
4-H CULTURAL FOODS

MJ1030
Member Manual and Record

Cultural Group Selected: _____

Name: _____ Age: _____
(As of December 31)

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip Code: _____

County: _____



Putting Knowledge to Work

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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8/04

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *4-H Cultural Foods!* You have an opportunity to investigate a wide variety of food choices during the coming year. Select one cultural or ethnic group within the United States to study in depth.

A *cultural group* is described as a group of people who share distinctive characteristics, such as beliefs, customs, arts, or region of the country, such as: Cajan or Creole, southern, Tex-mex, or barbeque cookery.

An *ethnic group* shares characteristics such as religion, language, ancestry, culture or national origin. Examples of ethnic groups within the United States include Amish, Jewish, Native American and Hawaiian.

Preparing food enables us to better understand the basic food patterns, culture and customs of an ethnic or cultural group. Each is unique, which makes the experience exciting and fun.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

- Learn dietary patterns of an ethnic or cultural group.
- Plan, prepare and serve ethnic or cultural meals.
- Gain a broader understanding of an ethnic or cultural group.
- Share experiences with others to promote greater understanding and appreciation of different cultures.

PROJECT EXPECTATIONS

- Select an ethnic or cultural group within the United States to study.
- Share with your leader the ethnic or cultural group you selected to study.
- Learn about the selected group such as:
 - customs that influenced their food choices,
 - nutritional aspects of their diet,
 - menus and recipes,
 - traditional food preparation techniques, and
 - holidays and foods associated with them.
- Record in your own words the information you collected and experienced about the ethnic or cultural group.
- Assemble and keep information.
- Plan, prepare and serve a minimum of three ethnic or cultural meals. At least one meal should be typical of the group you selected to study.
- Describe which of the three meals you like best and why.

- Write a story describing your experiences with the project.
- Present a demonstration to others on an ethnic or cultural foods related topic.
- Do a food-related community service project.
- Judge or evaluate food products to determine how well they meet acceptable standards or to select the best quality product.

RESOURCES

The following are possible resources that may be of help to you. Can you think of others?

- Public Library - information about and cookbooks from different ethnic or cultural groups.
- Internet - offers a large number of sites containing information on ethnic cookery. Some possible search engines include: *food, cooking, home and family, ethnic cookery, countries, regions, etc.*

Record the web addresses for those sites you found most helpful.

- Check within your community and contact individuals who may represent the ethnic or cultural group you are interested in.
- Check with a local college or university to see if they have programs that offer opportunities to learn about different cultural or ethnic groups.
- Visit ethnic food markets or grocery stores and cultural centers.
- Check with kitchen supply stores to see if they offer any cultural or ethnic cooking classes.
- Tour a culinary institute. To find a culinary institute in a city near you check the internet or phone directory under *schools*.
- Book stores offer a wide variety of materials on ethnic groups, foods, etc.

EXHIBIT

Include the following in your exhibit.

- A. A *food product* with recipe representative of the cultural or ethnic group you selected.
NOTE: the food product must be safe to hold at room temperature during judging and display.
- B. *Complete records* that include:
- a description of the cultural or ethnic group's,
 - ▶ food customs
 - ▶ traditional food preparation practices
 - ▶ holidays celebrated and foods associated with them
 - reasons you selected the cultural or ethnic group,
 - your goals for the project,
 - how the goals were accomplished,
 - nutritive value of the diet of the cultural or ethnic group studied,
 - how the project broadened your understanding of the group you selected,
 - a record of your demonstration, community service and judging/evaluation experiences during the year, and
 - a story.

FOOD AND TRADITIONS

ETHNIC FOODS

Foods and traditions were brought with immigrants as they moved to the United States. They prepared their meals based upon what they had learned and practiced in their country of origin. Over time, many of these rich traditions changed in response to availability of new food products that cut preparation time, equipment that eliminated the need to do everything by hand, and less time to prepare authentic foods from scratch. Today traditional meal preparation methods are often reserved only for special holidays or family celebrations.

Advertising and meal programs helped introduced people to foods different from their traditional meals. This has resulted in foods once associated with one ethnic group becoming more widely accepted by others; for example tacos, spaghetti and rice.

There are still some foods considered suitable within one group that are thought to be unacceptable by others; such as locust, octopus, poi, or guinea pigs. Not all foods eaten by the average American are acceptable to all groups; such as: Pork - forbidden to Orthodox Jews and Moslems and meat of any kind - forbidden to the Seventh Day Adventist.

The introduction of ethnic markets in communities has made traditional ingredients more readily available. This enables many individuals to again enjoy their traditional foods that could not previously be found in local grocery stores. These ethnic markets have also made it more convenient for others outside that ethnic group to purchase ingredients to use in ethnic meals as well.

NATIVE AMERICAN COOKERY

Scholars studying Indian cultures north of Mexico found seven great culture areas in the region. The Indians of each area shared similar natural surroundings and had much the same kind of culture. Their diets however reflected special ways of acquiring food.

Indians of the Eastern Forests. The Indians made their homes in the eastern part of North America. They depended upon the trees, the animals that lived in the forests, and the fish and shellfish from the streams and sea. They knew how to grow crops such as pumpkins, corn, squash, beans, tobacco and gourds.

Wanderers of the Plains. The Plains Indians lived on a vast rolling plain. They relied on the herds of animals that roamed the region. Their most important food supply was the buffalo, or bison, however they also hunted other plains animals such as elk, deer and antelope.

Pueblo Indians of the Southwest. The Indians of the Southwest had land that was high, dry and cut by mountains and canyons. They learned to irrigate their fields and find moist spots for dry farming. The good crops gave them a dependable food supply.

Nomadic Raiders and Herders. The region also had nomadic Indians who did not build villages. They hunted and raided other settled villages until the Spaniards brought sheep and goats into the region. The Indians gradually began to tend flocks of these animals for a livelihood.

Seed Gatherers of the Desert. The Seed Gatherer Indians had an even drier homeland. Game animals were scarce, therefore families roamed the desert and gathered berries, nuts, seeds, and roots. They ground the seeds into flour for gruel.

Fisherman of the Northwest. The Northwest Fisherman had a land of heavy rainfall along the northern Pacific coast. The ocean and rivers were rich with fish. Hunters added game to the diet while women gathered bulbs, berries and seeds.

Northern Hunters. North of these areas lived the Mackenzie-Yukon Caribou Hunters and the Inuit. The Caribou hunters depended upon the caribou and other northern game much as the Plains Indians depended upon the buffalo. The Inuit depended upon seal, whale, walrus, caribou, polar bear, birds and other animals.

Following are two recipes that reflect the culture of the Pueblo Indians.

Hopi Corn Stew

1 cup roast beef or ground beef, chopped	1 cup zucchini squash, cubed
1 tablespoon shortening	2 cups plus 2 tablespoons water
Salt and pepper to taste	2 tablespoons cornmeal
2 cups fresh corn, cut from cobs	

Heat shortening in a large heavy skillet. Brown meat and add salt and pepper to taste. Add squash, corn and 2 cups water. Simmer about 30 minutes, or until vegetables are almost tender.

In a cup, stir together cornmeal and 2 tablespoons water to make a paste. Stir thickener into stew. Stir about 5 minutes to prevent sticking.

Makes 4 servings.

Fry Bread

4 cups flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
2 tablespoons powdered milk
1 ½ cup warm water

Put 4 cups flour into a bowl. Add baking powder and salt. Add powdered milk and mix together. Pour warm water into bowl and mix with hand until soft. Take a ball of soft dough and pat back and forth and pull until flat and round. Melt shortening or oil in a deep pan. Put dough one or two at a time into hot fat, turn until brown on both sides.

CULTURAL FOODS

Early American immigrants brought and planted seeds from their native countries introducing new foods to the region. They discovered plants that provided food, such as the Sugar Maple tree that provided sap for syrup. Diets relied on food sources available in the region, such as wild game, fish, roots, fruits and berries. This trend continued throughout the civilization of the continent thus the variance in localized food habits.

Cultural food preparation often is a blend of traditional foods, due to sharing by individuals from different cultures who come together in new communities. Foods were blended to produce a richness of flavors unique to that group or region. Marriage resulted in the blending of food customs from each individual's family to form new practices as well.

PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH COOKING

Pennsylvania (PA) Dutch cookery is one of the oldest and most distinctive of the many regional styles of cooking in the United States. Dating back to 1683, early German settlers brought with them a love of good food and knowledge of good cooking. They adapted their traditional old country recipes to use the limited ingredients they had available in their new land. Because they produced almost everything they used, their recipes become based upon the flocks, herds and grains they had available to them.

Dough is used extensively in PA Dutch cooking. Rivals, noodles, dough balls and all kinds of dumplings are used in soups, meat dishes, with vegetables and even in deserts. Dough and potatoes are often used in combination with meat in pot pies made in a kettle on top of the stove, not baked in an oven.

Potatoes are a favorite food of the PA Dutch and they are prepared in many different ways. They may be served at each meal starting with fried or hash browned for breakfast and as a part of a stew or pot pie for lunch or dinner. Cabbage, corn, beans, sugar peas and Jerusalem artichokes are other popular vegetables used.

Salads Hot potato salad is a common recipe used as compared to a lettuce-based salad due to the short growing season. There are only a few typical salads used for that reason.

Sweets and Sours Pickles, relishes, preserves and spiced fruits are common in many kinds of regional or national cookery. Some of the most typical sweets are apple butter, spiced cantaloupe and cinnamon apples, as well as a wide variety of preserves, jams, jellies and fruit butters. Favorite sours include cabbage-filled peppers, pickled cabbage, chow chow, pickled beets and pickled eggs.

Desserts Cakes, cookies, puddings and custards are plentiful in PA Dutch cooking. Pies are a speciality and made daily with whatever ingredients are available. During the summer and fall, fruits are plentiful and used in their recipes. During the winter, when other things are not available, there is always Shoofly Pies and other pies made from dried fruits (raisins, dried apples and apricots).

Shoofly Pie

Makes one 9-inch pie; serves 8.

Pastry for a 1-crust, 9-inch pie	1 egg
1 cup all-purpose flour	1 cup light molasses
2/3 cup light brown sugar, packed	3/4 cup cold water
1 tablespoon cold butter	1/4 cup hot water
1/4 teaspoon salt	1 tablespoon baking soda

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Roll out the pastry and line a 9-inch pie pan. Set aside.

In a food processor bowl, combine the flour, brown sugar, butter and salt. Remove ½ cup of the mixture and set aside. Transfer the rest to a medium mixing bowl.

In a small bowl, beat the egg lightly. Add the molasses and cold water and blend, but do not beat. Set aside.

In another small bowl, mix the hot water and the baking soda. Blend into the molasses mixture. Add to the flour mixture and mix well. Pour into the pie shell and top with the reserved crumbs.

Bake for 35 minutes. The pie will appear quivery but will firm up as it cools. Transfer to a rack to cool completely before cutting.

CREOLE AND CAJUN COOKERY

The word *Cajun* originally comes from the word Acadian, which specified French-speaking individuals who were exiled to the Louisiana area in 1753. They are world-famous for great tasting food. Authentic cuisine does not include the recently popularized "blackening" technique nor extreme levels of spices. Good Cajun cooks know the secrets of using a variety of simple, fresh, locally-available ingredients with just the right seasonings.

The Acadian refugees made excellent use of the seafood, wild game and fresh vegetation available to them to feed their families. Early Cajuns experimented with local herbs and prepared homemade seasonings to enhance the flavor of their plain meals. The modern Cajun kitchen includes at least one black cast-iron pot. Pantries usually are stocked with these essential items: rice, flour, oil, salt, pepper (black, red and white), beans (red, white and others) hot sauces and seasoning mixes, and cane syrup and sugar.

The first step in Cajun cookery is to make a roux ("roo"), which is the key to successful gumbo, sauce piquante ("pee-kahnt"), fricasse ("free-kah-say"), etouffee ("aye-too-fay") and stews. The basic procedure for a dark roux (Cajun's favorite) requires heating flour and oil, in roughly equal proportions, until the mixture is a rich chocolate color. This involves constant stirring, and depending upon the level of heat, may take 20 minutes to an hour. Well prepared roux smells like roasted nuts.

Cajuns are known for preparing lots of food for a meal. The tasty leftovers often are used for meals later in the week.

There is a trinity of chopped vegetables - onion, bell peppers and celery - that are standard ingredients in many recipes. Other vegetables may be added to the recipe, but these three often are the basis for the recipe.

The term *Creole* evolved from the word Criollo that defined any person other than those of Spanish descent. It evolved to be applied to those with an elegant lifestyle, which featured a cuisine heavy in butter and cream. Creole-designated recipes tend to be heavier in tomatoes, but also include the trinity of vegetables - onions, green peppers and celery.

The use of filé powder is distinctly Creole. This ingredient is powdered leaf of the sassafras tree, and was first used by the Choctaw Indians as a thickener for soups and stews. It has a woody flavor, very much like sassafras tea. Creole cooks prefer the light-colored roux whereas the dark, chocolate colored roux was preferred by Cajuns.

Today the distinctions between Cajun and Creole cookery is much less clear and the entire cuisine of Louisiana's bayou country can be correctly called either Cajun or Creole, depending upon the family in which it evolved. Some modern cookbooks and restaurants offer menu items loosely identified by either label.

Olive Salad (Creole)

2 cups sliced pimento stuffed olives
½ cup pickled cauliflower, drained
3 tablespoons capers
4 stalks celery, minced
1 teaspoon celery seed
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoons oregano
½ teaspoon black pepper

½ cup diced pickled pepperoncini peppers
1 cup sliced Greek black olives
½ cup cocktail onions, drained

Dressing:

¼ cup olive oil
¼ cup vegetable oil
2 tablespoons red wine vinegar
1 teaspoon sugar

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Combine dressing ingredients and toss with vegetables. Refrigerate for a couple of days before using.

Basic Beignets ("ben-yay" - Cajun)

1 cup water
1 cup milk
1 large egg
3 cups all purpose flour
2 tablespoons baking powder

1 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons sugar
Pinch of nutmeg
4 to 6 cups vegetable oil
Confectioners sugar

Combine the water, milk and egg in a large mixing bowl and mix well. Add the flour, baking powder, salt and sugar and mix until the batter is smooth. Pour the oil into a large, deep pot or a deep fryer and heat to 360°F. Drop the batter by spoonfuls into the hot oil and fry, turning two or three times, until golden brown. Drain on paper towels and sprinkle with confectioners sugar. Makes 2 dozen.

BARBEQUE, BARBECUE OR BBQ

The real origin of barbeque remains obscure and some assume its origin is derived from the French word - *barbe-a-que*, which means "from snout to tail". The word was used in the state of Virginia before the 1700's and the institution of the barbecue is probably of southern origin.

The term means a whole animal roasted or broiled in its entirety for a feast or the feast at which such a meat is served. Therefore, a barbeque is either a form of cooking, or a social event. It is not to be confused with the cooking of steaks, hot dogs, and hamburgers on the grill, that is called grilling.

To barbeque is to slow-cook the meat at a low temperature for a long time over wood or

charcoal. A large barbecue takes about 24 hours of preparation. First the meat is marinated for a number of hours and the fires prepared. Then the BBQ or basting sauce is mixed according to the recipe used. The animal is placed on a steel spit over the fire and the roasting begins. The spit is turned at regular intervals and the basting is done by dipping the brush or broom in tubs of sauce and swabbing the meat evenly.

Different areas of the country have different meat priorities and preparations. For example, the Southeast prefers pork, Texas seems to prefer beef barbeque, and the West coast seem to love chicken or seafood.

The sauce is what helps define a BBQ. In the South they tend to like thinner sauces, with a more vinegary taste. Other parts of the country seem to prefer the thick, sweet, tomato based sauces. In some areas of the South they season their meat with a dry-crumb mixture of seasonings before roasting.

It is suggested that you collect sauce recipes that goes well with your preferred meat/poultry/seafood choice and best represents your family's tastes. Check the library, cookbooks, and the internet for recipes that sound fun.

ETHNIC AND CULTURAL FOOD ACTIVITIES

Activity #1

Think about the foods your family eats on a regular basis. Identify:

One ethnic food your family eats: _____

One cultural food your family eats: _____

Identify when your family began eating these foods and why they tried them?

Activity #2

Imagine moving from Colorado to another part of the country.

Where would you move? _____

What common foods are eaten in that region? _____

How does that compare to foods commonly eaten in Colorado?

How is it alike? _____

How is it different? _____

Your challenge during the coming year will be to discover traditional ethnic and cultural foods and practice their preparation methods. Once you have accomplished that task, you will feel more comfortable trying other foods from around the country.

RECORD

1. Describe the food customs of the ethnic or cultural group you selected.

2. What are their traditional foods and how are they prepared?

3. What holidays do they celebrate and how?

Foods Prepared: List foods prepared at home and club meetings. Star (*) those that represent an ethnic or cultural food.

Foods prepared	Number of times prepared	Foods prepared	Number of times prepared
Example: Corn Bread *	5		
Chocolate Chip Cookies	8		

Report on Meal Prepared

Share the three menus for the cultural or ethnic meals you prepared this year.

Menu # 1

Cultural or ethnic group represented:

Number of people served: _____

To whom was the meal served? _____

Menu # 2

Cultural or ethnic group represented:

Number of people served: _____

To whom was the meal served? _____

Menu # 3

Cultural or ethnic group represented:

Number of people served: _____

To whom was the meal served? _____

Which meal was the most interesting to prepared? Why?

Demonstration

Title of demonstration	Where was it given and to whom?	Number in audience

Community Service

Tell about the food-related community service project you participated in this year.

Judging/evaluation Experiences

Share your experiences comparing food products or items to determine how well they met acceptable standards or to select the best quality product.

Pictures

One page of project related pictures. (Optional)

Story

Add a story sharing responses to questions such as:

- Why did you select the cultural or ethnic group for your project?
- What were your goals for the project?
- How did you accomplish your goals?
- What would you do differently if you were to do this project again?
- How did the project broaden your understanding of the group you studied?
- Did you plan to continue preparing recipes you tried this year?

