

1926

EC976 The Planning and Management of the Community Dinner

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COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK
IN AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS

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U. of N. Agr. College & U.S. Dept. of Agr. Cooperating
W.H. Brokaw, Director, Lincoln

THE PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY DINNER

The community dinner, in its broadest sense includes those affairs to which the entire community, or at least a large part of the community contribute and partake. This festival may be in the form of a neighborhood picnic, an informal church dinner, the County Achievement Day dinner, the lodge luncheon, the high school senior breakfast, or the elaborate banquet. Women usually have charge of the planning and management of these affairs and regardless of the type of service, they are, in the end credited with success or failure.

What should be the aim?

1. To foster good will and develop community spirit.
2. To give the service a really educational value.
 - (a) Food selection should be well balanced from a nutritional standpoint.
 - (b) The meal service should be attractive.
 - (c) Convenience and comfort should be the keynote.
Available space and available service equipment should be studied.
 - (d) Should be in keeping with the economic condition of the community.
3. To give an opportunity for people to become acquainted.
4. To encourage young people to work together, and to take responsibility.

General Plans

Some time before the festive occasion, have a woman with known ability selected to be manager of the entire meal. She should be given power to select a "committee group" to assist her in the planning. Great care must be taken to select a woman who is well acquainted with the women of the community, one who has sufficient skill and discretion to direct others. She should have a telephone.

Plan of the Menu

Meat Course

Starchy Vegetable

Bulky Salads or

A green succulent vegetable and a salad

Pickles, Jams, Jellies, Relishes (as desired)

Bread or Rolls

Butter

Dessert

Beverage

Suggestive Menus

- | | | |
|---|--|---------------------|
| I | Meat loaf or Swiss steak | Escalloped Potatoes |
| | Cabbage-Salad with nuts and raisins or pineapple | |
| | Hot rolls (graham) | Butter |
| | Pumpkin Pie | Jelly |
| | | Coffee |
| | | Milk for Children |

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| | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| III Baked Beans with or without Pork | (With Cream |
| | Cabbage Slaw (Dressing |
| | Banana Sandwiches |
| Lettuce Sandwiches (White | |
| | (Whole Wheat |
| | Preserves |
| Ice Cream - Cake | Coffee |
| | Milk for Children |

IV

| | | | |
|------------|-------------|-----------|------------------------|
| | (Beef) | | |
| | Meat (or) | Made with | (Potatoes |
| | (Pork) | white and | (Eggs |
| | () | graham | Potato Salad(Celery |
| Sandwiches | (Cheese) | bread | With or (Sweet Pickles |
| | (Egg | | without (Cooked Salad |
| | | onion | (Dressing |

Stuffed Tomatoes

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------|
| Cream Puffs or | Iced Tea |
| Ice Cream and Fruit Filled Cookies | |

V.

Banquet Menu

Fruit Cocktail (banana, orange, grapes)
Breaded Veal Cutlets Buttered Peas in Potato Baskets

| | | |
|------------------|--------------|------------------|
| | | (Cucumbers |
| | | (Tomatoes |
| | Spring Salad | (Celery |
| | | (Radishes |
| | | (Lettuce |
| | | (Mayonnaise |
| Hot Graham Rolls | Jelly | Butter |
| Apricot Ice | | Iced Sponge Cake |
| | Coffee | |

Recipes

| Meat Loaf (Serves 8 to 10 people) | |
|--|---|
| 2 lb. lean beef round or chuck (ground) | 1 c. milk $\frac{1}{2}$ small onion, chopped |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. salt pork or $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. ham ground | 2 tsp. salt $2\frac{2}{3}$ tsp. pepper |
| 2 eggs, slightly beaten | $1\frac{1}{8}$ tsp. sage (if desired) |
| 1 c. bread crumbs | |

Mix ingredients lightly. Shape into a loaf handling as little as possible. Place on a rack in a pan, dredge with flour or bread crumbs. Bake in a moderate oven $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 hour, basting as needed with the fat that cooks out of the meat.

Spanish Steak (Serves 8 people)

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2 lb. round steak | |
| (at least one inch thick) | Small amount of whole cloves |
| 1 pt. canned tomatoes | Peppercorn or bayleaf may be used. |
| 1 onion (small) | |

Score, and dredge in flour. Sear in hot fat in which onion has been browned. Season with salt and pepper. Place in a baking dish, cover with strained tomatoes, and seasonings. Cover and cook in a slow oven two hours or until meat is tender.

Chicken a la Maryland

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 chicken | 2 c. bread crumbs |
| 1 egg (diluted with 1 tsp. water) | Fat |
| | Seasoning |

Cut chicken into convenient serving pieces. Dip into dry crumbs or flour, then into dilute egg and again in bread crumbs. Brown in hot fat, season with salt and pepper, place in roaster, add a little water and cook slowly in oven until tender. The pressure cooker may be used if more convenient.

Baked Beans (Serves 20 to 24)

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 4 c. navy beans | 1 tsp. mustard (if desired) |
| 1 t. soda | 4 to 8 tbsp. brown sugar |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ to 1 lb. salt pork | 2 t. salt |

Pick over and wash the beans. Soak over night. Drain, cover with cold water, bring to the boiling point, add soda, and boil 1 minute. Drain, rinse and cover with fresh water. Cook slowly till skins will wrinkle when struck by a draft of air. Drain, fill the bean pot half full, lay in the pork, the rind of which has been scalded and scored. Put the remaining beans into the pot and pour over the mustard, salt and sugar dissolved in hot water. Add enough more hot water to cover the beans. Put the lid on the bean pot and bake 8 or more hours in a slow oven. Replace the water as needed. Draw the pork to the surface during the last hour of baking and remove the lid to brown the beans and pork.

Banana Sandwiches

(May be used as a sandwich, as a salad, or as a dessert)

Peel and split solid ripe bananas lengthwise. Spread one-half with peanut butter and place strips of dates across the half banana, place the other half banana over this and hold together with toothpicks. Cut into halves and wrap each half in waxed paper twisting the paper at the ends. The banana sandwich is especially desirable for picnic service as the paper wrapping makes the banana easily handled.

Cream Puffs

$\frac{1}{2}$ c. water
 $\frac{1}{4}$ c. fat
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ c. flour
 2 eggs

Heat the fat and water to the boiling point. Add the flour all at once and stir vigorously until the mixture leaves the sides of the pan and clings to the spoon. Remove from the fire and cool slightly. Then add the unbeaten eggs, one at a time, beating thoroughly after each addition. Drop by spoonfuls into oiled gem pans or onto oiled baking sheets $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches apart. Into the latter case, shape into rounds about 2 inches in diameter and pile slightly in the center. Bake in a hot oven about 30 minutes or until well risen and set. Then reduce the heat and continue to bake until puffs are dry.

When ready to use, make a cut in the top of each with a sharp knife and fill with cream sauce filling, whipped cream, fruit filling or a combination. Sprinkle with powdered sugar or use icing.

Fruit Filled Cookies

Prepare any sugar cookie dough, preferably sour cream and roll out quite thin and cut as for the ordinary cookie. Prepare a fruit filling and place a small spoonful on one of the unbaked cookies and on top of this place another unbaked cookie. Press the edges together and bake.

Filling

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 c. raisins or other similar fruit | 1 tsp. cornstarch |
| 1 c. sugar | 1 c. water |
| Speck salt | |

Cook the mixture until it begins to appear thick. Cool before using.

Points for the "committee group" to consider

1. The approximate number that will attend, with estimate of number of children and number of adults.

2. Most suitable available building

- (a) Kitchen space and conveniences.
- (b) Serving space or spaces determined definitely.

3. Type of service best suited to the group and to the occasion.

- (a) Most informal or picnic style in which all the food is placed before the guests. Suitable for 20 or 30 people.
- (b) Semi-formal or cafeteria style in which food and serving silver is placed on a long table, part of which is conveniently arranged for the guest to help himself - part must needs be served by helpers.

Variation - Plates are partially filled and handed to the guest who passes along the line to get the remainder of the food.

- (c) Formal or banquet style in which guests are seated at a well appointed table and food served according to some conventional custom.

Large trays, size to hold six served plates, will facilitate the service of the formal type. These large trays can best be carried by boys, and placed on service tables from which waitresses may serve. The boys may even hold the trays while the waitresses serve the guests.

4. Plan of Menu.
5. Suggestive Menus
6. Approved Recipes

Division of Responsibilities

1. The tables, spacing, the covering and the decorations.
2. Amounts of each food necessary and definitely arranged for.
3. Manager should take no specific responsibility herself.
4. Definite care of foods when they arrive at the building, and plans for the serving of it later. (The success and ease of the entire service depend in a large measure upon the thoroughness of this work.)
5. Collecting and cleaning of dishes and equipment. If the expense is not prohibitive, paper table covers, paper plates and paper small dishes may be purchased, while the silverware, cups and glass may be rented. Obviously this system saves labor.
6. Managing the group when coming in, being seated and when leaving.
7. Serving the workers and children if there are any for which provision is not made.
8. A definite "clean up" committee, at least part of which has not worked on the preparation or on the serving.

Methods of Planning and Preparing the Food

1. Estimate the amount of finished product it will take to serve ten, twenty, or any other convenient unit, and determine kinds and amounts of raw material required to prepare each lot.
2. All dishes may be prepared at the community center, in which case the raw material may be purchased outright or it may be brought from the homes in definite amounts.
3. The menu may be published in a widely circulated ^{local} paper with the suggestion that groups composed of two, three, or more families plan among themselves to provide enough food to make the menu complete so far as their families are concerned, but the food will be served indiscriminately according to plans by the foods committee. The result will be a uniform meal with the responsibility for preparation evenly distributed.
4. Certain individuals may be given responsibility for the preparation of definite dishes.

Hints Concerning Serving Quantities

1. Allow $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. meat (raw lean pork or beef) per serving.
2. One quart of salad will provide approximately 8 servings of $\frac{1}{2}$ cup each.
3. One pound coffee makes 50 servings. 2 eggs to one pound coffee for cleaning coffee.
4. One quart ice cream will serve 8 people.

5. One pound butter provides 32 to 40 servings.
6. One loaf bread (white 1 lb. baker's) cuts 12 to 16 slices.
7. One gallon potatoes (mashed) serves 32 persons.
8. One can (size 2) of peas or other similar vegetable makes 6 to 8 servings when buttered.
9. In creamed dishes, allow 2 parts vegetable (drained) to one of cream sauce. (proportion for cream sauces).
10. One gallon fruit cocktail for 48 servings on basis of 1/3 cup per serving.
11. One pound round steak plus the remaining ingredients used for meat loaf serves 9 people.
12. One gallon soup provides 16 to 20 servings on basis of one cup per serving.

Suggestions for Clearing up After the Service

1. If china, silver, etc. are brought from the homes, then each home should have its own definite mark.
2. Tables should be cleared, all food scraps discarded in a sanitary manner, and dishes taken home to wash. Again responsibility is prorated.
3. All borrowed equipment should be returned without fail. Certain responsible individuals should be detailed to check such equipment.
4. There should be plenty of soap, towels, and hot water for cleaning provided.

An important factor in determining the success or failure of a meal is appropriateness. If an elaborate banquet is to be served, fine table cloths with napkins to match and freshly cut flowers would add to the attractiveness. The occasion determines the appropriateness of the appointments. On some occasions, wrapping paper would be very suitable for the table covering and for most occasions the neatly potted plant or simple garden or wild flowers are quite satisfactory.

(Prepared by Maude Voddor)

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