oil
Pinch of salt and black pepper
1/2 pound Brussels sprouts, trimmed and thinly sliced
1/2 cup dried cranberries
1/4 cup coarsely chopped smoked almonds

In a medium skillet, cook the bacon until crisp and remove to a paper towel. Leave 2 tablespoons of drippings in the pan. Add the red onion and cook until softened. Add the mustard, vinegar and sugar. Whisk in the olive oil off the heat and season with a little salt and pepper. In a large bowl, combine the Brussels sprouts and the cranberries. Pour the warm dressing over the top and toss well. Sprinkle with almonds and bacon just before serving.



PUMPKIN

In October, the pumpkin makes its appearance and reigns supreme throughout the fall. That familiar flavor and creamy texture pairs well with warm fall spices and lends itself to all kinds of baking like cakes, muffins, strudels, rolls, doughnuts and pies. Use canned pumpkin or the small pie pumpkins for best flavor.

Peter's Pumpkin Bars

4 eggs
1 2/3 cups sugar
1 cup vegetable oil
1 (15-ounce) can pumpkin
2 cups flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
3 ounces cream cheese, softened
1/2 cup butter, softened
2 teaspoons orange extract
2 cups powdered sugar
1-2 tablespoons milk, as needed

Line a 15 x 10 inch jelly roll pan with parchment paper. Coat with non-stick spray. To make the bars, in a large bowl, beat together the eggs, granulated sugar and oil until blended. Add the pumpkin and mix until smooth. Stir in the flour, baking powder, baking soda and pumpkin pie spice and continue stirring until smooth. Pour into the prepared pan and bake at 350 degrees until a skewer inserted into the center comes out clean, 20 to 25 minutes. Remove from the oven and let cool completely in the pan on a rack. To make frosting, with an electric mixer, beat the cream cheese, butter and orange extract in a large bowl until blended. Add the powdered sugar and beat or process until the mixture reaches a spreadable consistency. You may need to add a little more sugar or a little milk to make it the right consistency. Spread over cooled bars and cut into 40 two-inch bars.

Overnight Pumpkin Spice Rolls

1/4 cup warm milk
1 1/2 teaspoons yeast
1/4 cup sugar, divided
1/2 cup canned pumpkin
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 egg
2 1/2 - 2 3/4 cups flour, divided
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 cup butter, cubed and softened
3/4 cup sugar
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/4 cup butter, melted
1/4 cup butter
4 ounces cream cheese, softened
2 cups powdered sugar

Cutting Through Dough:

- ♦ Cutting logs of rolled up dough without squishing them can be an issue.
- ♦ Try using unflavored, plain dental floss. Keep a container in your kitchen drawer.
- ♦ Hold each end tightly in your hand and use your thumbs to push the floss through the dough.
- ♦ Also works well for soft cheeses like fresh mozzarella and goat.

In small bowl, mix warm milk, yeast and 1 tablespoon of the sugar. Set aside until yeast becomes foamy. In a large bowl, mix 2 1/2 cups of the flour, salt, cinnamon and remaining 3 tablespoons sugar. Cut in butter until sandy in texture. In the mixer bowl of a stand mixer combine the pumpkin, vanilla and egg. Using the dough hook, add the yeast mixture and then the flour mixture. Beat with dough hook for 10 minutes on medium speed, until dough pulls away from the sides of the bowl and becomes elastic. If dough is still very wet and stringy, add remaining 1/4 cup flour. Shape into a ball and place into oiled bowl. Cover with plastic wrap and set in warm place 1-2 hours or until double in size.

For filling, stir together sugar, cinnamon, ginger and nutmeg. Place dough on floured surface. Roll with a rolling pin into a 15" x 12" rectangle. Spread melted butter over dough, leaving about 1" unbuttered on the long sides. Sprinkle with sugar and spice mixture. Starting with one long edge, roll it up into a log and pinch the seam together. Cut the dough into 4 pieces and then cut each piece into 3 for a total of 12 rolls. Arrange evenly in a 9" x 13" greased pan, with cut sides down. Cover with plastic wrap and place in refrigerator overnight.

In the morning, remove pan from refrigerator and let set for 30 minutes. Place on top of oven while it preheats, covered with a towel, to rise for another 30 minutes or until doubled. Bake at 350 degrees for 20-25 minutes. Cool slightly.

For icing, heat butter over medium heat and cook until solids become deep, toffee brown. Set aside. In a medium bowl, beat cream cheese until soft and creamy. Add powdered sugar and browned butter. Beat to combine and spread over warm rolls. Serve warm.

Apple Pie Spice

- Cinnamon
- Nutmeg
- Allspice
- Cardamom (Opt.)
- Cloves (Opt.)

Pumpkin Pie Spice

- Cinnamon
- Ginger
- Nutmeg
- Allspice
- Cloves (Opt.)

Chinese Five Spice

- Star Anise
- Cinnamon
- Cloves
- Ginger
- Sichuan Pepper (Opt.)
- Fennel Seeds (Opt.)
- Nutmeg (Opt.)

Gingerbread Spice

- Ginger
- Cinnamon
- Allspice
- Nutmeg
- Cloves (Opt.)



PARSNIPS

Parsnips are a cool season vegetable that look like fat white carrots. They have a sweet, mellow flavor that is perfect for the holidays.

Readily available at local markets, parsnips are great for roasting, sautéing or mashing. You can boil them and then mash either by themselves or combined with potatoes or turnips for a delicious twist. Any place you use carrots, parsnips can be substituted or added.

If large, they have a woody core that will need to be cut out and parsnips are usually peeled. Although you can eat them raw they are normally cooked.

Maple Roasted Parsnips

4 slices bacon
2 tablespoons pure maple syrup
1/8 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon black pepper
1/2 teaspoon fresh thyme, roughly chopped
3 parsnips

Slice the bacon crosswise into 1/2" pieces. Cook the bacon in a small skillet until browned and crisp. Remove the bacon with a slotted spoon to a paper towel to drain. Measure 1 tablespoon of the bacon drippings into a medium bowl. Add syrup, salt, pepper and thyme and mix well. Wash and peel the parsnips. Cut into about 3" long sticks that are all about the same thickness (like French fries). Toss in the bowl with the syrup and stir to coat. Pour out onto a parchment lined baking sheet in a single layer. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes. Stir the parsnips and return to oven for another 20-25 minutes until tender and caramelized. Sprinkle with reserved bacon and serve.

Maple Glazed Parsnips

2 parsnips, peeled and cut into 2" sticks
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons orange juice
2 tablespoons maple syrup
Salt and pepper

In a medium sauté pan, melt the butter and add the parsnips. Stir and cook for 2 minutes. Combine the orange juice and syrup and add to pan. Sprinkle with a pinch of salt and pepper and cook over medium heat until the parsnips are tender and glazed.

Potato Parsnip Puree

2 russet potatoes
2 parsnips
Kosher salt
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons milk

Wash and peel the potatoes and parsnips. Cut the potatoes into 1 1/2" - 2" cubes. Cut the parsnips into quarters, lengthwise and cut out the woody core and slice into 1/2" pieces. Place potatoes and parsnips in a large Dutch oven or stockpot and cover with water. Add several big pinches of salt (about a 1/2 teaspoon or so). Bring to a boil, cover and cook until tender, about 20-30 minutes.

Drain the potatoes and parsnips when tender to a fork. Place in a mixing bowl and beat with the electric mixer until fairly smooth. Add the butter and milk. Adjust the consistency with more milk, if needed and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Date Nut Tart

1 1/2 cups flour	2/3 cup dark corn syrup
1/2 teaspoon salt	1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup vegetable shortening	1 teaspoon vanilla extract
4-5 tablespoons cold water	1/2 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 cups coarsely chopped walnuts	2 eggs
1 cup pitted dates, chopped	

In a medium bowl, stir together flour and salt. Cut in shortening. Add cold water around edge of bowl and stir together with a fork until it comes together in a ball. Turn out onto a floured counter and roll out to about 1/8" thick. Place in 9" tart pan, easing into bottom and up sides. Trim off excess dough. Sprinkle nuts and dates into pie shell. In a medium bowl, whisk together corn syrup, sugar, vanilla, salt and eggs. Gently pour over nuts and dates. Bake at 350 degrees for 50 minutes or until puffed and browned. Cool in pan on a wire rack at least 15 minutes before serving.

Bourbon Pumpkin Tart with Walnut Streusel

1 1/4 cups flour	1 (15-ounce) can solid pack pumpkin
1/2 teaspoon salt	3 eggs
1/2 cup cold butter, cut into cubes	1/2 cup sugar
1 teaspoon orange zest	1/2 cup heavy cream
2-4 tablespoons cold water	1/4 cup packed brown sugar
	1/4 cup bourbon whiskey
Streusel Topping:	2 tablespoons flour
6 tablespoons flour	1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
3 tablespoons sugar	1 teaspoon ground ginger
3 tablespoons brown sugar	1/4 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon salt	1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon	
1/4 cup cold butter	
6 tablespoons coarsely chopped walnuts	
2 tablespoons chopped candied or crystallized ginger	

Place the flour and salt in the bowl of a food processor. Pulse to mix. Add the pieces of butter and process for approximately 10 seconds or just until the mixture resembles coarse meal. Add the orange zest and pulse to combine. Add ice water, slowly, through the feed tube with the machine running, until the dough just holds together without being wet or sticky. Do not process more than 30 seconds. Test the dough by squeezing to see if it holds together. If it is crumbly, add a bit more water. Divide the dough into two pieces and form a disk with each. Wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour or until easy to handle. On a lightly floured surface, roll out each pastry into a 13 inch circle. Place on bottom and up the sides of 2 ungreased 11 inch fluted tart pans with removable bottom.

In a large bowl combine pumpkin, eggs, sugar, cream, brown sugar, bourbon, flour, cinnamon, ginger, salt and cloves. Pour into crusts.

For the Streusel Topping, mix together the flour sugar, brown sugar, salt and cinnamon. Cut in the butter until crumbly and then stir in the walnuts and ginger. Sprinkle over filling. Bake at 350 degrees for 45-55 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack. Refrigerate leftovers.