

February: The Family that Bakes Together...

By: Lisa Franzen-Castle, RD, PhD, Nutrition Specialist
UNL Panhandle Research & Extension Center
Author E-mail: lfranzen2@unl.edu

Baking is an inexpensive family activity that provides opportunities for families to share baking traditions, recipes and family heritage that can be handed down through each generation. February is Bake for Family Fun Month, and the Home Baking Association



(www.homebaking.org/familyfun/) encourages families to spend time together in the kitchen. Below are some tips on how to get started.

Baking tips from the Home Baking Association:

Do some prep work. Prep by reading and trying the recipe first. Add 20 to 30 minutes to explain, show and guide beginners and 15 minutes for intermediates or experienced bakers. Divide it into two sessions if needed, or pre-measure or prepare some steps beforehand.



Keep it clean. Remember to wash hands and countertops before starting and cleaning up after you're done. Provide separate towels for hands and dishes and frequently wash pot holders. Aprons or large T-shirts are great for keeping clothes clean during the baking process.



Take it one step at a time. Read the recipe, gather ingredients, and make sure nothing was left out.



When short on time, or working with beginning or young bakers, prepare some steps ahead or do some steps one day and complete the mixing or baking the next.

Use the right tools. Pour liquids (water, oil, milk, honey, corn syrup) in a clear liquid measuring cup placed on the countertop. Read amount at eye level. Use standard dry measures for dry ingredients (flours, sugar, cocoa, brown sugar, cornmeal). Use measuring spoons for small amounts less than ¼ cup (4 tablespoons).



Do a safe kitchen checklist. Turn handles of pans toward the center of the stove so sleeves or people passing by won't catch on them and spill. Keep



cupboard doors and drawers closed unless in use. Always use only dry hot pads or oven mitts because heat goes through damp mitts. When stirring or checking for doneness, tilt the lid away from you so steam is released away from your face.

Oven ins and outs. Before preheating, make sure the oven racks are in the right place for the pans and recipe. Preheat the oven as the recipe directs—allow 10 minutes. Place pans in the oven so they do not touch each other or the oven sides. Do not place pans on racks directly below or above another pan. Keep clean, dry oven mitts or pads close by.



Baking can be a learning experience. Children and adults learn a lot together in the kitchen. The results of cooking or baking together contributes to stronger relationships at home and in groups and children learn time management, team skills, following directions, and problem solving.



Enjoy foods from your own kitchen. It's quick, easy, and economical. Use these recipes to get started from the recipe central website at food.unl.edu/web/fnh/recipe-central, the cooking



with youth recipes at food.unl.edu/web/youth/recipes, or scan the QR Code with your smartphone or other electronic device to go straight to the website.

Additional Resources & Links:

- **Cooks Tools for the Kitchen.** Having the right kitchen tools can make cooking easier and more fun! However, you don't need every tool in the store. Before you buy that next piece of kitchen equipment, check the following tips and suggestions. <http://go.unl.edu/c75>
- **Cook it Quick's Cooking Tips & Techniques.** Covers topics and provides links for using the oven or stovetop, freezing make ahead foods, meat, poultry and egg basics, and techniques for rice, beans, fruit and vegetables. <http://food.unl.edu/web/fnh/cooking-school>
- **Ingredient Substitutions.** Often for lack of an ingredient, a recipe is ruined or an extra trip to the store is required. Sometimes, you need to buy a large container of an ingredient for just a teaspoon or two needed in a recipe. To the rescue: ingredient substitutions! <http://food.unl.edu/web/fnh/ingredient-substitutions>
- **UNL Extension Calendar – National Food Days, Weeks, and Months for February.** <http://food.unl.edu/web/fnh/february>
- **Reducing the Size of Recipes.** Many recipes can be cut in half or thirds. Here are some guidelines to help you adapt a larger recipe to a smaller one. <http://food.unl.edu/web/fnh/reduce-recipe-size>

- **Bite When the Temperature is Right Participant's Guide, HEF587.** Using food thermometers is the only way to ensure that food is fully cooked and safe to eat. This lesson explains how to choose the correct thermometer for your needs. <http://www.ianrpubs.unl.edu/sendIt/hef587.pdf>

Sources:

1. Home Baking Association. 2012. Celebrate Bake for Family Fun Month. Accessed at: <http://www.homebaking.org/familyfun/>.
2. Home Baking Association. 2012. Great Resources for Teaching Baking. Accessed at: <http://www.homebaking.org/familyfun/#resources>.
3. Home Baking Association. 2012. High Yield Bakers: Ten Tips for Baking Success. Tips for Baking Success with Children. Accessed at: <http://www.homebaking.org/familyfun/TenTipsforBakingSuccesswithKids.pdf>.

Updated: January 2013

