



Food Bites



November 2015



Fruit of the Month Cranberries

Cranberry is an evergreen woody plant that belongs to the heather family. It originates from northeastern parts of North America. This plant was popular and highly prized among Native Americans, who used it as a source of food, medicine and dyes. Cranberries are cultivated around the world today because of their delicious fruit that acts beneficially on the humans' health.

Cranberries are a good source of dietary fibers, Vitamin C and Manganese. Cranberry was used as a source of Vitamin C for the prevention of scurvy (disorder induced by vitamin C deficiency) on the American ships in the past. Latest medical studies indicate the antioxidants found in cranberries can prevent development of Alzheimer's disease.

The name cranberry is a shorter version of the original name of the plant: "crane berry". Dutch and German settlers coined this name because of the light pink flower whose petals twist backwards and together with stem create impression of head, neck and bill of a crane.



Vegetable of the Month Pumpkins

Pumpkins are a member of the gourd family, which includes cucumbers, honeydew melons, cantaloupe, watermelons and zucchini. These plants are native to Central America and Mexico, but now grow on six continents.

Pumpkins have been grown in North America for five thousand years. They are indigenous to the western hemisphere. In 1584, French explorer Jacques Cartier reported finding "gros melons". The name was translated into English as "pompions," which has since evolved into "pumpkins".

Pumpkins are low in calories, fat and sodium and high in fiber. They are good sources of Vitamin A, Vitamin B, potassium, protein, and iron.

Pumpkin seeds should be planted between the last week of May and the middle of June. They take between 90 to 120 days to grow and are picked in October when they are bright orange in color. Their seeds can be saved to grow new pumpkins next year.



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How to Cook a Turkey



Turkey Roasting Tip:

1. Remove giblets that are usually stored in a packet in the neck area of the bird. Use for preparing broth if desired. Remove and discard any large pockets of fat that may be present in the neck area.
2. For whole poultry, drain juices and blot cavity dry with paper towels. Currently, the USDA does not advise washing poultry before cooking. If you do, after removing the turkey, wash the sink with hot, soapy water or sanitize with a mild bleach solution of 1 teaspoon chlorine bleach to 1 quart of water. This will help prevent cross-contamination to other foods that are washed in the sink.
3. Rub the inside of cavity and neck area with salt.
4. Place breast side up on a rack in a shallow roasting pan.
5. Brush the skin with oil or melted butter.
6. Insert an oven-safe meat thermometer into the thigh area of large birds, not touching bone. (Or for large or small birds, use an instant read thermometer before you return it to the oven.)
7. Roast, uncovered without liquid, according to the temperature and time given in the chart below or in your recipe. The roasting times provided in the chart below are for defrosted poultry that is refrigerator cold.
8. If poultry browns too quickly, tent with foil.
9. Because turkeys will continue to cook after being removed from the oven, remove them when the internal temperature is 5 degrees below desired doneness.
10. Cover with foil and let stand for 15 to 20 minutes before removing any stuffing and carving.

Turkey Roasting Temps & Times:

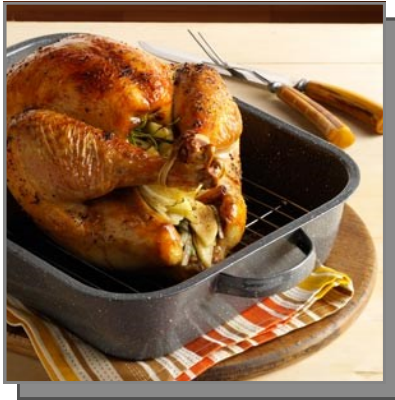
The roasting times provided in this chart are for defrosted poultry that is refrigerator cold.

Type of Turkey (Unstuffed*)	Weight	Cooking Time (Minutes Per Pound)	Oven Temp	Doneness Temp
Turkey, Whole	8 to 12 lbs.	15 to 20	325°	170° to 175°
	12 to 14 lbs.	15 to 17	325°	170° to 175°
	14 to 18 lbs.	14 to 16	325°	170° to 175°
	18 to 20 lbs.	13 to 14	325°	170° to 175°
	20 to 24 lbs.	12 to 13-1/2	325°	170° to 175°
Turkey Breast, Whole	4 to 6 lbs.	22 to 30	325°	165°
Turkey Breast, Half	1-3/4 to 3-1/2 lbs.	35 to 40	325°	165°
Turkey Breast, Roast	1-1/4 to 1-3/4 lbs.	45 to 60	325°	165°

* For stuffed birds, add 15 to 45 minutes to the roasting time. Temperature of stuffing should read at least 165 degrees

- 4 cartons (32 oz each) vegetable broth
- 1 cup kosher salt
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 Tbsp whole peppercorns
- 1-1/2 tsp whole allspice
- 1-1/2 tsp minced fresh gingerroot
- 4 quarts cold water
- 2 turkey-size oven roasting bags
- 1 turkey (14 to 16 pounds)
- 1 cup water
- 1 medium apple, sliced
- 1 small onion, sliced
- 1 cinnamon stick (3 inches)
- 4 fresh rosemary sprigs
- 6 fresh sage leaves
- 1 tsp canola oil
- 1/2 tsp pepper

Golden Roasted Turkey Recipe



1. In a stockpot, combine the first six ingredients. Bring to a boil. Cook and stir until salt and brown sugar are dissolved. Remove from the heat. Add the cold water to cool the brine to room temperature.
2. Place a turkey-size oven roasting bag inside a second roasting bag; add turkey. Carefully pour cooled brine into bag. Squeeze out as much air as possible; seal bags and turn to coat. Place in a roasting pan. Refrigerate for 18-24 hours, turning occasionally.
3. In a microwave-safe bowl, combine the water, apple, onion and cinnamon. Microwave on high for 3-4 minutes or until apples are tender; drain water.
4. Drain and discard brine. Rinse turkey under cold water; pat dry. Place cooked apple mixture, rosemary and sage in turkey cavity. Skewer turkey openings; tie drumsticks together.
5. Place turkey breast side up on a rack in a roasting pan. Rub with oil and pepper. Bake, uncovered, at 325° for 2-3/4 to 3-1/4 hours or until a thermometer inserted in thickest part of thigh reads 170°-175°. (Cover loosely with foil if turkey browns too quickly.) Cover and let stand for 15 minutes before carving; discard apple mixture and herbs.



Turkey:

- 1 turkey (14 to 16 lbs)
- 2 tsp poultry seasoning
- 1 tsp pepper
- 3 cups chicken broth
- 1/2 cup minced fresh parsley
- 1/4 cup lemon juice

- 1 Tbsp minced or dried thyme
- 1 Tbsp minced or dried rosemary
- 1 tsp grated lemon peel
- 2 garlic cloves, minced

Gravy:

- 1-1/2 cups chicken broth
- 1 Tbsp butter
- 1 Tbsp all-purpose flour

Make-Ahead Turkey & Gravy



1. Preheat oven to 325°. Sprinkle turkey with poultry seasoning and pepper. Tuck wings under turkey; tie drumsticks together. Place on a rack in a shallow roasting pan, breast side up.
2. Roast, uncovered, 30 minutes. In a 4-cup measuring cup, mix remaining turkey ingredients; carefully pour over turkey. Roast, uncovered, 3 to 3-1/2 hours longer or until a thermometer inserted in thigh reads 180°, basting occasionally with broth mixture. Cover loosely with foil if turkey browns too quickly.
3. Remove turkey from pan; let stand at least 20 minutes before carving. Skim fat from cooking juices.
4. Carve turkey; place in shallow freezer containers. Pour strained juices over turkey; cool completely. Freeze, covered, up to 3 months.
5. **To serve:** Partially thaw turkey in refrigerator overnight. Preheat oven to 350°. Transfer turkey and cooking juices to a baking dish; pour broth over turkey. Bake, covered, 50-60 minutes or until a thermometer reads 165°.
6. Remove turkey from baking dish, reserving cooking liquid; keep warm. In a small saucepan, melt butter; stir in flour until smooth. Gradually whisk in reserved cooking liquid. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly; cook and stir 2 minutes or until thickened. Serve with turkey.

How to Carve a Turkey



Step 1

Place bird on a carving board and remove any stuffing. Holding the end of the drumstick, pull the leg away from the body and cut between the thigh joint and body to remove the entire leg. Repeat with other leg.



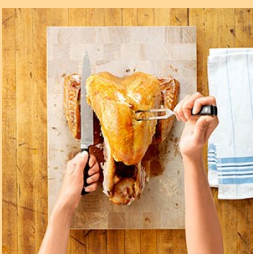
Step 2

To separate the drumstick and thigh, cut through the connecting joint.



Step 3

Holding the drumstick by the end, slice meat into 1/4-in. slices. Cut thigh meat parallel to the bone into 1/4-in. slices.



Step 4

Hold the bird with a meat fork and make a deep cut into the breast meat just above the wing area.



Step 5

Slice down from the top of the breast into the cut made in Step 4. Slice meat 1/4 in. thick. Repeat steps 4 and 5 on other side of bird.



Step 6

To remove wings, cut through the connecting joints by the wing bones and backbone.

How to Make Gravy

Step 1

To make gravy from meats and poultry roasted in an uncovered roasting pan, pour pan drippings into a heat-resistant measuring cup or fat separator. Loosen the browned bits from the roasting pan and add to drippings. Add enough broth to drippings to measure 2 cups. Skim the fat, reserving 2 tablespoons.



Step 2

Combine flour and reserved fat in a saucepan; whisk until smooth over medium heat.



Step 3

Gradually stir in the drippings mixture. Cook and stir over medium-high heat until mixture comes to a boil. Cook and stir 2 minutes longer or until thickened. Add seasonings to taste.



Step 4

To avoid lumpy gravy, first make a roux (pronounced "roo"), which is a mixture of flour and fat (like butter), that's cooked over low heat and used to thicken sauces. A roux can be white, blond or brown, depending on how long it's allowed to cook and what fat the flour is mixed with.



Step 5

Make sure the butter is completely melted before adding the flour. Test it by sprinkling in a pinch of flour. If it slowly starts to bubble, whisk in the rest of the flour. Whisk the butter and flour constantly until the mixture is blended and smooth.



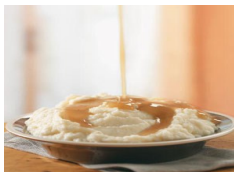
Step 6

Gradually whisk or stir in the chicken broth. Bring the mixture to a boil, whisking constantly until the gravy is thickened, about 2 minutes.



Step 7

Whether you drizzle this smooth sauce over mashed potatoes, stuffing or sliced meat, gravy is fast and easy in these few steps.



Creamy Cranberry Salad

- 3 cup fresh or frozen cranberries, chopped
- 1 can crushed pineapple, drained
- 2 cups miniature marshmallows
- 1 medium apple, chopped
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 1/4 cup chopped walnuts



1. In a large bowl, mix the cranberries, pineapples, marshmallows, apple, sugar and salt until blended. Refrigerate, covered, overnight.
2. In a large bowl, beat cream until stiff peaks form. Just before serving, fold cream and walnuts into cranberry mixture.

Comforting Potato Casserole

- 2 cans condensed cream of mushroom soup, undiluted
- 2 cups sour cream
- 2 cups shredded Mozzarella Cheese
- 5 green onions, sliced
- 1 package frozen cubed hash brown potatoes, thawed



1. In a large bowl, combine the soup, sour cream, cheese and onions; add in potatoes; toss to coat.
2. Transfer to a greased 2-1/2 quart baking dish. Bake, uncovered, at 350 degrees for 1-1/2 hours or until potatoes are tender.

Slow-Cooked Apple Cranberry Cider

- 3 cinnamon sticks, broken
- 1 tsp whole cloves
- 2 quarts apple cider or juice
- 3 cups cranberry juice
- 2 Tbsp brown sugar



1. Place cinnamon sticks and cloves on a double thickness of cheesecloth; bring up corners of cloth and tie with string to form a bag.
2. In a 5-quart slow cooker, combine the cider, cranberry juice and brown sugar; add spice bag. Cover and cook on high for 2 hours or until cider reaches desired temperature. Discard spice bag.

Maple-Honey Cranberry Sauce



- 2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries
- 1/2 cup maple syrup
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1 Tbsp grated orange peel

1. In a large saucepan, combine the cranberries, syrup, honey and orange peel.
2. Cook over medium heat until the berries pop, about 15 minutes.
3. Cover and store in the refrigerator.



Roasted Cauliflower & Brussels Sprouts with Bacon

- 2 lbs fresh Brussels sprouts, thinly sliced
 - 1 lb fresh cauliflowerets, thinly sliced
 - 1/4 cup olive oil
 - 1 tsp pepper
 - 1/2 tsp salt
 - 1 lb bacon strips, cooked and crumbled
 - 1/3 to 1/2 cup balsamic vinaigrette
1. Preheat oven to 375°. In a very large bowl, toss Brussels sprouts and cauliflower with oil, pepper and salt. Transfer to two greased 15x10x1-in. baking pans.
 2. Roast 20-25 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Transfer to a serving bowl. Just before serving, add bacon and drizzle with vinaigrette; toss to coat.





Sweet Potato Casserole with Pecans

- 2 can sweet potatoes, drained
- 8 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tsp salt

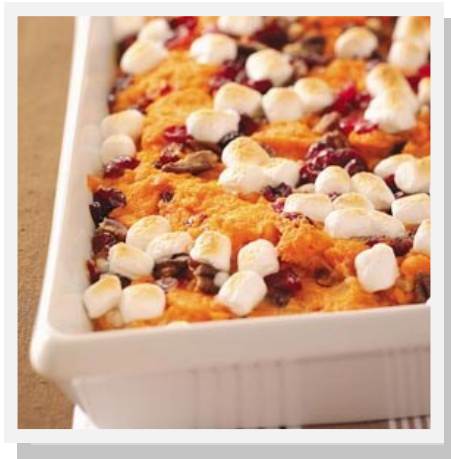
TOPPING:

- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1/4 cup cold butter, cubed



1. In a large bowl, mash sweet potatoes. Add the eggs, sugar, flour, vanilla and salt; beat until smooth. Transfer to a greased 13x9-in. baking dish.
2. In a small bowl, combine the brown sugar, flour and pecans; cut in butter until crumbly. Sprinkle over sweet potato mixture.
3. Bake, uncovered, at 325° for 60-70 minutes or until a thermometer reads 160°. Refrigerate leftovers.

Mallow Sweet Potato Bake



- 6 large sweet potatoes
- 3 Tbsp butter
- 1 can unsweetened crushed pineapple, undrained
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1/3 cup orange juice
- 3/4 tsp salt
- 2/3 cu miniature marshmallows
- 1/3 cup chopped pecans

1. Preheat oven to 400°. Scrub and pierce sweet potatoes. Bake 45-55 minutes or until tender. Reduce oven setting to 350°.
2. Cut potatoes in half; scoop out pulp and place in a large bowl. Stir in butter until melted. Stir in the pineapple, 1/4 cup cranberries, orange juice and salt.
3. Transfer to an 11x7-in. baking dish coated with cooking spray. Cover and bake 30 minutes.
4. Uncover; sprinkle with marshmallows, pecans and remaining cranberries. Bake 8-10 minutes longer or just until marshmallows are puffed and lightly browned.



HAPPY THANKSGIVING



Favorite Yeast Rolls

- 2 to 2-1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 3 Tbsp sugar
- 1 package quick-rise yeast
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 3/4 cup warm water
- 2 Tbsp butter, melted



1. In a large bowl, combine 1-1/2 cups flour, sugar, yeast and salt. Add water and butter; beat on medium speed for 3 minutes or until smooth. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough.
2. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 4-6 minutes. Cover and let rest for 10 minutes. Roll dough to 3/8-in. thickness; cut with a lightly floured 2-1/2-in. biscuit cutter. Place 2 in. apart on a greased baking sheet. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1-1/2 hours.
3. Bake at 375° for 11-14 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to a wire rack.



Grandma's Poultry Dressing



- 1 lb bulk pork sausage
- 1 cup milk
- 7 cups coarse dry bread crumbs
- 1 cup diced celery
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 2 to 3 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
- 2 Tbsp diced onion
- 1/2 tsp salt or salt to taste

1. Preheat oven to 350°. In a large skillet, brown sausage. Drain and discard drippings. Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, heat milk over medium heat until bubbles form around sides of pan. In a large bowl, combine sausage, milk and remaining ingredients.
2. Transfer to a greased 2-qt. baking dish. Cover and bake 40 minutes or until lightly browned.



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