

COUNTRY FAIR RECIPES

Win ribbons and compliments

This year let's go to The Fair! Spend hours viewing the exhibit of colorful handmade quilts, roaming through the cattle barn and bidding for a box lunch. It's a chance for city folks to get away from it all and partake in some fun rural folks have enjoyed for generations.

Beneath this seemingly casual, back-to-basics gathering, however, tensions run high. The gentle eyed dairy cow, standing patiently while a young boy quietly grooms her is in stiff class competition for a blue ribbon. Judges are everywhere — in every contest category from cattle to baked goods — timing, grading or tasting.

Awarding blue ribbons is serious business, but a delicious task when judging food because only the very best recipes are presented. The winner of each class is often simply a traditional favorite the judges know and like with something extra added to prove originality and creativity.

It's recipes like these that say, "Take me to the fair." Upside-Down Country Cake blends a beautiful topping of pineapple and pecan halves with a spicy banana oat cake. Prize Peach Pie, made with a corn meal crust, is almost as golden on the outside as it is on the inside. Fruit 'N Oat Bread fits two worlds with country good ingredients that mix up in a hurry for hectic city schedules. Lastly, Champion Corn Bread is cleverly seasoned with green onions to enhance those hearty entrees so popular with the men. Each of these is good enough to win a ribbon at the fair and oodles of compliments at your table.

HIGHEST BID BOX LUNCH

This box lunch is sure to win the highest bid. It's packed full with Crispy Corn Breaded Chicken that's as good as it sounds — a crust of enriched corn meal and a hint of dill. There's also carrot and celery strips, fresh fruit and a peanut-oat dessert, Blue Ribbon Bars. The day is bound to be hot so use caution with the chicken and keep it cold in a refrigerator or an ice chest for safety's sake.

CRISPY CORN BREADED CHICKEN

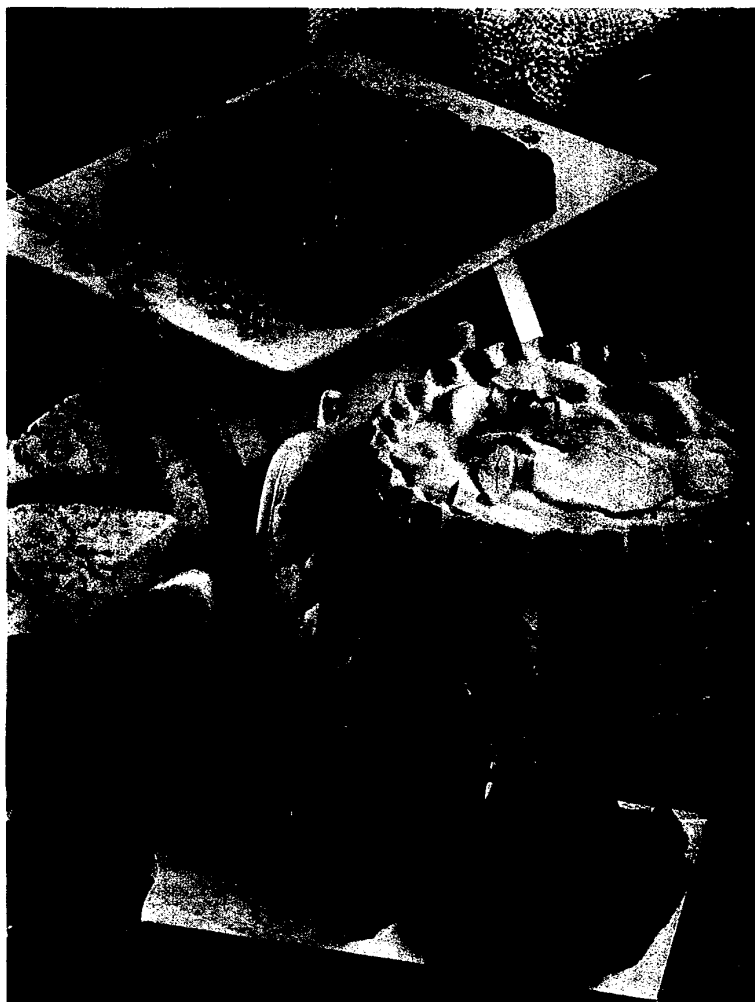
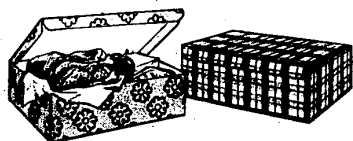
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| 1/2 cup enriched corn meal | 1/4 teaspoon pepper |
| 1/2 cup all-purpose flour | Two 2-1/2 to 3 lb. broiler, fryers, |
| 1-1/2 teaspoons salt | cut-up |
| 1 teaspoon dill weed | Milk |
| 1/4 teaspoon garlic salt | 1/2 cup butter or margarine, melted |

Combine corn meal, flour, salt, dill weed, garlic salt and pepper. Dip chicken in milk; coat with corn meal mixture. Place in two large shallow baking pans; let stand 10 minutes. Drizzle butter over chickens. Bake in preheated moderate oven (375°F.) 55 to 60 minutes or until chicken is tender and golden brown. Serve warm or cold. Makes 8 servings.

BLUE RIBBON BARS

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| 1/4 cup butter or margarine | 1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour |
| 1/4 cup peanut butter | 1/2 teaspoon soda |
| 1 cup firmly packed brown sugar | 1/2 teaspoon salt |
| 1 egg | 1 cup quick or old fashioned oats, uncooked |
| 2 tablespoons milk | 1/2 cup raisins |
| 1 teaspoon vanilla | 1/2 cup coarsely chopped peanuts |

Beat together butter and peanut butter; gradually beat in sugar. Blend in egg, milk and vanilla. Gradually add combined flour, soda and salt. Stir in oats, raisins and nuts. Firmly press dough into lightly greased 9-inch square baking pan. Bake in preheated moderate oven (350°F.) 20 to 25 minutes. Cool; cut into bars. Makes 8-inch square of bar cookies.



Try these blue ribbon winners made delicious with quick or old fashioned oats or enriched corn meal.

UPSIDE-DOWN COUNTRY CAKE

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| Topping: | 2 eggs |
| 3 tablespoons butter or margarine | 1 teaspoon vanilla |
| 1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar | 1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour |
| One 8-oz. can pineapple slices, drained, halved | 1 teaspoon soda |
| 1/3 cup pecan halves | 1 teaspoon cinnamon |
| | 1/2 teaspoon baking powder |
| | 1/2 teaspoon salt |
| | 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg |
| | 3/4 cup buttermilk |
| Cake: | 1 cup quick or old fashioned oats, uncooked |
| 1/2 cup butter or margarine | 1/2 cup mashed banana |
| 1 cup sugar | |

For topping, melt butter in 9-inch baking pan. Sprinkle brown sugar over butter; arrange pineapple slices and pecans over brown sugar.

For cake, beat together butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Blend in eggs and vanilla. Add combined flour, soda, cinnamon, baking powder, salt and nutmeg to butter mixture alternately with buttermilk, mixing well after each addition. Stir in oats and banana. Pour over topping. Bake in preheated moderate oven (350°F.) about 45 to 50 minutes. Loosen sides; immediately invert onto serving plate. Serve warm or cold. Makes 9-inch square cake.

CHAMPION CORN BREAD

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| 1 clove garlic, cut in half | 1-1/2 cups enriched corn meal |
| 1-1/2 cups milk | |
| 1 egg, beaten | 1/2 cup all-purpose flour |
| 1/4 cup green onion slices | 2 teaspoons baking powder |
| 3 tablespoons vegetable oil | 1 teaspoon salt |

Rub inside of 9-inch layer pan with garlic. Add milk, egg, onion and oil to combined dry ingredients; mix until well blended. Pour into well-greased 9-inch layer pan. Bake in preheated hot oven (450°F.) 20 to 25 minutes. Immediately remove from pan; cut into wedges. Serve warm with butter or margarine, if desired. Makes 9-inch round corn bread.

PRIZE PEACH PIE

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| Crust: | Peach Filling: |
| 1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour | 6 cups fresh peach slices |
| 3/4 cup enriched corn meal | 3/4 cup sugar |
| 3/4 teaspoon salt | 1/3 cup half and half or light cream |
| 1/2 cup shortening | 1/4 cup flour |
| 1/2 cup cold water | |

For crust, combine flour, corn meal and salt. Cut in shortening until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add water, a tablespoon at a time, stirring lightly with a fork until mixture forms a ball. Roll half of dough out onto lightly floured surface to form a 13-inch circle. Fit loosely into 9-inch pie plate. Trim. Roll remaining dough to 13-inch circle; cut steam vents. Decorate as desired.

For peach filling, combine peaches, sugar, half and half and flour; mix lightly, just until peaches are coated. Spoon mixture into pie crust. Place rolled dough over peach mixture. Trim; flute edges. Bake in preheated hot oven (400°F.) 40 minutes or until crust is lightly browned. Makes 9-inch pie.

FRUIT 'N OAT BREAD

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| 2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour | 3/4 cup firmly packed dark brown sugar |
| 1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder | 1/2 cup chopped dates |
| 1 teaspoon cinnamon | 1/2 cup coarsely chopped walnuts |
| 1 teaspoon salt | 1 cup applesauce |
| 1 teaspoon soda | 1/2 cup milk |
| 1/2 teaspoon nutmeg | 1/2 cup vegetable oil |
| 1 cup quick or old fashioned oats, uncooked | 3 eggs |

Combine flour, baking powder, cinnamon, salt, soda and nutmeg; stir in oats, sugar, dates and nuts. Add applesauce, milk and eggs; mix just until dry ingredients are moistened. Pour batter into well-greased 9x5-inch loaf pan. Bake in preheated moderate oven (350°F.) 1 hour and 15 minutes or until wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 10 minutes; remove from pan. Cool thoroughly before slicing. Makes 9x5-inch loaf.