

FOOD & NUTRITION

cooking

EASTER TREATS

the microwave way

(DM)—Treat-filled, decorated baskets for the children are a popular part of the Easter celebration. This year, tuck a wrapped Hippity Pop or Egg into your child's Easter basket. They will be delighted to discover their favorite cereal—marshmallow treats shaped and decorated with colorful candy sprinkles. The mixture can even be formed into miniature candy baskets, a unique treat idea for birthday parties or classroom celebrations.

One recipe makes 12 pops, eggs or mini-baskets. Whirlpool Corporation home economists recommend using the microwave oven to prepare this recipe. After portioning, the individual treats can be rewarmed, if needed, in the microwave oven for easier shaping and handling. Also, light corn syrup can be warmed in the microwave oven and brushed lightly over the shapes before rolling them in the candy decorations.



HIPPITY HOPPITY TREATS

Pops, Eggs or Mini-Baskets (makes 12)

- 1/4 cup margarine or butter
- 1 pkg. (10 oz., about 40) regular marshmallows or 4 cups miniature marshmallows
- 6 cups oven toasted rice cereal
- Colored candy sprinkles or assorted candies (for the mini-baskets)

1. Microwave margarine and marshmallows at HIGH (100%) in large glass mixing bowl for 2 minutes. Stir to combine. Microwave at

HIGH 1 1/2 to 2 minutes longer. Stir until smooth.

2. Add cereal. Stir until well coated. Quickly divide warm mixture into 12 portions on buttered surface (about 1/2 cup each). With buttered hands shape as desired. Roll warm shapes in candy sprinkles. Rewarm individual treats in the microwave oven for up to 10 seconds, if needed, for easier handling.

3. Insert wooden sticks, if making pops. If making mini-baskets, mixture can be reshaped as they cool. Cool completely. Cover tightly. If using for Easter baskets,

wrap individual treats in clear plastic wrap.

Whirlpool Micro-Tip REHEATING: Did you know that the microwave oven reheats most foods without loss of flavor or texture? When conflicting schedules prevent a coordinated mealtime, put an individual portion on a microwaveable plate for the latecomer. Cover and refrigerate. Then reheat, covered, when needed. The microwave oven becomes your short-order cook.

Increase In Fat Free Products Can Help Dieters, But Caution Is Advised

Food processors have developed a whole range of new fat free products, ranging from a sour cream-like concoction to modified cheeses, and a Stanford nutritionist says such items can help people lose weight and reduce their cholesterol if used carefully and wisely.

In the past few years the varieties of products labeled fat free have increased substantially, largely because food companies have developed recipes which can substitute fats with natural gums or cellulose, or potentially even more unconventional ingredients, such as pureed prunes. Many products are truly fat free, not simply lower in cholesterol or fat.

"For someone who just has to have cream cheese in his gelation or

sour cream on his baked potato, the fat free products appear to be a reasonable option," says Joann Hattner, a registered dietitian at Stanford Medical Center and spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association.

However, the products do offer some trade-offs. For example, subjectively they may not "taste quite the same as the original," Hattner explained, "especially to someone who is switching cold turkey from the high fat product. On the other hand, someone on a weight loss diet who has gone without cheese for years might find the fat free version a pleasant reminder of more carefree eating habits.

"But one of the real potential drawbacks," says Hattner, "is that regular users of the products are still in the habit of eating a high fat item. A more

fundamental way to make a positive diet change would be, for example, to substitute salsa or mustard or sour cream, or a plain warm bagel for toast and butter. That way, you won't be tempted to fall back into high fat habits if the fat free options aren't available."

Three other potential issues: the fat free products often have higher concentrations of sugar than their original versions, a major concern for diabetics.

"Be aware that there are generally many more ingredients in these products. If you have allergies-to sulfites, for example-be sure to read the label," says Hattner.

And the cost of these products, at least now, tends to be much higher than the original, she notes.

Legal Aid Part Three In Series Of Twelve Expedited Food Stamps

An empty stomach has little patience with bureaucracy or deadlines. You or your children may be hungry, and you shouldn't have to wait for a meal.

If you're not already getting food stamps, you may be able to cut through their red tape and speed up your application for what are called "expedited" food stamps. Expedited (sounds like ex-sp-dite-id) means speeded up. If you qualify, Adult and Family Services (AFS) must get food stamps into your hands within five days of the date you apply.

To receive expedited food stamps, you must qualify for regular food stamps, and you must have a monthly gross income (before taxes are taken out) of less than \$150, and have less than \$100 in available cash, in checking or savings accounts, in savings certifications or in other forms. You're also eligible if you rent or mortgage, plus your utility bills, eat up more than your income plus any cash on hand. Those who are homeless, living in a halfway house, shelter or staying temporarily with friends, relatives or others also qualify. If a member of your household is a migrant or seasonal farmworker, you may be eligible, but only if you have less than \$100 in the household, someone living there got paid the month before you applied but is no longer getting paid, and someone living there is starting new job, but will not get more than \$25 within the next 10 days.

Even if you were already receiving food stamps in another state, you can still get expedited food stamps in Oregon. If you moved here before the other state's supply arrived, simply sign a form (AFS 7261) stating you failed to get the other state's stamps. You can qualify in Oregon even if the

other state already mailed your food stamps and you haven't yet received them. But if the other state's stamps do arrive, you must return them.

It sounds simple, but getting your application through AFS takes time and patience. Be firm and persistent as you fill out and hand in the forms. To start the process, turn in a completed food stamp application, prove your identity with an ID card or a written statement from someone who knows you and fill out a work registration form, unless you're excused from work registration. At the AFS office, tell the person behind the counter you want to apply for expedited food stamps. Make sure to tell it's EXPEDITED food stamps you're applying for, or your application may be delayed. The counter clerk should give you an initial contact form (ARS 472). Make sure the form is stamped with that day's date. Fill out everything at that office, check the box asking if you need help with food stamps, sign and date the form. When you give it back at the counter, get a receipt. This is important, because the five-day countdown to get your food stamps begins with the date on your application. If you meet the guidelines, AFS must have your food stamps to you on the fifth day. If that day falls on weekend or a Monday holiday, you must receive our food stamps on Friday of the week you applied.

Some AFS offices may give you a food stamp application form (AFS 415) with the date on it. Take that form, but also ask for an initial contact form (FS 472) so it can be screened for expedited food stamps. Next, you'll need an appointment with a food stamp worker to review your application. Be sure to say you need an appointment for EXPEDITED food stamps. They

should schedule you for that day, or within the next five days. Fill out the food stamp application during the appointment with the food stamp worker. Answer all questions on the form. If you need help, just ask the food stamp worker. Bring copies of any papers you need to prove information asked for on the form, but keep the originals yourself. Don't worry if you can't prove everything asked for. Finally, find out whether the AFS office is sending your application through as expedited. You have the right to know.

If, at any time through this ordeal, the counter clerk refuses to give you a food stamp application form or an appointment with a food stamp worker within five days, or if you believe you are denied expedited food stamps when you qualify, you can do something about it. First, ask to speak with the operations manager. If you are still denied forms or an appointment within five days, or turned down flat for food stamps, ask for a hearing request form. Put your name and address on the form and write that you were not allowed to apply for food stamps. On the form, also ask for an "expedited hearing." Turn in that form at the food stamp counter, again ask for a receipt and immediately call Legal Aid's Welfare Rights Hotline at 241-4111.

Multnomah County Legal Aid Services provides legal advice and representation to low-income people living in Multnomah County who are having welfare problems. Appointments may be made by calling our North/Northeast Community Law Office (on the Portland Community College Cascade Campus) at 295-9494. For telephone advice, call Legal Aid's Welfare Rights Hotline at 241-4111.

Household Help

by John Amantea

Q. I own a home and have a backyard deck that's in dire need of repair. Actually, the stairs and railings are in the worst shape due to the lack of adequate sunlight, I believe. The stairs are also a bit rickety and unsteady, besides the loose railings. Can you advise me what to do?

A. First, I can only surmise that in addition to the damaged areas you mentioned, the lumber is not pressure-treated or chemically treated. However, you did mention a lack of sunlight to some portion of your deck, and that is to be considered as well.

Provided your stairs and railings are not decayed or rotted, you can begin to correct this problem. You should first secure the steps by hammering additional nails into the side beams for extra strength. Also, constructing small cleats of wood (about six-inches in length) under the steps and nailing in place will help.

Reinforce the railings with extra nails at the base of the rail post and also at the top of the rail.

Now you can proceed to chemically treat all exposed wood, if not originally pressure-treated. You can purchase a good type of wood preservative at most home decorating centers. This product serves as a primer for bare wood that has not been sealed in any other way, such as painting, staining or varnishing. Apply your sealant liberally by brushing and cover all exposed areas, if possible. You should recoat your entire deck annually for the best protection, because these products are formulated to seal the surface from all types of weather.

SEASONAL TIPS

- * Oil Furnace (service)
- * Hot Water Heater (discharge hot water twice a year)
- * Vacuum all air ducts and vents
- * Seal drafts around non-used windows in basement or other areas with heavy gauge plastic sheeting and/or weather stripping
- * Replace any broken storm windows and repair window frames if needed
- * Complete all outdoor jobs you wanted to do before the foul weather arrives

Send Household Help questions to John Amantea, King Features Weekly Service, 235 East 45th Street, New York, N.Y. 10017.

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283-1240

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915 N.E. ALBERTA
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KING FOOD MART
3510 N.E. MLK BLVD.
281-0357

PHILLY CAFE
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288-9367

BOSTON MINI MARKET
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282-6776

NU-RITE-WAY FOOD CENTER
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