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Holiday Recipe: Filled Cookies

By LeAnn R. Ralph

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by: **LeAnn R. Ralph**

From the book: Christmas In Dairyland (True Stories From a Wisconsin Farm)

When I was a kid growing up on our dairy farm in Wisconsin 40 years ago, cookies with a date filling were my dad's favorite kind. Here is the recipe. 3/4 cup butter or margarine (softened) 3/4 cup shortening 2 cups sugar 3 eggs 2 teaspoons vanilla 5 cups flour 1 teaspoon baking powder 1/2 teaspoon salt several tablespoons of milk if the dough seems too dry Jam: blackberry, black raspberry, strawberry, red raspberry, plum conserve, apple conserve, or date filling (recipes for plum and apple conserve and date filling are included below.)

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Cream butter, margarine, sugar, eggs and vanilla. Stir in flour, baking powder and salt. If the dough is too dry, add 1 or 2 tablespoons of milk. If the dough seems too wet, add 1/4 or 1/2 cup of flour.

Roll out dough. Use either a small round cookie cutter or one large round cutter. Place cookies on an ungreased baking sheet. Put one teaspoon of jam (or other filling) in the middle of the smaller rounds or off to one side of the larger rounds. Place another small round on top of the small rounds; fold the larger rounds in half. Use a fork to crimp the edges together and to poke holes in the top. Bake for 15 minutes, or until light brown.

This recipe makes about six dozen filled cookies.

The recipe can also be used to make cut-out Christmas cookies frosted with colored icing.

~ Plum Conserve ~

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If plum conserve is made specifically for filling cookies, store any that remains in the refrigerator and use on toast or biscuits. The conserve can also be sealed in pint jars. (This recipe makes about three pints.) 8 to 10 fresh, large, ripe plums 1/2 cup of water 4 cups of sugar 2 cups of raisins 1 cup chopped walnuts 2 tablespoons of lemon juice

Pit the plums and chop into small pieces. Place in a large saucepan and add the sugar and water. Boil for 10 minutes, stirring constantly. Add the lemon juice, raisins and walnuts and cook for 10 minutes longer, stirring constantly. (Note: Recipe can also be made using 3 cups of chopped apples instead of plums. Add 1/2 teaspoon of cinnamon.)

~ Date Filling ~ 3 cups chopped dates 1/2 cup sugar 1 2/3 cups water 1 tablespoon lemon juice

Put all ingredients into a saucepan and cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until thickened (10 or 15 minutes).

LeAnn R. Ralph is the author of the book: Christmas In Dairyland (True Stories From a Wisconsin Farm). Share the view from Rural Route 2 and celebrate Christmas during a simpler time. Free shipping on autographed copies.

How To Develop A Holiday Cookie Assembly Line

By Robert Michael

Use these ideas for the next holiday party your child has at school.

1. Figure out how many people will be attending the holiday party and make or buy plain cupcakes or cookies so each person has one or two. Make sure you allow for extras in case of those unfortunate accidents.
2. Pick up a couple of different kinds of frosting, a mixture of sprinkles, mini M & Ms, mini chocolate chips, toffee pieces and some nuts. Pick out the ones you want for the cupcakes or cookies you will be decorating.
3. Make sure you have containers for knives, paper towels, toppings, waxed paper and a paper plate for each child participating.
4. Use a cupcake or holiday cookie menu for every child. Make sure there is place for each child's name. Every child should mark the appropriate box for the kind of sprinkles and frosting they would like. Collect the menus after the children have filled them out.
5. Decide who the holiday foreperson is going to be. Being in charge of the holiday decorating crews, job assignments and quality control is the job description. Being able to work well with other children is

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very important for the holiday foreperson.

6. Put children in group of four to five. Explain to them they will either be filling the cupcake menu or holiday cookie requests after you introduce them to their holiday foreperson. Make an example of one completed cookie or cupcake to show them.

7. Four or five Menus should be completed by the first group. Give each child a specific job, a kind of frosting or sprinkles or topping to put on. Make sure each child understands their job and how important it is to listen to the foreperson and work as a team.

8. Making sure the assigned menus are completed and each child does their job is what the foreperson is responsible for. The foreperson needs to make sure they are being kind and encouraging but firm at the same time. Show them how to be a positive role-model.

9. The group that is waiting to decorate their cookies or cupcakes should participate in an activity such as a crossword puzzle or a game. Make sure everyone is having a good time and staying busy.

10. Take every child's menu and pass around the cupcakes or cookies when all of the holiday treats have been frosted and sprinkled. It is great to see if each child actually gets the treat they ordered. Tell the children what a good job they did.

The holiday cookie or cupcake assembly line can work with almost any holiday party and it is a great learning experience for children.

Robert Michael is a writer for Fleet Holidays which is an excellent place to find holidays links,

resources and articles. For more information go to:

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