

The Sandy Post

Home & Garden

What's Cooking?

Ground beef perfect for dinner guests

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For The Post

2 pounds ground beef
1 8-oz. can water chestnuts, sliced
3 tablespoons cornstarch
Soy Sauce
1 4-oz. can sliced mushrooms
2 cups water
Salt and pepper to taste

Divide ground beef into 10 patties. Heat non-stick skillet and pan fry patties after adding salt and pepper. During cooking, sprinkle on each side with one-half teaspoon soy sauce. After cooking, remove meat from pan, add water chestnuts and

mushrooms. Stir until heated through. Dissolve cornstarch in water with one tablespoon soy sauce, then add to water chestnuts and mushrooms. Cook on medium heat until mixture begins to thicken. Pour this over meat and serve immediately to 10 hungry people. Serves 8-10.

With cooked rice and a salad, this makes a nourishing meal.

—From the files to Faye Bryant, Gadsden, Ala.

The following recipe makes a delicious crunchy salad. I ate it last year at a Christian Church tasting luncheon. It was so good I got the

recipe.

BROCCOLI-CAULIFLOWER SALAD

Mix:
2 cups chopped broccoli flowerlets
2 cups chopped cauliflowerlets
2 green onions, sliced thinly
½ cup frozen peas, thawed and drained
Mix, then pour over the above vegetables:
three-fourths cup mayonnaise
½ cup sour cream
½ teaspoon garlic powder
½ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon pepper
4-6 slices bacon, fried, drained and crumbled or ½ cup bacon bits
Toss gently and refrigerate at least two hours or overnight. Add bacon bits just before serving. Serves six.

—From the files of Edith Thomas of Portland.

The following recipe is a "must" for your appetizer file. It was served recently at a wedding reception which I helped serve. Mrs. Porter was happy to share the recipe with me. Thanks very much.

SPINACH QUICHE SQUARES

2 10-oz. pkgs. frozen chopped spinach
3 tablespoons margarine or butter
4 eggs
1 small onion, chopped
¼ cup fine dry bread crumbs
1 can (10 and three-fourths oz.) cream of mushroom soup
¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
one-eighth teaspoon each pepper, dry basil, oregano
¼ lb. fresh mushrooms, sliced.

Place spinach in wire strainer, rinse under hot water to thaw, then press out all water. Set aside. Melt butter in frying pan, over medium heat, add onion and mushrooms and cook, stirring, until onion is limp.

In a bowl, beat eggs with a fork, then stir in bread crumbs, mushroom soup, two teaspoons of the Parmesan cheese, pepper, basil, oregano, drained spinach and onion. Mix until blended.

Turn into a well-greased, nine-inch square pan. Sprinkle with remaining Parmesan cheese.

Bake uncovered in a 325-degree oven for 35 minutes or until set when lightly touched. I usually cook this 10-15 minutes longer. Cool. Cut into one-inch squares and serve cold or reheat in 325-degree oven for 10-12 minutes.

—From the files of Shirley Prter of Boring.

Summer pruning OK for water sprouts

Many home gardeners have the mistaken impression that pruning of fruit trees should only be done in the spring. This isn't necessarily so, according to extension agent Ray McNeilan.

"A light summer pruning will help many fruit trees produce better next year, but the home gardener should keep in mind that this pruning should be light," he says. "Heavy pruning of fruit trees should always be done in the spring."

McNeilan also reminds home orchardists that summer pruning in most cases should be restricted to healthy, vigorous fruit trees. Pruning a slow growing fruit tree during the summer months may severely stunt the tree.

One of the primary goals of summer pruning is to eliminate water sprout growth on the fruit tree. Water sprouts are small branches growing upward from the tree's main limbs. Cutting this excess tree growth out enables the tree to channel its vigor into fruit-bearing tree limbs.

"Home orchardists should remember that pruning a tree later in the

growing season lessens the likelihood that regrowth will occur," McNeilan says. "This means that water sprout growth pruned in August will have little chance to grow back because the tree will soon be dormant."

Another important goal of summer pruning is the training of the fruit tree.

"Training is forcing the tree to grow the way the home orchardist wants it to," he says. "In pruning to train the tree, weak limbs and those limbs growing in undesired directions should be removed."

The gardening specialist adds that this will cause the other branches to experience more growth than usual, and as a result, it may be necessary to head them back once or twice during the summer.

The goals of summer pruning are the same as those of spring pruning: to help the tree develop as desired and to control its size. But the home gardener should keep in mind that any pruning done now should be light and selective, McNeilan notes. Major pruning activity should be reserved for the early spring when fruit trees are still dormant.

Frames aid plants, increase harvest

Giving home grown tomatoes and cucumbers a little frame support is a good way to insure there will be plenty to harvest later in the summer.

Frames keep the growing vegetables off the ground, which helps prevent rot and reduces damage from slugs.

Tomatoes are exposed to more sunshine and air when grown on a frame support and are easier to pick. Cucumbers often become curved when left to grow on the ground; they tend to grow almost straight when trained on a trellis.

An effective support should be about 16 inches in diameter and one to three feet high. Frames can be made from scraps of lumber, or a cylinder of concrete reinforcing wire can be placed around each plant.

Concrete reinforcing wire is recommended

because it has large enough mesh to allow for easy harvesting. The small holes in chicken wire prevent handpicking of tomatoes near the bottom of the plant.

Cucumbers can be grown on a frame, or trained to grow up a wire fence.

Tomatoes can be tied to stakes rather than framed, but more labor is involved because the plant will tend to have to be pruned.

When staking, leave one main stem and remove the small and weaker side branches. Staking the tomatoes will hasten ripening, but the overall yield will be less than with framing. Sunburn is also a problem with staking.

In addition to improving the quality of the produce, training cucumbers and tomatoes on a frame conserves valuable garden space, which can then be planted to other crops.

Yellow jacket traps take sting from pests

Yellow jackets are one of Mother Nature's more potent insects in terms of ability to inflict pain on humans through a powerful sting.

They are most likely to sting people when they get too close to a nest entrance. But they are also strongly attracted to cooked meat, particularly salmon, and can be a nuisance at picnics and outdoor meals.

These pests often sting people without any provocation or warning.

Yellow jackets make nests in trees, large bushes, under eaves or in attics, or in underground cavities. Control of yellow jackets can be accomplished through use of insecticides or traps.

Insecticides registered for yellow jackets—and other wasps—usually contain carbaryl, diazinon or

pyrethrin. Several are sold in pressurized cans while others are available as wettable powders or liquids from which a spray can be prepared.

Nests should be treated after dark when the yellow jackets have retired for the night. Be careful if using flashlights or lanterns because yellow jackets may be aroused by the light and leave the nest.

Treat the nest following the directions on the insecticide label.

If the nest can't be located, traps containing an attractant may be the most best control. Commercially prepared traps can be found in most nursery and garden shops. Traps should be placed around the periphery of human activity so they draw wasps away from the area.



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