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## EC975 Suggestions for the Thanksgiving Dinner

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Nebraska  
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK  
IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS  
U. S. Agr. College & U. S. Dept. of Agr. Cooperating  
W. H. Brockaw, Director, Lincoln

Extension  
Circular  
975

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE THANKSGIVING DINNER

Thanksgiving Expresses Hospitality

Thanksgiving day has associated with it many delightful traditions which had their origin in the very earliest colonial days over three hundred years ago. It is today as it was in its beginning an occasion for family reunions and expression of hospitality to one's dearest friends. And so, in keeping with the spirit of the day, the Thanksgiving dinner is worthy of the attention it receives. While retaining certain of its original characteristics, the Thanksgiving dinner of today is much saner and simpler than it was in earlier days. The colonial housewife and her daughters spent days in preparing the viands for the feast which is much less of a task with the labor-saving appliances at the service of the modern housewife. In those days the festive board fairly groaned under its weight of good things. In these days when the housewife entertains more frequently, she feels the need of conserving her strength and expressing her hospitality in a simple but beautiful manner.

Standards of nutrition and health, too, have changed since Thanksgiving day was inaugurated, as a consequence, our dinners today are less heavy, but may be just as satisfying as those of former days. We use more fruits and vegetables together with certain time-honored dishes which characterize the Thanksgiving dinner, so there is less danger of indulgence in overeating.

Pleasing Decorations and Color Schemes

Appropriate decorations and color schemes can do much to make the meal attractive and one long to be remembered. If some thought is given to the choice of foods in the menu from the standpoint of color and flavor the effect will be far more pleasing than if the housewife prepared just everything she could possibly think of. Haven't you eaten dinners where you wished there had been half as much because you couldn't possibly taste everything anyway? Moreover, haven't you wished that the housewife hadn't worn herself out for your sake? And have you ever felt sorry to think of the family living on left overs for several days afterward?

In laying the table there is nothing nicer than a beautifully laundered cloth of snowy linen. A pumpkin hollowed out and filled with several kinds of fruit, as apples, and cluster of grapes, or other fruit makes a colorful and appropriate centerpiece. Crystal candlesticks holding bright orange candles will serve to repeat the pumpkin color. Small nut-cups covered with orange colored crepe paper to resemble tiny pumpkins may be used at each place. A colored glass bowl or a nice basket instead of the pumpkin may be used to hold the fruit for the centerpiece. A horn of plenty may be fashioned from brown crepe paper and a wire frame. This makes an attractive centerpiece when filled with fruits. For a floral centerpiece chrysanthemums or combinations of flowers are beautiful and may have the predominant color repeated in the candles and favors. The table-setting, and decorations and garnishes are accompaniments which give a festive feeling.



The following menus which may be served in three or four courses are suggestive for the Thanksgiving dinner. It should be borne in mind that these are suggestions only and many variations will doubtless occur to you in connection with the cost and labor involved.

Menu Number One

Grapefruit Halves with shredded pineapple and Maraschino Cherry	
Roast Turkey or Capon with Oyster Stuffing	
Mashed Potatoes	Giblet Gravy
Buttered Carrots	
Curled Celery	Olives
Cranberry Ice	
Denver Biscuit	Butter Balls
Individual Pumpkin Pies	Whipped Cream
Spiced Salted Pecans	Pink, White & Orange Cream Wafers
Raspberry Jam	
Coffee	

Menu Number Two

Clear Tomato Soup	Toasted Brod Sticks
Stuffed Celery Stalks	Ripe Olives
Roast Goose or Duck with Plain Bread Stuffing	
Glazed Sweet Potatoes	Creamed or Escalloped Cauliflower
Spiced Cranberry Jelly	
Graham Rolls	Butter
Perfection Vegetable Salad with Mayonnaise Dressing	
Cheese Wafers	
Orange Ice	
or	Chocolate Cake
Orange Pie	
Coffee	
Salted Almonds	Hard Candies

Menu Number Three

Fruit Cocktail	
Roast Loin of Pork or Pork Ribs with Bread Stuffing & Apple Rings	
Potato Puff	Gravy
Buttered String Beans	Pickles
White Bread	Graham Bread
Butter	Current Jelly
Cabbage, Celery and Carrot Salad	Mayonnaise Dressing
Cranberry Criss-Cross Pie	Cheese Sticks
Coffee	
Salted Peanuts	

Menu Number One is the most expensive as regards both time and money, while Menu Number Three is the least expensive.

Some of the recipes suggested by each of the above menus follow.



Recipes for Menu Number 1.

Oyster Stuffing for Roast Turkey

1 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. dried bread crumbs	or toasted bread crumbed	Pepper
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. cracker crumbs		$\frac{1}{4}$ t. mace or nutmeg
$\frac{1}{2}$ c. melted butter		1 pt. oysters
2 t. salt		$\frac{1}{4}$ c. oyster liquor

Add melted butter to the bread and cracker crumbs. Wash the oysters, remove the tough muscles, and combine and mix all ingredients. In stuffing the turkey or capon leave plenty of room for the stuffing to swell. Sew up the openings with a large needle and heavy thread. Fasten the legs and wings close to the body by means of skewers or string so the bird will be compact and not dry out so much. A paste made of equal parts of flour and butter spread over the breast will keep the breast from drying out. Bacon or fat salt pork will serve the same purpose and save basting so frequently.

Curled Celery

Clean the celery, cut stalks in lengths of four or five inches. Make several slits one inch deep in each end, place in ice water and leave for several hours or over night.

Cranberry Ice (Six servings)

1 qt. cranberries	2 c. sugar
2 c. water	Juice of 2 lemons

Cook the cranberries with the water until the berries are tender. Strain. Add the sugar and heat if necessary to dissolve the sugar. Cool, add the lemon juice and freeze. In the menu given, this ice is served in sherbet cups with the meat course instead of a salad. This ice might also be used as a dessert. If a spicy flavor is desired, add one two-inch stick of cinnamon and six cloves when cooking the cranberries.

Denver Biscuit

1 qt. milk (scald and cool)	1 cake yeast soaked in $\frac{1}{2}$ c. warm water
1 c. mashed potatoes	2 t. baking powder
1 c. sugar	1 t. soda
1 c. shortening	1 t. salt

Add mashed potatoes to the milk, sugar, and yeast. Mix the dry ingredients using about 4 cups flour or enough for a sponge. Beat well. Add shortening. Let sponge rise until it bubbles. Add flour to make a soft dough. Place in a well greased dish, cover well and set in refrigerator or cold place. When needed, take out the amount desired and knead. Shape into rolls. Let rise until light, about 1 hour. Then bake. This dough will keep for 2 or 3 weeks, if kept in the refrigerator.

Individual Pumpkin Pies

Line patty or muffin tins with pastry and fill with a pumpkin pie filling. The individual pies are attractive and convenient to serve.

Spiced Salted Pecans

Heat olive oil, Mazola, Wesson or any other brand of oil in a frying pan using only enough to coat the nuts. Two tablespoons will be sufficient for one cup of nuts. When the fat is hot drop in the nuts, stirring constantly until the nuts are crisp. Do not let the oil smoke. Drain the nuts on absorbent paper.



Make a mixture of 1 teaspoon salt to 2 teaspoon cinnamon and nutmeg mixed. Place in a salt shaker and sprinkle over the nuts just after they are drained. When cold shake in a colander to remove the surplus salt. Almonds may be blanched and treated in the same way.

### Recipes for Menu Number 2.

#### Clear Tomato Soup

1 qt. canned tomatoes	4 cloves	1 t. salt
1 pt. water	1 slice onion	2 T. butter
12 pepper corns	1 stalk celery	3 T. flour
$\frac{1}{4}$ bay leaf	2 t. sugar	

Cook tomatoes, water, seasonings, and sugar for twenty minutes. Strain and add salt. Brown butter and flour cooked together. Bind and strain before serving.

#### Plain Bread Stuffing

2 qt. stale (not hard) bread	1 t. ground sage	$\frac{1}{2}$ c. butter
2 t. salt	$\frac{1}{2}$ t. pepper	1 egg

Soak the bread in cold water or milk and squeeze quite dry. Melt the butter in a frying pan, add the bread and stir until well mixed and the bread is slightly browned. Place in a mixing bowl and add seasonings and egg. For a variation finely chopped onion may be slightly cooked in the butter before it is added to the bread, or sliced apples may be added to this dressing if desired.

#### Glazed Sweet Potatoes

Boil medium sized sweet potatoes until tender but not too soft. When cool, peel and cut lengthwise into halves or quarters. Place in a buttered shallow pan, salt, spread with softened butter and sprinkle thickly with light brown sugar. Bake in a moderate oven 20 to 25 minutes, basting occasionally.

#### Escalloped Cauliflower

Remove the outer green leaves from a head of cauliflower and let stand upside down in salt water for about 20 minutes. Cook whole, uncovered, in boiling salted water until tender but firm. Drain and place in buttered casserole, cutting off a part of the stem, if necessary. Add two cups medium white sauce (using  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. flour and 3 T. butter to 2 c. milk). Cover with buttered crumbs and brown in a moderate oven. Grated cheese may be sprinkled over the white sauce before covering with crumbs, if desired.

#### Spiced Cranberry Jelly

1 qt. cranberries	3 inch stick cinnamon	4 whole cloves
$1\frac{1}{2}$ c. boiling water	Blade of mace	$1\frac{1}{8}$ t. salt
		2 c. sugar

Add 1 c. boiling water to the cranberries and spices, cover and cook slowly until every berry is burst. Strain and return to fire with the sugar and  $\frac{1}{2}$  c. water. Boil rapidly until the mixture jells.



### Perfection Vegetable Salad

2 T. granulated gelatin	2 c. boiling water	1 c. celery, diced
$\frac{1}{2}$ c. cold water	$\frac{1}{2}$ c. sugar	1 c. apples, diced
$\frac{1}{2}$ c. vinegar	1 t. salt	2 pimientos cut in small pieces
2 T. lemon juice	1 c. shredded cabbage	

Soak gelatin in cold water five minutes. Add vinegar, lemon juice and boiling water. Add sugar and salt. When mixture begins to stiffen, add other ingredients.

### Stuffed Celery

Wash and cut tender stalks of celery into two or three inch lengths. Fill the inside of the stalk with pimento cheese or a mixture of cream cheese and finely chopped nuts, seasoned with salt and paprika.

### Filling for Orange Pie

1 c. sugar	Grated rind of 1 orange	Juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ lemon
$\frac{1}{3}$ c. flour	$\frac{1}{2}$ c. water	2 T. butter
$\frac{1}{4}$ t. salt	1 c. orange juice	3 egg yolks

Mix the sugar, flour, salt and grated rind. Add water and fruit juice, and cook at low heat about ten minutes or until thickened. Add butter and well beaten egg yolks. Cook two or three minutes longer and pour into baked pastry shell. Cover with meringue made from three egg whites and six level tablespoons sugar. Brown in slow oven.

### Recipes for Menu Number 3

#### Apple Rings

1 c. sugar	$\frac{3}{4}$ c. water	3 cloves	Red coloring or red cinnamon drops.
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Wash four red apples, core, cut in rings  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch thick and cook slowly until done.

#### Potato Puff

For each 4 cups of hot, well seasoned, mashed potatoes, add 2 well beaten egg yolks and beat well. Then fold in the stiffly beaten whites. Turn into a buttered baking dish or casserole and bake in a hot oven until brown.

### Cabbage, Celery and Carrot Salad

2 c. diced celery	1 T. finely minced onion
2 c. shredded cabbage	Salt
1 c. grated carrots (may be put thru food chopper)	

Mix all together with mayonnaise dressing just before serving. Nuts may be added if desired.

### Cranberry Criss-Cross Pie (2 pies)

4 c. cranberries	2 c. boiling water	$1\frac{1}{2}$ c. sugar
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Boil sugar and water together five minutes. Add the cranberries and boil without stirring until all the skins are broken. Remove from fire and let stand until cold. Fill a partly baked pie shell with this mixture. Put strips of pastry over the top and finish baking in a moderate oven.



Work to be Done on Previous Day

Let us now consider what work can be done on Wednesday before Thanksgiving.

Menu 1.

The turkey may be prepared, stuffed and placed in a roaster and kept in a cold place.

The carrots may be scraped, diced and left in the water in which they will be cooked. Canned carrots may be used.

Celery may be cleaned and packed in cold water.

The cranberry ice may be prepared so it need only be frozen the next day.

The rolls may be purchased from a bakery and reheated, or the dough for Denver rolls may be made several days in advance.

Butter rolls may be made and placed on a plate in the refrigerator, or a cold place.

The pastry for the pumpkin pies may be made and placed in a waxed paper or damp cloth in the refrigerator. Or the patty shells may be lined with the pastry and kept over night in the refrigerator or covered with a moist cloth, in a cold place. They can then be filled the next morning and baked while getting breakfast.

The filling for the pumpkin pies and the salted nuts may also be prepared.

With this amount of work accomplished the day before, the dinner the next day may be prepared with much less effort.

Menu 2.

In menu 2 the soup, stuffed celery, cranberry jelly, the salad and salad dressing and the cake may be prepared on Wednesday. The fowl may be prepared the same as in menu 1. The orange ice may be mixed ready for freezing. The sweet potatoes may be cooked and left in the skins until the next day.

In preparing the Thanksgiving dinner, the housewife is more apt to be tired because of the hurry and worry rather than because of the actual work. By planning ahead it will be possible to manage to do enough work the day before so that the dinner on Thanksgiving Day may be accomplished with comparative ease. May you all have much enjoyment in planning and preparing your Thanksgiving Dinners.

(Prepared by Matilda Peters, Department of Home Economics).

He Thanks Thee Best  
By Grace Noll Crowell

"He thanks Thee best who serves Thee best;  
Who meets each glowing day  
With grateful heart and lifted face,  
To toil and rest and play.

He thanks Thee best who loves Thee best;  
And loving, loves each one  
Who passes down the old highroad  
From sun to setting sun.

He thanks Thee best who trusts Thee best;  
Whose faith shines thru the dark  
A helpful, happy, hopeful thing  
For way-tired hearts to mark.

He thanks Thee best who worships best;  
Who prays where none may see:  
Who humbly waits to hear Thy voice -  
Who has no God but Thee."