



IFAS EXTENSION

THE MARKET BASKET



Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program

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Welcome!

November is upon us and we all know what is around the corner. We're talking Turkey days so this issue will be devoted to Planning for those Holiday Meals. I am devoting an entire article on Thanksgiving Dinner on a Budget as well as some Thanksgiving Clone Recipes. Next Month we will do the same for Christmas. Until Then, Happy Thanksgiving to you and yours!

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Stretching your Food Dollar Tips:

- 20. Be sure to check the "sell by" date on fresh whole, low-fat, and skimmed milk to make sure you can use it before it spoils. If milk has been kept cold, it will usually stay fresh for 2 or 3 days after the "sell by" date
- 21. The less tender cuts of beef such as round, chuck, and shoulder are less expensive, but are as nutritious as the more tender cuts. Cook them right braise or stew - and they are just as delicious
- 22. When buying eggs, compare the cost of medium and large. If the price of large eggs is more than 7 cents above the medium, medium size are the best buy.
- 23. Make your own "master" mix for biscuits, muffins, and quick breads from "scratch" at home. An Extension agent or program assistant can give you a recipe for making your own "master mix."

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## Plan for those Holiday Meals



Gathering round the table for a special meal with family and friends can be a source of joy and feed both body and soul. Cooking late into the night before your meal, however, can greatly diminish the pleasures of the table. Cooking too far ahead can decrease the quality and safety of your food. The following tips will give you some ideas on planning ahead on preparing the Big Meal. Assemble a Vegetable Casserole a day in advance, refrigerate and then bake the day of the dinner. Plan 15 to 20 minutes additional heating time for the refrigerated cold casserole. Heat until it's hot and steamy throughout. Cut washed fruits and vegetables within a day of your meal for salads and relish trays. (NOTE: Wash fruits and vegetables under cool running tap water.) Store all CUT fruits and vegetables covered, such as in storage containers or one-time use plastic bags in the refrigerator. Store fresh-cut produce above raw meat, poultry and fish and below cooked items. Avoid leaving cut and/or peeled fruit and vegetables at room temperature for more than two hours. This includes the TOTAL of preparation time and serving time.

Pumpkin pie is especially popular around the holidays. A pumpkin pie is a form of custard and must be kept in the refrigerator at 40 degrees F or cooler. Foods which contain eggs, milk, and a high moisture content must be kept refrigerated, as bacteria love to grow in these foods. Avoid letting a pumpkin pie set at room temperature for more than TWO hours. That means it shouldn't sit out more than TWO hours total including after its baked and while waiting to be served. NOTE: Some commercial pumpkin pies that are purchased at room temperature may later need to be refrigerated. Check the label on commercially baked pies for storage requirements. Don't buy pies stored at room temperature if label directions are unclear or missing. If you'd like to get a head start on preparing your pumpkin pie, it's easiest and safest to freeze just your shaped and unbaked pie crust in a freezer- or oven-safe pie pan. Or, purchase an unbaked frozen pie crust already in a pie pan. Then, add the pumpkin filling, mixed according to directions, to the frozen crust just before baking. It takes just a few minutes to mix together.

Remember the basic food safety rules: Keep hot foods hot, and cold foods cold. Don't let any cooked food, meat or poultry remain in the danger zone — between 40 °F and 140 °F — for more than 2 hours. If you have hot foods in the oven, you may be able to hold them safely until your guests arrive. Put a meat thermometer in the thickest part of your roast or poultry, or center of your casserole. Adjust the oven temperature so that the food stays at an internal temperature of 140 °F or above. To prevent dryness, cover the dishes or wrap with aluminum foil. If you have prepared a turkey and you have determined it is safely done several hours before serving time, remove the turkey from the oven and allow it to stand for 20 minutes. If the turkey is stuffed, remove the stuffing, place it in a shallow container, cover and refrigerate. Remove the legs, thighs, and wings. Carve the breast meat, and legs and thighs, if desired. If you want to serve the meat cold, arrange the sliced turkey on platters or shallow containers. For carved turkey meat to be reheated, place the slices in shallow oven-safe baking dishes or pans. Cover and refrigerate the meat. If you will be making gravy, pour off the drippings and refrigerate them. The gravy can be made at your leisure.

About thirty minutes before serving turkey to be heated, sprinkle with a little broth. Cover with foil and heat in a 325 °F oven. The stuffing can be heated alongside the turkey.

## Thanksgiving on a Budget:

Regardless of the menu, the fact is that there is always too much **food**! So how do you cope with Thanksgiving dinner when your on a Budget? If you have a large **family**, suggest having each person bring a particular part of the meal. Preparation, time, effort, and cost are then spread evenly throughout the family rather than becoming the responsibility of the host. If you have a smaller family, resolve to only fix the amount of food needed to feed everyone and then stick to your resolution. You can still have each person bring a dish, but make sure everyone knows not to go overboard. Leftovers are grand, but not at the expense of your bank account. Limit yourself to the amount of money and time you can afford to spend and stick to it.

It takes planning and watching the sales early instead of buying everything the week before.. Use doilies, both paper and cloth to accent. If you don't have a punch **bowl**, borrow one! It's a **fun** touch and makes everyone feel festive. Have fun and **relax** with your Holiday meal; your festive attitude will be contagious and your guests will have a great time! Visit your bread outlet (many brand name bakeries have these) or a bakery for specials on rolls, bread, heat and serve rolls or stuffing. Often you can get great deals on Turkeys at your local grocery store with an extra \$10.00 or \$20.00 purchase. Watch the ads! Look at thrift stores for wicker baskets. You can use hot, soapy water and a stiff brush to clean. Then place paper doilies in basket and use on the table for rolls, breads, silverware, napkins, or you can even place bowls in the larger ones. Have extras on hand to place on the table while guests are waiting for dinner. Homemade Quick breads, dips and crackers or even nuts work well.

Plan your leftovers.

Get those recipes ready. The meal's good just warmed over for the next night, as long as the gravy holds, but after that there's Turkey Sandwiches, turkey soup, turkey hash. Rotate it with other meals. (Don't refreeze once-frozen turkey.) End with cold turkey salad; the mayonnaise will moisten it.

Grocery shop the day after Thanksgiving.

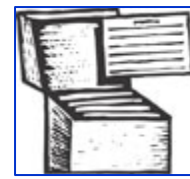
Bargain-o-rama. Have you ever been? Surplus fresh turkeys at pennies on the dollar, bakery items, breads, fresh yams. **Clean** out your freeze and get ready. So ... **shop** for your Christmas meal the day after Thanksgiving! Pay for convenience when it counts. I like to buy throwaway aluminum pans to **cook** the turkey in. It's just such a mess to clean up afterwards.

Make your own pie crust and bread. Unless you live in sweet potato country, canned yams or sweet potatoes are a better bet than fresh. Pre-baked breads are often sacrificed as loss leaders and with the rest of the spread, people don't really care. Pumpkin filling mix, often on sale, is cheaper than buying canned pumpkin and adding evaporated milk and eggs. Save time and cooking energy by baking many things at once. Compare your recipes and cook pies, stuffing's, biscuits, and muffins all at the same time. Most baked goods can stand some minor temperature variation and still come out well. With a little extra attention at the oven while items bake, you may save yourself an entire day of baking.

Be wary of the season's supermarket promotions. Locally, some grocery stores offer a free turkey to households that spend a certain amount of money in the weeks before Thanksgiving. If you would not otherwise spend that much on your groceries in that time period, then a free turkey is no deal. On the other hand, if you can combine the offer with a well-thought-out strategy for stocking your pantry only with foods that you would ordinarily use, then the effort may be worth it. But do the math first, and investigate the restrictions that the supermarket may have imposed on their offer ... and consider incorporating more vegetarian options instead.



## Thanksgiving Clone Recipes:



### Bread Stuffing

4 c Dry bread cubes;(3 slices)  
 1 Onion; chopped  
 1 Garlic clove;(1/2 tsp powder)  
 1/4 tsp. Black pepper;  
 1/4 tsp. Dried marjoram; or oregano)  
 1 c Celery; chopped (3 stalks)  
 2 tsp. Parsley leaves; or 2 tsp dry  
 1 c Hot water or turkey broth;  
 3/4 tsp. Ground sage;  
 1/2 tsp. Dried thyme; or 1/4 tsp  
 1/8 tsp. Basil; optional  
 Combine all ingredients in a bowl, toss to mix well  
 Stuff into a 10-pound turkey or 4 Cornish hens.

### Candied Sweet Potatoes:



3 large sweet potatoes  
 2 sticks butter or margarine  
 2 cups brown sugar

Cook sweet potatoes in microwave, for about 5 minutes. You want them semi cooked but not all the way, as they will cook in candy sauce for a while, and will be too soft otherwise. Melt butter in frying pan with lid, add brown sugar stir till dissolved. Add yams, and spoon sauce over yams. Cover and reduce heat to medium low, to low, depending on your stove. Cook until yams are soft, and sauce has thickened nicely approximately 30 minutes. Baste yams with sauce occasionally. For an added touch, allow to cool in pan, for 20 minutes, sprinkle with marshmallows, and

### Cranberry Sauce:

2 cups fresh Cranberries  
 1/2 cup honey  
 1/4 cup water, or fresh Orange Juice



Wash and pick over cranberries. Place in wide bottomed saucepan. Add honey and water. Cook over medium heat until cranberry skins pop. Chill before serving. Note! I use the Ocean Spray™ Cranberries and usually buy 2 or 3 bags of them to keep in the freezer, as I find that you only find cranberries at certain times of the year.

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### Heavenly Orange Fluff

2 3 oz packages orange gelatin powder  
 2 cups hot water  
 1 small can frozen orange juice concentrate -- undiluted  
 2 small cans mandarin oranges -- drained  
 1 large can crushed pineapple including juice (I don't use all the juice)

### Topping:

1 package instant lemon pudding  
 1 cup milk  
 1/2 pint whipping cream (I use 1 pint)  
 1 To prepare gelatin: Mix the gelatin with hot water until dissolved. Add the orange juice and let mixture cool. Add the orange juice and let mixture cool. Add the oranges and pineapple to the mixture. Pour into a 13x11 dish and refrigerate.  
 2 To prepare topping: Beat the pudding with milk until slightly firm. Whip the cream and fold into the pudding. Spread the topping on the gelatin. Cut into squares and serve on lettuce.