

Why older recipes are out of date

By DANIEL NEMAN
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

It was ridiculous. I couldn't lift the package of chicken breasts without a winch.

There were only three breasts in the package — and if you want to be technical, it was only a breast and a half. Yet the thing weighed about three pounds.

Three pounds is, technically, the size of an entire fryer chicken. Fryers can be as small as 2-1/2 pounds (or as large as 4-1/2 pounds). We can assume that these particular breasts came from a roaster, but still. The breasts were huge, and that was without skin and bones.

There is nothing wrong with that, as far as it goes. More food means more people can be fed and, with luck, more leftovers. The problem comes when you are trying to cook to a recipe.

I was on this particular hunt for chicken recently when I was going to make Chicken Kiev. I was using a recipe that dates back to 1975.

It wasn't that long ago in the grand scheme of things, but it was a different epoch in terms of chicken evolution.

Chickens back then were, for lack of a better term, normal. They were properly proportioned, at least for a chicken. I mean, chickens always look kind of funny, but at least they could stand up without threatening to topple over. When the great Craig Claiborne said to use one chicken breast per Chicken Kiev, he meant one that weighed perhaps 8 ounces, not 16. Cooking his recipe now means having to make adjustments; I sliced the breasts horizontally in half to come up with the proper size.

For the sake of science, I tried to use a one-pound breast in the recipe. It was an utter failure. I couldn't pound the chicken thin enough to use — Chicken Kiev requires a thin fillet so it can be wrapped around a mound of herbed butter. When I finally got the chicken thin enough, it fell apart in shreds. And still, there was twice as much chicken as I needed. I don't blame the

farmers. Farmers look to fill a need. Americans like chicken breasts much more than legs and thighs, so farmers, breeders and geneticists try to supply chickens with as much breast as possible.

If it were only chickens, I'd keep my grumbling to myself. But a walk down the aisles of any grocery store reveals that food just isn't the same size.

Shallots used to be almost a secret ingredient used only by those in the know. When they weren't popular, they were more or less the size of a dried fig.

But now, there are more and more people in the know, resulting in increased demand for shallots. Agricultural science has responded, and now shallots are twice as big as they used to be.

Again, there is nothing inherently wrong with that. They still taste the same, you just get more shallot per shallot.

But if you see a recipe from more than a few years ago calling for one shallot, you'll be much happier if you cut one of today's monster shallots in half.

At least chicken breasts and shallots are getting bigger. Everything else is getting smaller, for obvious economic reasons.

Cans of vegetables and fruit have contained 14 or 14-1/2 fluid ounces for so long that it feels normal now. But those are odd numbers, or at least unusual, so I looked up pictures of old cans. Sure enough, they all started out at 16 ounces. Of course they did.

Candy bars are a particularly annoying example. The prices naturally keep going up, but the 3 Musketeers bar of my youth that weighed 2.06 ounces now weighs 1.92 ounces. The Hershey's bar that was formerly 1.875 ounces (I assume it was originally 2 ounces) now checks in at 1.55 ounces. Kit Kat bars, which started out at 1-1/4 ounces, now weigh 1 1/2 ounces.

OK, I did not see that one coming.



Anna MoneyMaker/Getty Images-TNS
Chickens roam away from a shed following a rainstorm at the Nu Sunrise Farms on March 15, 2022, in Griffin, Georgia.

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CROSSWORD PUZZLER

ACROSS

- Col. Sanders' place
- Hayseeds
- Clairvoyance
- Pipe bend
- Furnish
- Discoverer's shout
- Long for
- Condescended
- Like before
- TV adjunct of yore
- Mend a toe
- Oman neighbor
- Floor covering
- "Ouch!"
- Miscellany
- Egypt's Anwar —
- Japanese — ceremony
- Outscores
- Wine server
- Keep on hand

DOWN

- Answers
- Tiny jumper
- Chowder morsel
- Barnyard female
- Brainpower meas.
- Heifer's mouthful
- Ukraine's capital (var.)
- Highway hauler
- Electrical unit
- Winner's feeling
- Forgo
- Complete
- Mexican Mrs.
- NYC cager
- Comrade
- Sombrero
- Doesn't do much
- USN rank

Answer to Previous Puzzle

G	L	O	R	Y	A	B	C	D	I	P	
P	I	N	T	O	W	A	R	R	O	E	
S	L	E	E	K	O	R	A	I	T	S	
		S	E	A	L	W	R	E	A	K	
I	R	E	L	A	C	L	A	S	S	Y	
B	A	N	I	S	H	A	S	K			
M	E	D	S					E	R	R	S
		S	S	E	O	R	D	E	A	L	
R	E	F	U	T	E	N	O	S	P	Y	
A	B	L	E	R	D	A	M	P			
B	O	A	U	S	A	A	L	A	C	K	
I	N	K	M	E	L	N	E	W	E	L	
D	Y	E	S	T	E	S	A	L	E	M	

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- Like gingersnaps
- Perform again
- Dull color
- Pacino and Hirt
- Pore over
- Birthday suit wearers
- Oven glove
- Fencing sword
- Close
- Axioms
- Monogram pt.
- Billionth, in combos
- Clublike weapon
- Hat for 39-Down
- Highlander
- Close at hand
- Uniform fabric
- Look after
- Easy gait
- Flair
- Lampreys
- Volcanic dust
- Lingerie buy
- Plopped down
- Not even one
- Mo. parts
- After yr. 1

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
12			13						14		
15			16			17			18		
19						20					
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38			39		40				41		
42				43		44					
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51	52	53				54		55			
56				57				58		59	
60				61						62	

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- Black's Distributing
- Ryder Bros
- VFW
- Baker Elk's Lodge
- Main Event
- Lefty's Tap House
- Baker City Fire Dept.
- Haines Sell-Rite
- Idle Hour
- Salvation Army

104 Community Calen-

VFW POST 460
Every 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at 7pm.
Corner of Main at Birch in Union

104 Community Calen-

PINOCHLE
Fridays at 6:30 p.m.
Senior Center
2810 Cedar St., Baker City
Public is welcome

Baker County United "freedom rallies"
3rd Thursday each month
6 p.m. at the Sunridge
1 Sunridge Lane.
The public is invited

Kiwanis Club of Baker City
Tuesday at 12:00 PM
Sunridge Inn Restaurant
1 Sunridge Lane
For more information call:
(541) 523-6027

ROTARY CLUB of Baker City
Meets every Monday
Noon - 1 PM
Baker Towers Meeting Room

POWDER RIVER SPORTSMAN'S CLUB
Meets 1st Tuesday of every month
8th & Broadway, Baker City
6 PM - Pistolettes
7 PM - Regular Membership

Check out our classified ads.

114 Group Meetings

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS
Monday, Thursday, & Friday at 8pm. Episcopal Church
2177 First St., Baker City

AA MEETINGS - La Grande
Wednesday Nights, 7-8:15pm.
Fort Union Grange Hall, corner of McAlister & Gekeler Lanes. For more info, call 541-786-1222

AL-ANON
Keep Coming Back Family Group
Mondays, 7 pm
at NKWest, 1208 Adams, La Grande, OR

CELEBRATE RECOVERY
Calvary Baptist Church
Third & Broadway
Baker City, OR
EVERY THURSDAY
6:15 - 8:00 PM

DO YOU HAVE...HURTS, HABITS and/or HANG UPS?
12 Step Biblical Support
Harvest Church
3720 Birch St. Baker City
Thurs., 6:30 - 8:30 PM

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