

RECIPES IN REVIEW

Cookies Cut for Christmas

Even folks who normally don't do a lot of baking often have the urge to stir up some fancy baked goods during the holidays. Decorated cookies are a season tradition and fun for the whole family. Here's the American Dairy Council's best bake-and-decorate, rolled cookie recipe.



Traditional Butter Almond Cut-Outs

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup slivered almonds, toasted and finely chopped
- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoon milk
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- 2 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- Decorator frosting, multi-colored sprinkles, etc.

Cream butter and sugar with electric mixer until smooth. Gradually beat in almonds. Beat in egg, milk and almond extract. Combine flour and salt together. Gradually add flour and salt combination to butter mixture. Divide

dough in half. Wrap each half in plastic wrap; refrigerate a minimum of 1 hour or overnight.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Roll out dough on lightly floured surface to 1/8-inch thickness. Cut into desired shapes using holiday cookie cutters. Place on lightly greased cookie sheets. Make a hole on top of each cookie with a wooden skewer for ribbon. Bake 12 to 15 minutes or until edges are golden. Cool on wire rack; decorate as desired. Makes about 16 large or 32 smaller cookies.

HOME COOKING RECIPE CONTEST WINNERS

Winners of the December Home Cooking Contest are Nicki Sirkel, Tri-County Electric Co-op; Lorraine Coleman, Mid-South Electric Co-op; Suzanne Nowotny, Pedernales Electric Co-op; and Velta Anderson of Deaf Smith Electric Co-op. Thanks to all co-op member-readers for the wonderful holiday recipes they shared with Texas Co-op Power.

Gloria Hogan's Apricot Brandy Pound Cake

- 1 cup butter (1/2 pound or two sticks)
- 3 cups granulated sugar
- 6 large eggs
- 3 cups sifted flour
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream
- 1/2 teaspoon rum extract
- 1 teaspoon orange extract
- 1/4 teaspoon almond extract
- 1/2 teaspoon lemon extract
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup apricot brandy

Have all ingredients at room temperature. Grease 2 loaf pans with shortening. Line the

pan with wax paper and grease again. Set aside. In a large bowl, cream butter thoroughly. Add sugar gradually and cream until light and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, beating after each addition.

Sift together flour, soda and salt. Add flour mixture slowly while beating continuously. In a small bowl, combine sour cream, all 5 extracts and apricot brandy. Mix with a whisk, and beat into cake mixture. Pour batter into prepared pans. Bake 1 hour and 10 minutes in a 325-degree oven. Let cake "rest" 20 minutes before turning out on rack to cool. Wrap in tin foil and keep in an air-tight container.

Submitted by Velta Anderson

Fresh Apple Cake

- 4 cups fresh apples, peeled and diced
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 3 cups flour
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg or cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons soda
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 2 eggs, well beaten



In a large mixing bowl, place diced apples, sugar and chopped nuts. Mix with a wooden spoon and let stand for an hour, stirring often so that mixture makes its own juice. Sift together flour, nutmeg or cinnamon, soda and salt and stir into apple mixture. Then, stir in eggs, oil and vanilla until blended. Stir mixture by hand, with a wooden spoon, throughout – do not use a mixer. Pour batter into a greased and floured tube or bundt pan and bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Submitted by Suzanne Nowotny

Caramel Popcorn

- 1 cup (2 sticks) of margarine
- 2 cups firmly packed brown sugar
- 1/2 cup light corn syrup
- 1 teaspoon soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 6 quarts popped corn
- 1 can peanuts (optional)
- 1 cup or more pecans (optional)

Melt margarine in large pan. Stir in sugar, syrup and salt and bring to a boil. Boil for 5 minutes without stirring. Remove from heat and stir in baking soda and vanilla.



Mixture will foam. Pour mixture over corn and nuts in an ungreased, large roaster-type pan and coat thoroughly. Do not butter or grease pan. Bake in preheated 250-degree oven for 1 hour, stirring every 15 minutes to coat thoroughly. Cool on wax paper and store in air tight container.

Submitted by Lorraine Coleman

Walnut Mincemeat Pie

- 1 (9-ounce) graham cracker pie crust
- 1 (9-ounce) box condensed mincemeat*
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 cup water
- 1 (14-ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup chopped walnuts

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. In a small sauce pan crumble condensed mincemeat. Add brown sugar and water. Bring mixture to a boil, reduce heat and simmer 15 minutes. Remove from heat and set

aside. In a medium bowl, blend sweetened condensed milk and eggs by hand. Add mincemeat mixture and walnuts. Stir thoroughly. Pour into pie crust. Bake 40-45 minutes. Pie will rise slightly while cooking and turn brown. Serve warm with ice cream or whipped cream. Refrigerate leftovers.

*A 19-ounce jar of mincemeat may be substituted if boxed, condensed mincemeat is not available. Simply empty mincemeat into bowl, stir in brown sugar and proceed with recipe.

Submitted by Nicki Sirkel

The subject of the February contest is meatloaf, a favorite comfort food and one of the sturdy standbys of the old-fashioned "Blue-Plate Specials." Send your best meatloaf recipe to "Home Cooking," Texas Co-op Power, P.O. Box 9589, Austin, TX 78766. Include your name, address, phone number and the electric cooperative of which you are a member. The deadline for the February contest is December 15.

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