

### From LRE employees, to your kitchen table





### To our reader,

At LRE, we build sustainable energy solutions, empower our employees and communities, and constantly strive to find new ways to be good stewards of the land where our projects reside. LREats is an employee drafted company cookbook that highlights our diverse cultural backgrounds, showcases our valued stakeholders, and celebrates how to cook, eat, and live more sustainably. We've compiled an assortment of delicious recipes to bring you a taste of who we are and where we come from. America is often referred to as a melting pot, and these recipes and stories are the heart of what brings us all together.

We hope you enjoy - let's LREats!

From LRE Employees to your kitchen table







# **01** Grandma Nancy's Granola

Ron Grife has his mother, Nancy Burks, to thank for his healthy eating lifestyle. He also has her to thank for an easy, tasty and healthy granola recipe. "My mom was one of those people who was forever cooking and liked to try new things," Ron said. "She always made us eat healthy too. Every time I'd go home she was giving us things like fresh tomatoes from her garden or farm fresh eggs or homemade granola."

Grandma Nancy, as Ron's children call her, has shared her Homemade Granola recipe that features a number of healthy items from organic rolled oats to pumpkin, as well as sunflower and coconut seeds. "It's pretty easy to make," Ron said, "and it's really good."

Due to Grandma Nancy's influence, Ron still eats mostly healthy, and he's begun sharing the Homemade Granola recipe with friends who always ask for more. "I wanted to share this recipe because it's good and because it was handed down by my mom," Ron concluded. "I think everyone should be making their own granola."

- Ron Grife

#### INGREDIENTS -

5 Cups organic rolled oats

1/4 Cup oat bran

1 Cup pumpkin seeds

1 Cup coconut

1 Cup raw sunflower seeds

1 Cup chopped walnuts or pecans

3/4 Cup date pieces or raisins (optional)

1/2 Cup honey (you can add a few scoops or drops of stevia if you want it sweeter)

1/2 Cup coconut oil melted (use extra virgin for the coco-nutty flavor)

1/2 Cup water

2 tsp vanilla

2 tsp cinnamon

PREP

Mix all the grains, seeds and nuts together in a large bowl.

Warm the oil, honey and water and mix well in a medium bowl or pan. Warming in the microwave works but be careful not to overheat and make a mess!

Add the vanilla and the cinnamon to the liquids and gradually stir the liquid mixture into the dry ingredients and coat all well.

Spread out evenly on sheet pans and place in an oven at low temperature (160°F) for several hours until almost dry. Remove and let cool. Granola will crisp up when it cools.





### 02 Jalapeno Popper Dip

Troy Schnug is a cowboy at heart, and nothing says cowpoke like cooking on a cast iron pan.

Troy's Jalapeno Popper Dip is a modified recipe the family has been using for years. It was in regular rotation in the Schnug household when Troy and his wife Jaime's two sons were playing 6-man football in the small town of Grover, Colorado. "We'd pretty regularly have some of the team over and the Jalapeno Popper Dip with tortilla or corn chips was reasonably quick to make, and everybody loved it," he said.

A Plant Technician at LRE's Cedar Creek Wind project in Weld County, Colorado, Troy is a former rodeo rider who competed in wild horse races, and in addition to his renewable energy work is a cattle rancher with other family members. He also dabbles frequently in cooking with a cast iron pan.

"I like cooking with cast iron," he said, "that's really where our Jalapeno Popper Dip got started with us. It reminds me of being out on the range and riding the trails. It's cowboy cooking."

- Troy Schnug

#### INGREDIENTS -

- 1-8 Oz package cream cheese
  1/3 Cup sour cream
  1/3 Cup miracle whip
  5 Slices thick cut bacon
  1 tsp garlic
  2 Jalapenos
  1 1/2 Cup shredded cheddar cheese
  1 1/2 Cup shredded Monterey jack cheese
  Kosher salt to taste
  Pepper to taste
  Green onion (optional)
- Tortilla chips

#### PREP

Fry bacon, drain on paper towel.

Chop jalapeno and bacon.

Reserve enough bacon, jalapeno, and cheeses to sprinkle on top.

Mix the rest of the ingredients together in a bowl. spread into a 9 inch round baking dish. Cast iron skillet preferred.

Top with the remainder of the cheese, bacon, jalapeno, and a few chopped green onions (Optional).

Bake (a) 350 for 15 - 20 minutes.

Serve with tortilla chips.









### 03 Donna Spicer's Pepperoni Rolls

Becky Campbell's roots in western Pennylvania are linked to the region's character - coal mining, steel mills, and, of course, Pepperoni Rolls.

Pepperoni Rolls - a yeast-leavened bread roll with pepperoni baked in the middle - are a regional breakfast or lunch food that's a long-time staple in Western Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Appalachian Ohio.

For Becky, LRE's Sr. Director of External Affairs, pepperoni rolls are also very personal. Her mother, Donna Spicer, cooks a mean roll, made even better when she realized she could use her old family bread recipe to improve the pepperoni roll wrapper. That combination has been a big hit in the family for years. Becky remembers as a youngster they were in regular rotation at the family table, and later, mom would always make a batch for Becky to take back with her to college at Penn State University.

Nowadays, Becky says, Momma Donna focuses her pepperoni roll production on family gatherings and special holidays. But for Becky herself, while she has the recipe, she's never actually made the rolls, and for good reason. "I haven't even tried to make them," she said, "why would I? My mom's are the best."

- Becky Campbell

#### INGREDIENTS -

Packet of active dry yeast
 cup of luke warm water
 tsp of salt
 T of sugar
 4 cup of canola oil
 cups of flour
 Pepperoni
 Mozzarella cheese
 Egg (optional)
 Butter (optional)

PREP

#### Dough:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F

Combine activated dry yeast with lukewarm water and dissolve

Combine yeast/water mixture with all other dough ingredients and begin kneading mixture

If dough is sticky, slowly add up to 3/4 cup of additional flour, mixing well until dough is easy to handle (no longer sticks to your fingers)

Form dough into a ball and place in a large bowl; coat the dough ball with a small amount of additional canola oil

Allow dough to rise for 60-90 min, check every 30 min to ensure that it hasn't spilled out

#### Pepperoni Rolls:

Once dough has risen, separate 2-3 equal portions

Take each portion and on a well floured surface, use a rolling pin to roll into a thin rectangle

Place a layer of mozzarella on each rectangular piece of dough, don't over fill

Place a layer of pepperoni on top of the mozzarella on each piece of dough

Starting along one of the long edges of your dough, begin folding the dough over itself making a pinwheel shape

Place each pepperoni roll onto a baking sheet and if desired, brush the top with an egg wash/ melted butter mix

Place pepperoni rolls into a 375 degree F oven and bake for 20 minutes







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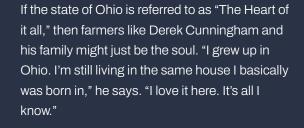
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## DEREK CUNNINGHAM

#### **BREWING SOUL IN THE HEART OF IT ALL**

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A native of the Village of Arcadia, Derek is a Buckeye through and through. His commitment to his home state is evident in nearly everything he does, including creating and serving his all-Ohio ingredients craft beers at his Carey Brewing Station nano-brewery and bar in the nearby village of Carey.

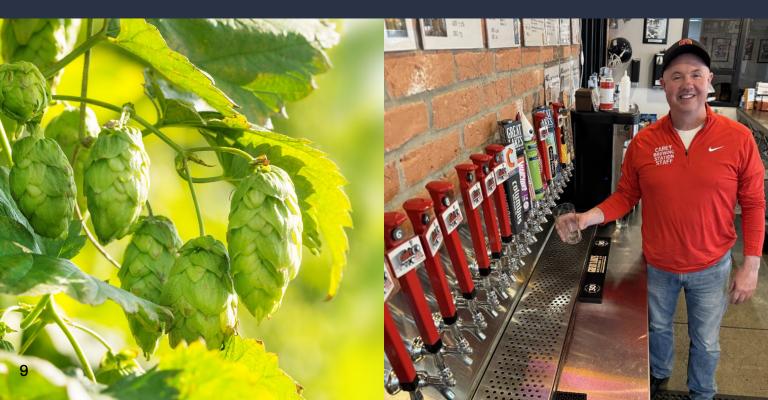
The Cunningham family's 700-acre family farm, which he and his 90-year-old father Rex continue to farm, has been producing soybeans, wheat and corn for nearly 100 years. Along with those crops, the family farm also began growing hops in the 2000s, which they initially sold to other Buckeye brewers. It was Derek's son, in college at the Ohio State University at the time, who planted the seed that would eventually put those hops into their own Buckeye brews. "My son came to me and said, 'we need to grow hops and be part of the craft beer industry that's really growing in Ohio," he notes. "That's where it started."

Derek was a teacher at Carey High School for 31 years teaching Marketing Education, and had long admired an old building in town that had previously served as everything from a Ford dealership to a gas station. His son's suggestion triggered a series of moves from purchasing the old Carey building, to taking a seminar on growing hops to planting his first rows.

In 2020 Derek opened the Carey Brew Station which now serves 23 different draft beers, including his own, and many others from his home state. The Station also features live music from local musicians, an outdoor patio area, and a curved bar made from Ohio wood. What's truly unique about the Carey Brewing Station and Carey's own brew, is that many of the beers are made exclusively with Ohio ingredients, including with the Cunnigham-grown Arcadia Buckeye Hops. "We wanted the Brew Station to be local and to feature local brews with Ohio ingredients," Derek says," and that's exactly what we've done."

A large portion of the Cunningham's farm is committed to being a part of LRE's South Branch Solar project in Hancock County, Ohio. Once South Branch Solar is built and operating, the Cunninghams will continue to own and farm 100 of their acres, some of which will continue to grow hops that will end up in Ohio beers.

"My family's been in Arcadia for generations," Derek says. "My dad went to Ohio State, I went there and my sons did too. We're Buckeyes. We're committed to the natural environment in Ohio and having solar energy on our farm is just another step in that. The energy will be Ohio-grown too."





### Minnie's Baked Corn

#### INGREDIENTS -

1 stick of butter
1 pack of crackers
1/4 cup flour
2 Eggs

2 T. Sugar 1 Cup of whole milk 10 oz of unfrozen corn 32 oz of frozen corn

#### PREP

#### White Sauce:

Melt half a stick of butter and add the flour in.

Add the whole milk, cook until sauce thickens.

Add 2 T. of sugar.

Add 2 eggs

#### Baking:

To a large baking pan add all of your corn

Spread the white sauce over the corn

Melt the other half stick of butter, add cracker crumbs and spread over the mixture in the pan.

Set the oven to 350°F and bake for 45min to 1hr.



### **04** Lindy's Olive Cheese Balls

Prior to starting a career in renewable energy, Lindy Brown worked at a Dallas-area high school as a Diagnostician Assistant, helping evaluate special needs students. Working with children was a life-changing experience for her in many ways, feeding into her love and concern for kids. It was also a great experience from a culinary perspective as the high school was where she was introduced to the recipe for Olive Cheese Balls.

Olive Cheese Balls are a twist on a traditional appetizer, adding tangy olives to a pastry cheese wrapping.

Lindy, now a Senior Procurement Agent with LRE, said she makes the tasty cheese balls for the occasional event as well as holidays and family gatherings. She still loves kids, she noted, and happily makes her recipe to share with her three grown children and six grandchildren.

"It's a great snack while you're waiting for the real meal," Lindy said, "When I do make them, I make two or three dozen at a time. They're always a big hit."

- Lindy Brown

#### INGREDIENTS -

1 Cup / 8oz of Shredded Sharp Cheddar 1 Cup / 8oz of Shredded Mild Cheddar 1 ¼ Cup / 10 oz of Flour ½ Cup / 4 oz of Margarine 28 Olives

PREP

Stir together the cheese and flour.

Melt the margarine and combine with the flour/ cheese mixture. Stir well.

Take a small portion of the dough mixture and flatten into a small circle.

Put an olive in the center and mold the dough around it until the olive is sealed within the dough in a round ball shape.

Place on a cookie sheet about an inch apart from each other.

Bake at 350 degrees for about 12-15 minutes (depending upon your oven) until brownish looking; like a biscuit.

Let cool some and ..... ENJOY!





### 05 Keeping to Our Roots Salad

It's the colors, aromas and open-air markets that Eran Mahrer associates most with the origins of his Keeping to Our Roots Salad.

Eran's roots were planted in Israel. Every year from age seven until late in high school, Eran, LRE's Chief Commercial Officer, spent the summer in Israel with his grandparents. Along with trips to the beaches of the Mediterranean, one of the constants of those summer visits was a daily fresh savory salad. And his joy in those salads wasn't just the freshness and taste, but in how the ingredients were gathered.

"Every morning my grandmother Inka Lozovski would go to the local markets," Eran said, "it's how she started her day. Everyone there knew her, it was her reality check."

Most days Eran would accompany her, walking up and down the aisles basking in the smells, the lively atmosphere, the vivid colors of the green zucchini, red tomatoes, and brilliant yellow squash. "The flavors were outstanding, the tastes like nothing you get in the States" he said, "Israel takes great pride in its agriculture, and it shows. But the process behind the salad was just as important to me. The story behind it was fascinating to be a part of."

Eran, who maintains a healthy lifestyle, named his salad as a play on the roots of the fresh vegetables used in the recipe, but also as a nod to his own roots, his grandmother, and his youthful summers in Israel. "The salad represents a deep connection to my family and my time growing up in Israel," he said. "It carries a lot of good messages and memories."

-Eran Mahrer

#### INGREDIENTS -

- 1 Beet (fist size)
- 1 Kohlrabi (fist size)
- 2 Carrots
- 2 T Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 1/2 tsp sea salt
- 1/4 tsp ground black pepper
- 2 T fresh lemon juice

#### PREP

Peel and cube all vegetables into a single bowl, ideally the cubes are no larger than about 1/4" square

Add spices and dressing

Chill and allow to rest for an hour or longer to allow the seasoning to settle

Salt and Pepper to taste.

Enjoy!



### **06** Za'atar Flatbread

LRE's Senior Vice President of Development, Omar Aboudaher was raised in Beirut, where Lebanese Man'oushe, Za'atar Flatbread, was a breakfast staple of his boyhood that has never left him.

Lebanese Man'oushe, Za'atar Flatbread is a Lebanese flatbread (manoushe) covered with olive oil and za'atar, a Middle Eastern blended spice and can be dressed with vegetables such as cucumbers or tomatoes, and is most often eaten for breakfast. The flatbread is a core dish in Middle Eastern countries and according to Omar can be found in every kitchen and corner bakery in Lebanon and beyond.

Omar's recipe for the flatbread was handed down from his father's mother, Eugenia, a respected family cook, then to his mother Aida, and now to him. "We always keep a bowl of za'atar on our counter so we can make it anytime," Omar said. The flatbread holds memories for Omar as a youth of a bakery next to his school which often fed the student's need for Lebanese flatbread. "The bakery had a runner who would deliver the flatbread and hand it to us across the metal gate of the school," he said. "It was delicious."

Omar's family stays close to his Lebanese roots as well, making the traditional dish often or purchasing it at a Lebanese bakery near his home in Houston, Texas.

"Whenever my daughter comes home from college she always asks for it," Omar noted. "It's a staple at our house and it's definitely a trigger for me. I can still see myself in our kitchen in Beirut or grabbing it at a bakery on the way to school. It's a part of who I am."

- Omar Aboudaher



#### INGREDIENTS ·

2 1/2 Cups unbleached all-purpose flour
1 Cup cake flour
2 tsp kosher salt
1 1/4 Cups cups lukewarm water (90-100 degrees)
1 tsp active dry yeast
1 T sugar
1 T neutral oil, such as canola or safflower
1/2 Cup Za'atar\* (very popular mix of herbs and spices in the Middle East)
1/2 Cup extra virgin olive oil
Garnishes: Tomatoes, Picked turnips, Mint, Arugula, Labneh, etc.

PREP

In a large bowl or a food processor, combine the flours and salt. Whisk together if making by hand; pulse a few times if using the processor.

Proof the yeast in a small bowl. Mix the yeast and sugar together, then slowly add ¼ cup of the lukewarm water while stirring to combine. Set aside for about 10 minutes until foamy.

Add the yeast mixture and the tablespoon of oil to the flour mixture. Mixing by hand, or with the food processor running, slowly pour in the remaining cup of warm water. Mix until combined and knead, if by hand, for 10 minutes until the dough is soft and elastic. If using the processor, run for a full minute after the water is added.

Set the dough to rise by placing the dough in a bowl that is lightly oiled, and turn the dough so it is entirely coated with oil.

Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and then a kitchen towel and place in a warm spot (I put it in the turned-off oven that's been just barely warmed) until doubled in size,  $1\frac{1}{2}$ -2 hours.

Deflate the dough by removing it from the bowl and pulling off four evenly sized balls of dough. Set the balls on a lightly floured surface and coat lightly with more flour. Cover and rise for 20 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. If convection, set oven temp to 425 degrees. Place the baking stone or overturned sheet pan in the bottom of the oven. Remove the racks or line them at the top of the oven.

In a small bowl, combine the za'atar and the oil, stirring well. Set aside.

Roll out the dough: lightly flour the work surface, the rolling pin, and the peel (or another overturned sheet pan to be used as a peel like a huge spatula). The flour acts as ball bearings for the dough to keep it from sticking to surfaces. Place one ball of dough on the floured surface and press down on it with the palm of your hand. The key to getting the dough rolled flat and round is to keep it moving, which means turning it frequently throughout the rolling process and adding more flour lightly to the work surface as you go. Roll the dough from the center of the circle to the edge a couple of times, then rotate it, and roll again, repeating until the dough is round and ¼ -inch thick.

Spread 3 teaspoons of the za'atar mixture on the dough using the back of the spoon or your fingertips to get an even, thick spread. Leave a ½-inch rim around the edge. Slide the peel under the dough, using two hands (to avoid misshaping the round) to pull the dough onto the floured peel. Place on the baking stone in the oven and bake for 7-10 minutes.

You'll want to keep the oven light on to watch the bubbling baking show.

When the bread is golden brown at the edges, remove from the oven to a baking rack and cool for a few minutes. The za'atar topping may seem oily when it's still hot but it will dry and taste just right. Repeat the process with each of the four balls of dough.

Eat the man'oushe as it is, torn off and eaten with the garnishes. Or top the bread with garnishes, fold over, and eat it like that.









### TRAVIS SNYDER

#### CREATING A POSITIVE BUZZ FOR OHIO VETERANS

Travis Snyder of Greenfield, Ohio has created quite a positive buzz for veterans in the Buckeye state.

Travis is owner and operator of ABC Honey, a beekeeping service placing and maintaining bee hives to support sustainability and land stewardship efforts at renewable energy sites. That includes LRE's Big Plain Solar facility in Madison County, Ohio where he oversees nearly 50 hives holding more than 1 million bees.

Travis is also a high school Government teacher and a veteran, a Technical Sergeant with the Ohio Air National Guard who served in Afghanistan.

Travis has combined his passions of beekeeping, teaching and military service to create a program that's having a healing impact on Ohio veterans and first responders, especially those suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). In 2024 Travis formed Frontline Hives, a non-profit organization that allows veterans and first responders to get started in beekeeping, a PTSD therapy approved by the U.S. Veteran's Administration. The program offers a free six-week program for veterans and first responders and their spouses that trains attendees on beekeeping basics. The program also provides them with a fully furnished beehive including the bees, then starts the hives for them.

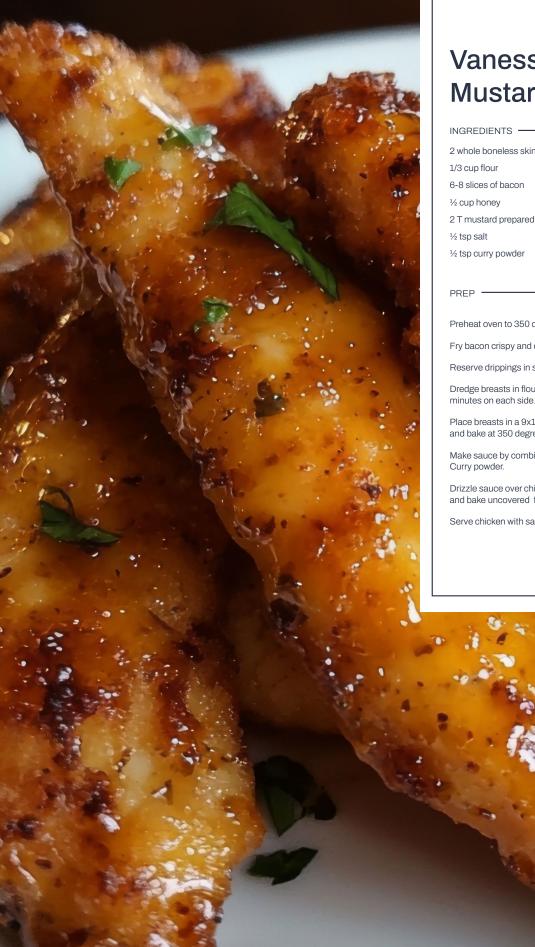
"I've been treated for PTSD due to my military service, and I've found that working with bees has been much more effective in helping me find my center than anything else," Travis said. "I encourage everyone I talk with who's dealing with these issues to look into beekeeping."

LRE and Big Plain Solar are major sponsors of Frontline Hives, a testament to the company's continuous commitment to supporting veterans and building a sustainable future for all. Since its creation, Frontline Hives has gotten a number of Ohio veterans and first responders trained and started in beekeeping. The program is now also working with the Department of Defense to place beehives at an Ohio Air Force base. And as part of his efforts to get the word out on the benefits of beekeeping, Travis also presented Ohio Governor Mike DeWine with a bottle of honey produced at Big Plain Solar.

"The response to Frontline Hives has been overwhelming," Travis said. "There's a definite need to understand and support our veterans and first responders and beekeeping is a tremendous way to do that."

"As a veteran myself I want to share my passion for beekeeping with others. Veterans and first responders are a close-knit group who sacrifice everything for community and country. Sharing beekeeping is a way to say thank you to them and to promote healing. That makes us all even closer."





### Vanessa's Honey **Mustard Chicken**

2 whole boneless skinless chicken breasts (4 halves)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Fry bacon crispy and crumble when cooled.

Reserve drippings in skillet.

Dredge breasts in flour and fry in bacon drippings 5-7 minutes on each side.

Place breasts in a 9x13-inch baking dish, cover in foil and bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes.

Make sauce by combining Honey, Mustard, Salt, and

Drizzle sauce over chicken and sprinkle with bacon and bake uncovered for 15 minutes.

Serve chicken with sauce over rice. Serves 4.







### **01** Luky's Spanish Potato Omelet

For LRE's Alan Kerbel and his wife Renne, food is a touchstone.

Renne's recipe for Luky's Torta de Patatas, also known as a Spanish Potato Omelet, comes from the past and family, both of which carry great meaning for the couple.

The Omelet recipe originated with Luky, a family nickname for Renne's mother Lucia, who was born and raised in Spain before moving to Mexico. Every summer Lucia would return to Spain to visit family in Seville where she acquired a wealth of culinary knowledge, including, perhaps, the recipe for Torta de Patatas.

As a girl growing up, Renne was not allowed to make the potato, egg and onion omelet, but she was observant. "I watched my mother," she said, "and learned."

Renne herself was raised in Mexico City and makes the Spanish omelet about once a month for dinner. She said having family from Spain and living in Mexico has made her appreciate the uniqueness of cultures and the sharing of cultural distinctions like recipes. "This is an authentic Spanish recipe that represents my roots," Renne noted. "It's Spanish, but it brings me back to Mexico."

In a nod to her Mexican roots, one change Renne sometimes makes to the Torta de Patatas recipe is to add chopped jalapeno peppers for flavor.

"I still like the original recipe, though" she added. "It reminds me of my mother, my family and my roots. I don't ever want to lose it."

- Alan Kerbel

#### INGREDIENTS .

2 Large white potatoes
½ White onion
4 Eggs
¼ Cup of olive oil
Salt, to taste
1 Jalapeno (optional)

#### PREP -

Peel and rinse the potatoes.

Slice the potatoes using a sharp knife or mandolin slicer and sprinkle salt to add flavor.

Cut onion julienne style and chop jalapeno (optional).

Add the sliced potatoes and onion to hot olive oil.

Cook over medium heat for 20-30 minutes and move occasionally.

While the potatoes are cooking, beat eggs in a large bowl until well combined – add in Jalapeno if chosen.

When the potatoes are fully cooked, some may start to break apart. That's okay.

Once the potatoes have cooked for 20-30 minutes add the potatoes in the egg bowl mixture. Let the mixture sit for 10 minutes.

Gently pour the tortilla and egg mixture back into the frying pan over medium-low heat for about 6-8 minutes on the first side.

You can use a spatula occasionally along the sides to make sure it's not sticking.

To flip the tortilla, grab a plate that's larger than the frying pan (flip quickly and confidently) it will be runny but don't worry.

Slide the tortilla back into the frying pan and let the other side cook for another 6-8 minutes.

Flip back out onto a clean plate and allow it to cool for 10 minutes before enjoying!





### 02 Omie's Breakfast Casserole

Anytime that LRE Sr. Permitting Manager Chris Moore makes his family recipe Breakfast Casserole, he thinks of Omie Ritter.

Omie was Chris' grandmother, the family matriarch and wife of his grandfather (Tex Ritter), a cattle rancher in New Braunfels, Texas near San Antonio.

Omie picked up the breakfast casserole recipe in the 1980s from a colleague of her husband, who in addition to ranching also sold cattle feed. "She got it from someone else," Chris said, "but to me she invented it."

The casserole is a breakfast crowd pleaser and can serve up to 10 people. According to Chris his family continues to make the original recipe from the '80s with one significant tweak – adding some spicy Jimmy Dean sausage to the mix to give it a bit of a Texas twang. Another improvement Chris' mom added in recent years is making the casserole with egg whites for a healthier version of the recipe.

"My wife, Mom, and I all make breakfast casserole for special family occasions," Chris said. "I always think of my grandmother when I do. I feel like I'm sitting at the table at her house with my parents, aunts and uncles and grandparents. It's a real comfort food."

- Chris Moore

#### INGREDIENTS

 $\frac{1}{2}$  lb. Owens or Jimmy Dean regular ground sausage

1/2 lb. Owens or Jimmy Dean spicy (hot) ground sausage

18 oz. Can crescent dinner rolls

1 Cup (8 oz) package shredded Mexican style cheese

4 Beaten eggs (or substitute egg whites for lower cholesterol option)

<sup>3</sup>⁄<sub>4</sub> Cup milk

Salt and pepper to taste

#### PREP

Brown sausage and drain.

In a 13 x 9" dish, line bottom of dish with crescent rolls (use non-stick spray or butter the pan first).

Sprinkle sausage and cheese on top of crescent rolls.

Combine the eggs and milk in a mixing bowl. Beat well. Pour on top of your rolls.

Bake at 400 degrees for 15 or 20 minutes. Serves 6-8. This recipe can be made in advance but add the beaten eggs and milk mixture the morning you bake it so it doesn't get soggy.

Note: if you don't want spicy at all, then use only regular ground sausage.





### **03** Ethiopian Beef Tibs

Even though LRE Project Engineer Bithia Gutema is more than 8,000 miles from her birthplace in Addis Ababa, the capital of Ethiopia, there's one thing that always takes her back home.

#### Beef Tibs.

A traditional East African dish, Ethiopian Beef Tips hold a special place in the hearts and homes of Ethiopians. The dish includes thinly sliced pieces of beef infused with warm spices including peppers, red onions, olive oil, and berbere, a hot spice mix that's a staple of Ethiopian cooking. It's served with flatbread and placed on a single plate for a common eating experience for family and friends. It also can be made with chicken, lamb or goat.

Bithia's Beef Tips recipe has been handed down through her family. She hasn't seen too many varieties of the Nibs in the U.S. and while it's easy to make and quite tasty, she prefers her family's version over any other.

"It's not an everyday dish, it's more for special occasions like holidays or when you have people come over," she adds. "But it always takes me home. The smell, the taste, the warmth of the dish. It takes me right to Ethiopia, and that's a very comfortable place for me to be."

- Bithia Gutema

#### INGREDIENTS -

1/2lb Beef Tenderloin, cubed
1/2 Red Onion thinly sliced
1 Jalapeno, sliced
4 Cloves of Garlic, thinly sliced
1/2 Tomato, chopped
2 tsp High Smoke Point Oil
2 tsp Kebe\* (Ethiopian Ghee)
1 T Berbere\* (Ethiopian spicy power, optional)
Salt & Pepper
2 Rosemary
Cast Iron Skillet or a good Non-Stick Pan Injera\*(Ethiopian Flat bread)

#### PREP -

Cut the beef tenderloin into cubes.

Heat the oil in a large skillet over high heat.

Add the cubed beef to the skillet and season to taste with salt, pepper, and berbere. Sear the meat for 2 minutes.

Add the Kebe to the same pan over medium heat. Once the Kebe is melted, add the onion, garlic, and jalapeños and sauté for 3 minutes, until starting to soften.

Add the rosemary and cook for one minute until simmering

Add the chopped tomatoes. Simmer for 2 minutes to allow the flavors to meld. Remove the pan from the heat.

Serve the tibs over injera





# STEVE FOGLESONG

Steve Foglesong's Black Gold Ranch and Feedlot in central Illinois is coming full circle. From energy to agriculture and back to energy again. The 8,000-acre Black Gold ranch began life as a coal mining operation, where strip mining left huge gashes in the rolling hills and flat pastures in the rural town of Astoria, IL.

But as prices and demand for coal waned, the land was eventually reclaimed and transitioned from coal mining into a farm growing corn and soybeans. That's when Steve and his young family moved to Astoria and Steve took over as farm manager in 1994. Little by little, piece by piece, Steve and his family acquired the land he was working and built the Black Gold Ranch, adding one significant new element – cows, and lots of them. Currently the Black Gold Ranch has about 7,000 head of cattle, some for breeding, the majority sold for beef – a portion of it to the McDonald's national food chain. The ranch also features several hog farms, and continues to serve partly as a working farm, mainly growing corn used for feedstock for the cattle.

But Black Gold will soon be repurposed again, as several thousand acres will be back in the energy business as part of LRE's South Fulton Solar project, a 350-megawatt (MW) solar and 175-MW battery energy storage facility. The project is expected to begin operating by late 2027 or early 2028.

While the former coal mine will be generating clean energy, not all of the Black Gold Ranch will be dedicated to solar power. Fogelsong and his family will continue to raise cattle and grow corn for feed on the remaining land.

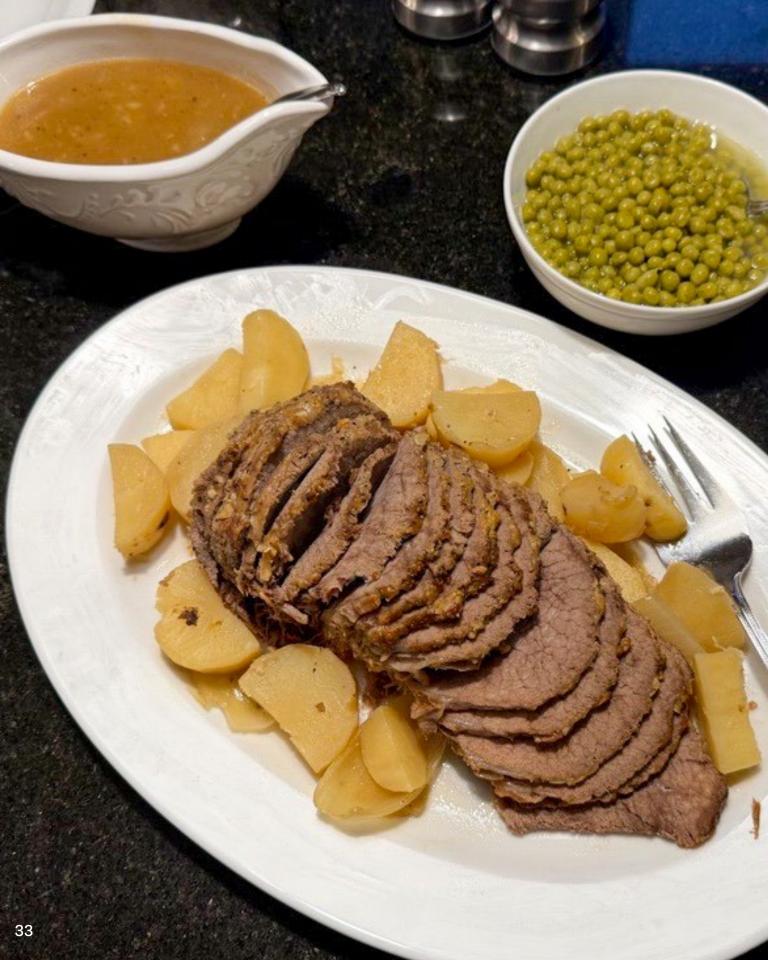
"We're trading farmland for solar panels but we're ranchers first," says Steve, who is also former president of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association. "Our job now is to take God-given sunlight and turn it into protein. With the solar panels we'll be turning that sunlight into clean energy. Either way it's a beneficial use of the land."

For Steve, using some of his ranch for clean energy is all about the future and family. He and his wife Linda have another herd they proudly oversee - three children and 12 grandchildren, all of whom work on the ranch. They also have four great-grandchildren. "There's really no risk in being a part of the solar project," he says. "Some of the land going to the solar project is owned by my children so they'll be benefiting and making decisions well into the future. It just makes good sense for us, for the family and for future generations."

"You're taking land that a lot of people would have considered worthless," Steve adds. "It was strip mined, reclaimed and then farmed, and now it's being turned into another energy source. I think it's a great story."







# 04 Chris' Sunday Roast

Chris Klein's Sunday Roast has a long and tasty history.

The roast recipe initially landed with the Klein clan when Chris' great grandmother Anna Maire brought it to the U.S. from her native France in 1861. Since then, the recipe has been handed down through generations, ultimately landing on the table of Chris and his wife Carol, a Senior Paralegal with LRE.

While the roast recipe is mostly the same as the one which came over from Le Havre, France, it's received some modifications over the years, such as adding a little Louisiana Red Hot sauce, in line with Carol and Chris' own roots deep in the heart of Texas.

True to its name, the roast was a Sunday family dinner staple for the Kleins for many years, but is now served mainly on special occasions, especially on Carol's birthday each year. "I don't make it myself," Carol noted. "My husband is so good at it I can't not let him make it."

The long roast tradition it seems will continue for generations to come as Carol and Chris' son can cook it, and their grandson is also learning the family recipe. "Everyone whose ever tried it has loved it," she added. "I hope my family keeps making it for a lot more generations. I've been eating it for years, and it's still really good."

- Carol Klein

### INGREDIENTS -

1-2 lb. Eye Round Roast (trimmed – not much fat)
All purpose flour
Worchestershire Sauce
Ground black pepper
Lemon-pepper seasoning
3 Fresh garlic cloves – chopped fine
Montreal Steak Seasoning (if desired)
Salt
Cooking oil (vegetable or olive)
2 Cups water
Louisiana Red Hot to taste
Potatoes (cut into wedges) – optional
Pearl Onions (or small onions) - optional

PREP -

Prepare roast by applying lemon-pepper seasoning, Montreal Steak Seasoning and black pepper to roast to taste.

Flour roast and brown on all sides in 2 tablespoons cooking oil in a large, heavy roasting pot over medium heat.

Before roast is completely browned, add garlic, salt to taste and drizzle roast with Worchestershire sauce.

Add water, cover and cook.

Place in 350 degree oven for approximately 3 hours.

Check midway during cooking to make sure there is adequate water in pot – about 1 inch.

Add onions or potatoes now, if desired.

After cooking for 3 hours, remove roast and vegetables from the pot to serving plate to cool slightly.

Put roast pot with liquid on a burner on medium heat to make gravy. To thicken liquid, add 1-3 tsps of flour that has been mixed with hot water into a thick consistency (similar to oatmeal). Stir well and add salt if desired. Slice roast thinly with electric knife and serve.





# 05 Sloppy Joes

LRE Senior Director of Development Patrick Nolan's Sloppy Joe recipe is a family keepsake.

The recipe stems from his wife Heather's great grandmother, Ada, whose name and recipe runs deep in their family.

Sloppy Joes have a long history, reportedly dating back originally to Cuba in the early 20th century. The simple sandwich, made essentially with browned ground beef, ketchup, spices and a toasted bun, has become an American staple at summer picnics and on cold winter nights.

For the Nolans, the recipe is a comforting reminder of family, particularly great grandmother Ada whose legacy lives on not only through her Sloppy Joe recipe, but through her name. Heather mom's middle name is Ada, and their two-year-old daughter is also named after Heather's beloved great grandmother.

The family, he said, makes the Sloppy Joes about once every month and little Ada helps, pulling up a stool and sitting on the counter asking questions while mom puts together the beloved recipe.

"My wife never got to meet her great grandmother," Patrick added," but every time we make Sloppy Joes we're reminded of her. In a way, through her recipe, we've all met her."

- Patrick Nolan

### INGREDIENTS -

- 1 lb ground beef browned
- 1 10.5oz can Campbell's French Onion soup
- I cup of Ketchup
- Bun (toasted)

PREP -

Let it all cook down on the stove top for 20 minutes.

Serve on toasted bun; recommended with Ruffle Potato Chips





# **06** Juana's Bolognese

Whenever she's making her late mom's recipe for Juana's Bolognese, LRE Sr. Manager of Corporate Communications Otilia Ayats-Mas is transported to a kitchen in Germany where her mother, Juana Mas-Serrat, is holding a wooden spoon over a simmering pan of her special Bolognese sauce.

Comfort food.

"When I was a child, I never asked my mother for a birthday cake," Otilia noted, "I always asked her to make spaghetti with her Bolognese."

Otilia's roots and her mother's recipe both sprouted in Europe where she spent many years in Germany, France and Spain. With those roots, an Italian recipe might seem out of character, but she explains that food is a part of the intimacy of Europe. "There's a lot of shared recipes in European countries," she notes. "Germany, France, Greece, Spain, Italy - when it comes to food there are no borders.

What sets Juana's Bolognese apart from other recipes, Otilia notes, is that it uses high quality ground beef such as Wagyu. In addition, she uses a healthy dose of red wine to give it that European flavor. She most often makes it with spaghetti.

"My mother's Bolognese recipe holds a special place in my heart," Otilia said. "It's been my favorite since I was a child. It's like a warm comforting embrace or a culinary hug. It's reminiscent of the love my mother poured into every batch she ever made."

- Otilia Ayats Mas

# INGREDIENTS -

1.5 lbs of Ground Beef
1 Packet of Penne Rigatte or Linguini
5 tsp of good Olive Oil
1 Sweet Onion
3 Cloves of Garlic
3 Medium chopped carrots
3 Celery stalks
1 Cup of Cabernet Sauvignon/red wine
1 Carton of Pomi chopped Tomatoes
A handful of cherry tomatoes
Red pepper flakes, Salt

PREP ·

Saute the onion, carrots, and celery in about 5 tablespoons olive oil in a large skillet until soft.

Cook on a medium-high flame for about 7 to 10 minutes, then add the meat; break it up well with a wooden spoon.

Add the wine and cook until the alcohol has evaporated.

Add chopped Pomi tomatoes and season with salt and pepper.

Lower the flame and let cook for 2.5 hours, stirring occasionally.

At the end, add the handful of cherry tomatoes chopped up in a food processor and let it simmer for another 10 minutes while you cook the pasta.

Serve the bolognese over the cooked linguini or penne rigate.





# 07 Chicken Seekh Kebabs

After growing up and marrying in India's capital of Delhi, LRE Senior Manager of M&A, Rashi Ahooja brought her Indian roots and recipes to Pittsburgh, Houston and eventually Chicago.

But no matter how far she moved from her native land, there has always been one constant in her kitchen - chicken seekh kebabs.

A signature dish in large Indian and Asian cities, seekh kebabs are a popular street food in cities like New Delhi and Kolkata. The kebabs consist of ground meat marinated with ginger, garlic and garam masala, a blend of Indian spices. They're shaped into delicious sausage-like cylinders and cooked on skewers, traditionally over a charcoal fire.

Rashi's kebab recipe was handed down from her mother, Madhu, but as she's shifted continents and cities, she's gradually modified it to make it her own. "I put in as many spices as possible," she said.

Making and sharing her seekh kebabs, Rashi noted, is not just a way to stay true to her Indian roots, but a way to share them. "I've made them for a big Fourth of July party in Houston and a grilling party in Pittsburgh," she noted, "I feel like it's our contribution to this great melting pot."

- Rashi Ahooja

# INGREDIENTS -

- 1 lb ground chicken
- 2 T finely chopped garlic
- 2 T finely chopped ginger
- 1 T finely chopped green chilies (Serrano/Thai Chili)
- 2 T finely chopped cilantro
- 1 tsp garam masala
- 1/2 tsp coriander powder
- 1/2 tsp cumin powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 T oil
- 1 Lime

# PREP

Combine all the ingredients (other than oil and lime) in a bowl. Let it rest for 30-60 minutes in the refrigerator before rolling the mixture into a kebab shape.

Rub a little oil in your palms and take 1/4 cup equivalent of the minced mixture and roll it in the shape of a kebab on a skewer. If skewers aren't available, roll the mixture into logs or round patties.

Grill over a charcoal or gas grill until the chicken is cooked through (with an internal temperature of 165F). Alternatively, cook the kebabs on a cast iron pan.

Brush a little oil and rotate the kebabs halfway through the cooking process to cook uniformly. Expected time to cook 10-15 minutes.

Once cooked, serve with squeezed lime juice on top and pickled onions on the side.





# **E&L BIEBER FARMS**

# BORN ON THE BAYOU

David Bieber is in his element. Wearing thigh-high rubber boots he wades into a pond on his Louisiana property and extracts a wire trap holding what passes for treasure in the Bayou state.

# Crawfish.

David, his wife Sharon and their son Ethan have been operating E&L Bieber Farms on their property in Acadia Parish for more than a decade. It's a family business that leverages the symbiotic relationship between rice and crawfish, who feed on rice stubble after it's harvested. E&L Bieber Farms currently produces about one million pounds of fresh crawfish each year which is sold regionally in grocery stores. The farm also produces several million pounds of rice annually and includes a full processing facility for both.

"Crawfish is really all you can raise here," says David, a Louisiana native. "It's authentic to our culture and our Cajun background in Louisiana. Everybody here eats it." The nearly 2,000 acre Beiber Farm got its start in 1906 when David's grandfather Henry moved to Louisiana from Germany. For many years it was a rice and cattle farm and has served as the homestead for the extended Bieber family ever since.

But while David is a diehard Louisianian, crawfish hasn't always been his mainstay. After working at the family farm through high school, he went on to earn a geology degree from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. For many years he worked as a Petroleum Geologist to determine the best places to drill and extract fossil fuels. But new restrictive regulations and legal wrangling in the industry eventually led him back to his roots and the farm and his family.

While crawfish and rice have provided a steady income for the Biebers, the farm is preparing to transition again.

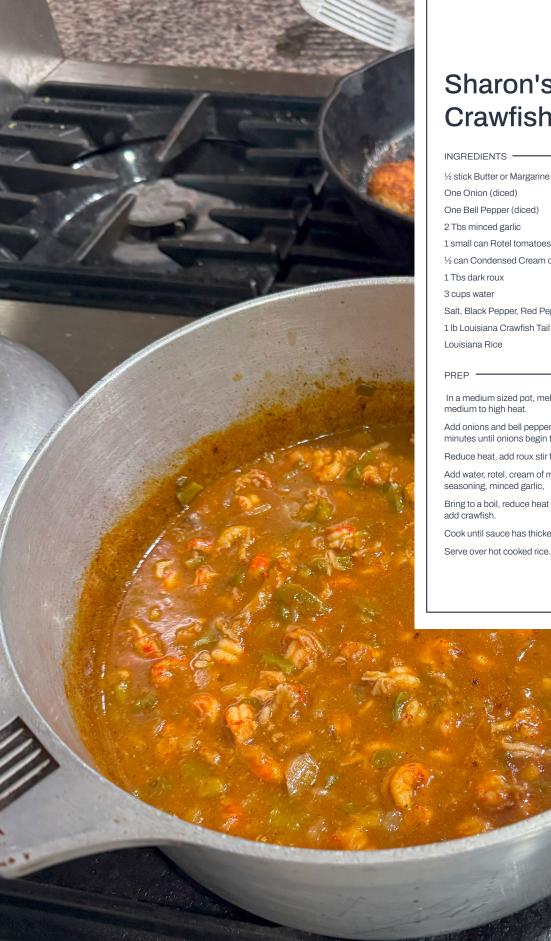
A significant portion of the farm is committed to being part of EB Heirs Solar, a proposed solar project anticipated to begin operating in 2030. With the solar project, the Biebers will continue to farm a smaller portion of the land, and David says he plans to purchase additional property in the area to continue the Bieber farming tradition.

"We're thinking ahead," David says. "Crawfish and rice have been very good to us, but we're ready to move to the next step." That step, he says. is based in family.

"We want to watch our two grandchildren grow up and we want to support our son Ethan's desire to keep farming. The solar farm will provide our family a steady income for a number of years and solar will help us do that.

"We value life, and we have deep roots here in Louisiana," he concludes. "We may change our focus but we're not going to change our roots."





# Sharon's Cajun **Crawfish Etouffe**

1/2 stick Butter or Margarine One Bell Pepper (diced) 1 small can Rotel tomatoes 1/2 can Condensed Cream of Mushroom Soup Salt, Black Pepper, Red Pepper (Season to taste) 1 lb Louisiana Crawfish Tail Meat, including fat

In a medium sized pot, melt butter or margarine over

Add onions and bell pepper, saute for about 5-6 minutes until onions begin to slightly brown,

Reduce heat, add roux stir for one additional minute.

Add water, rotel, cream of mushroom soup, seasoning, minced garlic,

Bring to a boil, reduce heat to a simmer for 5 minutes,

Cook until sauce has thickened, about 5 minutes.

# **08** Inn's Homemade Pierogies

Every Christmas since she can remember, LRE Senior Director of Development Kelly Inns has not only kept an eye out for Santa, she's helped keep a family tradition alive.

Making pierogi.

Pierogi, a traditional Polish dish, are filled dumplings made by wrapping unleavened dough around a filling, in Kelly's case cheese and potato, and then cooking them in boiling water.

The tradition of hand-making pierogi comes from Kelly's maternal grandmother who was Polish, and stems from a commitment to not eat meat on Christmas Eve. The Polish dumplings are paired with fish for dinner each Dec. 24. "Everything is made by hand, and we make hundreds of them," according to Kelly. "Then we freeze what's left and eat them the rest of the year."

As a child, she and her sister were responsible for pan frying the pierogi at her grandmother's house. Now as an adult, Kelly, her mother and sister have taken over as primary pierogi producers. She also gets help from her two children. "We need to carry on the family tradition," she says. "I hope my children and their children will be making pierogi on Christmas Eve for a lot of years to come."

-Kelly Inns





### INGREDIENTS

Dough:

4 Cups all purpose flour

2 Eggs

5 T sour cream

3 T vegetable oil, pinch of salt, about 3/4 cup water; (Recommend ratio of double dough recipe for each 1 filling recipe)

Cheese Filling:

2 lbs plain, unsweetened farmer's cheese

1 egg plus 2 egg yolks, beaten

1/2 tsp salt

Pinch of ground white pepper

## PREP

### Cheese Filling:

Use a grinder or food processor fitted with a metal blade, process cheese. Do not puree or process too fine. In a large bowl, combine cheese, egg and egg yolks, salt and white pepper. Stir to combine. Set aside.

#### Dough/Assembly:

Sift flour into a large bowl or onto a flat working surface; make a well in the center.

Break eggs into well.

Add sour cream, oil and salt

Blend ingredients with your fingertips.

Gradually add water, working and kneading mixture into a smooth, pliable dough.

Divide dough into quarters. Cover 3 portions with a damp cloth.

On a lightly floured board, roll 1 dough portion into a 1/16-in thick rectangle.

Cut into 3.5-4in circles.

In center of 1 dough circle, place 1 heaping tbl of filling.

Fold dough in half over the filling.

Crimp resulting edge with your fingertips, forming a tight seal.

Repeat process until remaining dough is used. This will use about half of the cheese filling recipe. Recommend preparing a 2nd dough batch by repeating dough steps 1 thru 12 to use the rest of your filling.

Place completed pierogies on lightly floured baking sheets.

Bring a large saucepan of salted water to a boil, using 1/2 tsp salt per 2 quarts water.

Drop about 5 pierogies into boiling water. Stir gently to prevent them from sticking to the bottom.

When water returns to a boil, add 5 more pierogies.

Stir carefully. Cover with a tight-fitting lid.

Cook savory pierogies over medium heat, 4-5 min or until they float.

Gently remove pierogies from pot; drain in a colander or strainer. Rinse with hot water.

Repeat until all pierogies are boiled. Then, pat dry. (At this point, you can let the pierogies cool and freeze to save for later or finish cooking immediately)

To serve, pan fry pierogies in butter until golden brown on both sides.

# **09** Roman Roasted Tomato Risotto

When he was a young man, there was no dish LRE's VP of Energy Services Massimo Passini dreaded more than Roman Roasted Tomato Risotto.

As an adult, reflecting on the taste, the history, the roots of the recipe, there is no meal he treasures more.

"Now," he said "I can't get enough of it."

For Massimo, it was never the taste of the traditional Italian tomato and rice dish that troubled him, it was the frequency. As a boy growing up in Rome, Italy, he and his family would routinely visit Castel Gandolfo, or Castello, a picturesque town southeast of Rome overlooking Lake Albano. It's also the location of the summer residence of the pope.

"Every time the family would gather at Castello, my Aunt Margherita and Uncle Giancarlo would bring Roman Roasted Tomato Risotto," Massimo said. "As kids we felt like it was just routine." He kept the family recipe and after growing up and moving to the U.S., the family risotto dish took on new taste and meaning. It was no longer routine. The ripe tomatoes, olive oil and garlic blended with the animated talk of uncles, cousins and parents chattering in his native language. It was all delicious.

"I make the tomato risotto now whenever I have the urge," Massimo noted. "It's delicious and a memory from my childhood. It brings me back to a time when we were a whole family together. That's a feeling I miss."

- Massimo Passini







#### INGREDIENTS

 $6\mathchar`-8$  Large Ripe Tomatoes (Ripe as possible as you will need the juice from the tomato)

2 Cup of sweet cherry tomatoes

2-3 Cups of Rice (Arborio or Basmati)

32 oz of High Quality Chicken Stock

Extra Virgin olive oil

Fresh Basil leaves (2-3 Bushels must be fresh)

3-4 Garlic Cloves

Salt Pepper

White Pepper (optional)

Appropriately sized roasting pan to fit the tomatoes and excess rice comfortably. The rice and tomatoes will need space to cook comfortably.

#### PREP

Wash rice in a bowl, repeat process until water is mostly clear; empty water and set aside rice.

After washing, cut the top of the tomatoes off and hollow out. Keep and place the pulp from the tomatoes in a large mixing bowl.

Place the hollowed-out tomatoes in the oven pan with room between each tomato.

Chop and mince the 4 cloves of garlic. Chop and mince the fresh basil.

Add ¾ of the garlic and half the basil to the bowl with the tomato pulp.

Using a hand blender (or regular blender), slowly and gently puree the pulp, garlic, and basil. If you blend too fast or too hard you will create foam which kills the flavour and adds acidity to dish.

Salt and pepper puree to taste. For a kick consider a dash of white pepper.

Add to puree, 1 part olive oil 2 parts chicken stock until there is enough liquid to soak the rice. Mix with spatula until uniform.

Add the rice and the remaining garlic and basil to the puree and soak for at least 3-4 hours.

As the rice soaks it will consume the liquid. If too much liquid is consumed add olive oil and broth as above and add 1 cup of pureed cherry tomatoes. Salt pepper to taste. There must always be liquid present in the puree; needed for cooking the rice.

Retrieve the pan with the hollowed-out tomatoes.

Place 1 to 1.5 tablespoons of the rice and puree mixture, depending on the tomato size, into the hollowed tomatoes. It is important not to overstuff the tomatoes and ensure there is sufficient liquid otherwise the rice will not be fully cooked.

In the space between the tomatoes in the roasting pan, place the rest of the rice and puree mixture in the pan between the tomatoes. Ensure that there is liquid for cooking the rice. If in doubt add chicken stock.

Prepare a mixture of chicken broth, pureed cherry tomatoes and basil/garlic, light on garlic and basil. Set aside.

In a 400 F oven, insert pan and bake for 40-45 minutes.

When done perfectly rice will be fluffy and tomatoes roasted.

During cooking if the rice mixture inside tomatoes and pan appear to dry up add some of the pureed cherry tomatoes, basil/garlic mixture prepared above as needed.

Allow to cool and serve.



# **10** Tawa Pulao

When it comes to cooking the traditional Indian rice and vegetable dish, Tawa Pulao, LRE Senior Director of Financial Planning & Analysis Akshay Mandlekar has street sense.

After attending college in Nagpur, India, also known as Orange City, Akshay moved to the fast and crowded city of Mumbai for his first job. To keep pace with the speed of the city, he quickly learned to eat on the run, and a good deal of that eating came from carts. India is famous for its street vendors, with an estimated 10 million vendors selling their wares from push carts, many of them preparing Tawa Pulao.

Tawa Pulao is a popular street food that originated in Mumbai. It's essentially rice cooked with vegetables and spices and garnished with cilantro and fresh lemon juice. Pulao is rice, tawa the concave metal pan used to prepare the dish.

Akshay learned to cook Tawa Pulao by watching the street vendors prepare it. "When you're hungry and in a hurry in India you go to the street," Akshay said. "Part of the fun was finding the cart with the best Tawa Pulao. I never actually got a recipe; I just watched them make it."

Akshay adds that his family makes their own Tawa Pulao at home in the Dallas area and it's a favorite. It also, he says, is a warm and delicious reminder of a young man on the streets of India.

"One hundred percent Tawa Pulao takes me back to my roots," he noted. "It makes me miss my friends from college days and hanging out on the streets of Mumbai."

- Akshay Mandlekar

### INGREDIENTS -

3 Cups boiled/steamed Basmati Rice

2 Onions – sliced

4 Tomatoes - finely chopped

1 Green Bell Pepper – diced (You can use colorful Bell Peppers also)

1/4 Shredded cabbage

2 Potatoes – boiled, peeled and diced

1/2 Cup Cilantro Leaves – chopped finely

1 Cup Green peas – fresh/frozen(if fresh then boil for 5 minutes in salted water)

2 tsp salt

2 T Pav Bhaji Masala (It is Indian spice, easily available in Indian Grocery Store)

2 T butter (Or your preferred cooking oil)

1 1/2 T Ginger Garlic paste

2 Green Chilies – minced

1 Lemon/lime

PREP

Heat Butter/Oil in a cooking pan and add sliced onions. sauté for 5-7 minutes or till translucent.

Add Ginger garlic paste and sauté for 2-3 minutes.

Add Bell papers, shredded cabbage, tomatoes, and Pav Bhaji masala (Indian spice), half of the cilantro leaves, and salt. Mix well and cook on high flame for 5-7 minutes.

If the mixture is dry, add 2 tbsp water (warm/ hot water)

After 2 minutes, add green peas, diced potatoes, and cooked rice.

Mix gently as to not to break rice grains (or toss all ingredients together). At this point, you can switch off the flame/heat, cover the pot for 2-3 minutes.

Squeeze lemon juice and garnish with rest of the cilantro leaves and lemon wedges.

Serve hot and enjoy!!!





# Aash Reshteh

Persian New Year, called Nowruz, falls on the exact day of the spring equinox, and is a 13-day time for renewal, celebration and rebirth.

It's also time for a bowl of Aash Reshteh.

Neeki Mostoufi, a Wind Performance Engineer for LRE, has a deep family and cultural connection to Aash Reshteh, also known as Persian Stew. The stew is a traditional Persian New Year's dish featuring reshteh, or thin noodles, kidney beans, chickpeas, herbs, and yogurt.

Neeki's parents were both born and raised in Iran, where Aash Reshteh is a common dish, especially for Persian New Year. Her mother makes the stew each year using a recipe handed down from her maternal grandmother.

And while Persian stew is not just limited to a New Year's celebration, Neeki says making the stew can be a little daunting for her, so the family relies on her mother and her deep Persian roots to create the traditional dish.

"We do eat it for Persian New Year," she notes, "but we love it so much we eat it all year."

- Neeki Mostoufi

# INGREDIENTS · 1 Large yellow onion 2 T olive oil 1 tsp turmeric 3 Cloves of garlic 2 T of dried mint 1 Can pinto beans 1 Can garbanzo beans 32 oz chicken, beef, or veggie stock 1/2 Cup of dried green lentils 11/2 tsp salt 1/2 tsp black pepper 1 Cup of coarsely chopped parsley 1 Cup of coarsely chopped cilantro 2 Cups of coarsely chopped fresh spinach 6 Medium green onions, finely chopped 8 oz of Persian Reshteh, or substitute linguine 1 Cup Kashk, or substitute sour cream

### PREP -

In a large Dutch oven or heavy-duty pot, heat oil on medium. Add onion and sauté, stirring until lightly golden.

Add the turmeric and sauté for 2 minutes, then add pinto beans, garbanzo beans, and lentils. Do not rinse the beans!

Add stock of choice, raise heat to high and bring to boil. Add spinach, cilantro, and parsley. Reduce heat to low, cover, and cook for 2 hours. Stir occasionally. Soup will be should be dense and thick.

In a separate pan, sauté garlic until aromatic. Add mint and stir for 10 seconds. Add mixture to soup; cook for another 30 minutes. Stir occasionally; ingredients tend to stick to the bottom of the pan!

Add noodles to the mixture. Cook for another 10-15 minutes. Stir occasionally.

Add Kashk (or sour cream); stir until fully mixed into the soup.

Turn off the heat and allow the Aash to sit for 10 minutes. Serve in a bowl paired with bread!





# LAVERNE AND ROBERT WILLIAMS

# FIGHTING RACISM FROM THE FIELDS

Laverne and Robert Williams' nearly 400 acres of farmland in Roscoe, Texas holds more than just the late cotton blooming in the fields and several LRE Sweetwater Wind turbines looking out over the Lone Star landscape.

Their land tells an inspiring story of racial injustice, perseverance, and ultimate validation.

Laverne and Robert own the land because they fought for it and gained it, against great odds.

In 1990, the couple, who previously owned a local restaurant, purchased 390 acres of land in Roscoe, which they bought using money borrowed the lending arm of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Robert had grown up on a cotton farm and hoped to use the land and his experience to build a successful farm.

But things didn't work out as planned. The only black farmer in the county, his crops weren't enough to pay the mortgage, and their requests to the local government agency for additional loans and technical guidance were denied or ignored.

Ultimately, the federal organization that had lent the money to purchase the farm threatened to take it away. "It was wrong," said Laverne Williams, "it was because we're black."

Robert and Laverne are fighters, and they knew they'd been wronged. They hired a lawyer who filed suit against the federal government. It was a long, contentious fight, but ultimately the U.S. Department of Agriculture admitted it had discriminated against the couple because of their race. After equally combative settlement negotiations the Williamses won and kept their farm.

At the time, Laverne Williams owned and operated Retta Mae's Homestyle Cooking, a popular local restaurant right off the Roscoe exit of Texas Interstate 20. Several companies were then developing and building large scale wind energy facilities in the area and their workers frequented Retta Mae's. One of Laverne's specialties at Retta Mae's was her Venison Chili, a popular dish which may have influenced the decision to place wind turbines on their land.

"One of the wind company men was having lunch at the restaurant and asked if we were interested in having windmills on our property," Laverne said. "Cotton farming is so weather dependent; you have a good year, then a bad year. I did my research and saw that wind turbines can be a steady source of income. I was excited."

Since then, three wind turbines, part of LRE's Sweetwater Wind 4 and 5 project, were built on their property, Laverne retired from the restaurant business and Robert retired from farming. Their cotton fields are now leased and worked by other farmers, while a second tract of land they own is used for deer hunting and pastureland.

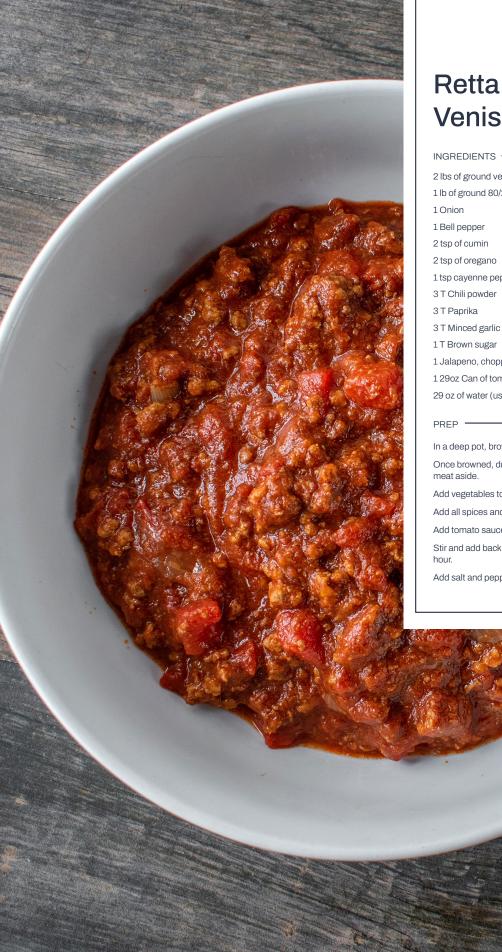
But their fight against injustice has never ended. Laverne and Robert would go on to found the Black Farmers Association, an organization representing African American farmers and their families. Their fight against discrimination was also recognized at the highest levels. They've met public figures including the former US Department of Agriculture's director of civil rights, several presidents and former Secretary of State Colin Powell.

Laverne and Robert have since shifted their focus to family and helping others. They speak proudly of their children, daughters Gwen and Crystal, their five grandchildren, and their son, Tommie Floyd, who works as Site Lead for LRE's Sweetwater Wind 4 and 5 facilities.

Their drive to speak up and help others however, has never diminished. According to Laverne she and Robert are "in the business of helping others." That business translates to providing food and money to those in need in their community and serving as a resource for clean energy in Texas.

"Anytime I have the opportunity to speak up about our experience I do," she noted. "There are too many untold stories in the cemetery. You have to speak up, you never know who you'll help."





# **Retta Mae's Venison Chili**

INGREDIENTS -

- 2 lbs of ground venison
- 1 lb of ground 80/20 beef
- 1 Bell pepper
- 2 tsp of cumin
- 2 tsp of oregano
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper

- 1 Jalapeno, chopped
- 1 29oz Can of tomato sauce
- 29 oz of water (use tomato sauce can to measure)

In a deep pot, brown your ground beef and venison.

Once browned, drain and remove meat from pan. Set meat aside.

Add vegetables to pot and cook until slightly tender

Add all spices and seasoning.

Add tomato sauce and water.

Stir and add back in beef and venison. Simmer for one

Add salt and pepper to taste.



# **12** Cincinatti Style Chili

The family recipe for Kristin's Mom's Chili actually originated from a friend of Sam Brooks' mom in Ohio.

"Kristin was my mom's best friend, and her son Wyatt was my boyhood friend," noted Sam, an LRE Development Associate. "Our family went to their house for dinner a few times and Kristin made the chili and we liked it, so mom got the recipe, and it became a family staple for us."

What makes the recipe truly unique is that along with the standard chili fixings of ground beef, beans, tomatoes and shredded cheese, it includes a healthy dose of spaghetti. The unique version of the chili was made popular by Cincinnati-based Gold Star Chili but has spread in popularity throughout the Midwest and beyond.

For Sam, growing up in Ohio, he thought all chili included spaghetti. "For a long time, I didn't know any different," he said. "That's just the way my family always made it."

As a boy, Sam's involvement with the chili was opening cans of beans and tomatoes to help his parents prepare the family favorite. Later, long after the family had moved from Ohio, he would make the dish himself, first in college as a way to avoid dining hall food, and later as a comfort meal on cold days.

"It's a recipe I consistently make," Sam said. "It's so good I always make a double batch and freeze some for later."

- Samuel Brooks

### INGREDIENTS -

### Chili:

2 1/2 Cups tomato juice
1 Big chopped can of tomatoes (don't drain)
1 lb of ground beef (or turkey)
1 Can chili beans (undrained)
1 Can pinto or kidney beans (drained)
1 Can black beans (drained)
1 Chopped medium onion (raw)
1 Chopped celery stick (optional)

# Spices:

1 tsp salt 1 tsp chili powder 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper 1/2 tsp cumin Pinch of cinnamon

# 1 lb Spaghetti

Shredded Cheddar Cheese (optional) Sour cream (optional)

### PREP

### Fry the hamburger/turkey

Add all the chili ingredients and spices together, starting with the tomatoes (for a spicier chili, double chili powder and cayenne pepper)

Bring to a boil and then let simmer for 2 hours, stirring occasionally

After 1 and a half hours have passed, bring a pot of water to boil

Cook spaghetti

Serve with spaghetti on the bottom, topped with chili then cheese and sour cream as desired





# **13** Champagne & Lemon Risotto

Patrick Kelly will never forget his wedding day, not as long as he and his wife continue to make their Champagne and Lemon Risotto dish.

According to Patrick, LRE's Director of Corporate Strategy, he and wife Felicitas (Fee) discovered the Champagne and Lemon Risotto recipe several years ago in a now forgotten cookbook and made it their own. What they will never forget, however, is the most meaningful batch they ever cooked. It was wedding worthy.

"Fee and I were married during COVID and had to significantly downsize to a backyard wedding," Patrick said. "We ended up holding the wedding rehearsal dinner in our own backyard just for our closest family and friends. Together Fee and I made a big batch of the Champagne and Lemon Risotto for dinner. We'd made it a lot of times before, but that particular day was a very memorable and meaningful recipe for us."

The risotto consists mainly of Arborio rice, butter, champagne lemon and cheese, and pairs well with roasted chicken or blackened shrimp and a dry white wine.

It also pairs well with weddings.

"Not only is the Champagne and Lemon Risotto a taste to remember, it's also downright delicious," Patrick added. "Every time we make and eat it, it reminds us of friends, family, and love."

- Patrick Kelly

### INGREDIENTS -

- 7 Cups chicken broth
- 4 T butter
- 1 Cup finely diced onion
- 1.5 Cups Arborio rice
- 1.5 Cups Champagne or Prosecco
- 1 Cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
- 1 T lemon zest (1-2 lemons)
- 1.5 T lemon juice (1-2 lemons), more to taste Kosher salt to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste

### PREP

Bring broth to a gentle simmer. Warm broth will be slowly added to the rice later.

Melt butter in a heavy pan or saucepan on medium heat. Add onion and large pinch of salt and cook until onion is translucent.

Add rice and stir constantly until rice begins to turn opaque (see through).

Add Champagne and increase heat. Cook until wine is evaporated.

Add roughly 1 cup of warm broth and continue to stir frequently and gently. Once broth is absorbed, repeat adding warm broth until rice is al dente and dish is creamy and slightly soupy.

Remove pan from heat. Add cheese, lemon zest, and lemon juice and stir until cheese is melted. Season with salt, lemon juice, and pepper to taste.

Serve immediately, topped with more Parm and pepper.





# **14** Lyon Family's Marinara Sauce

Family dinners at LRE Senior Development Associate Chase Lyon's house are as much ritual as they are taste and substance.

Especially when it comes to the Lyon Family Marinara Sauce

The recipe for the sauce originated with Chase's paternal grandmother Tisha Lyon, an Italian with deep Chicago roots, who handed it down to Chase's father Jeff, with each believing their version is best.

Their Italian roots are reflected in the overall preparation of the family sauce and the joy at the table when it's served.

"It's the recipe that had the most profound impact on my childhood," noted Chase. "It was the meal we most looked forward to and not just that day. My dad always made a lot, so we'd have leftovers for days."

"Nothing could beat coming home from school to find a fresh pot of sauce on the stove and a big smile on Dad's face. He was as excited to hear our reaction as we were to eat it."

The sauce takes some time to prepare, but Chase noted, it's well worth the time and effort. It features a mild Italian sausage, onions, peppers and more than a little love.

"It felt so genuine and heartfelt whenever my dad made the sauce," Chase added. "This is hands down the best marinara sauce I've ever had. It takes a little time but it's worth every minute of it. I'm so glad I get to share it so other people can enjoy it too."

- Chase Lyon

### INGREDIENTS -

3 Cans Diced Tomatoes
5 Cans Tomato Sauce
1 Large Sweet Vidalia Onion
1 Large Green Bell Pepper
6 Mild Italian Sausages
1 T Dried Tomato
1 tsp Dried Oregano
1 tsp Garlic Powder
Salt and Pepper
Olive Oil

#### PREP

Heat a tbs of olive oil in a large saucepan and cook sausage at 4-5 minutes per side over medium-high heat.

While sausage cooks, dice green pepper and onion.

Remove cooked sausage from pan and leave the residual grease. Add onion and pepper to pan and cook over medium-high heat until soft, ~ 4 to 5 minutes.

Add diced tomatoes to a pot and stir in. Cook for 10 minutes.

Add dried basil, dried oregano, and garlic powder to the cooked vegetables.

Using a blender, blend vegetables in a pot and add cans of tomato sauce.

Turn the burner on low heat and add the sausage back into the pot.

Let simmer for 45 minutes to an hour while stirring every 5-10 minutes.











# **WHISKEY ACRES**

# FARMING FROM SEED TO SPIRIT

What makes Jamie Walter's life as a farmer so unique is that he knows exactly where some of his harvest is headed. Walter is one owner of Whiskey Acres, an estate distillery in DeKalb, IL which produces a variety of award-winning whiskeys produced using grains from his fields.

"Everything that goes into a bottle of our whiskey comes from right here on our farm in DeKalb," he notes. "It's pretty unique in the industry. We grow the corn, the wheat, the rye, everything comes from our fields. Even the water comes from an aquifer beneath our fields. We like to say we take it from seed to spirit." Jamie began life working with his dad on the family's fifth generation farm in DeKalb. Despite striking out on his own to pursue degrees and careers in both advertising and law, he could never shake his deep roots in agriculture.

In 2013, he and his father Jim launched Whiskey Acres which now produces nearly 120,000 bottles of various blends of whiskey each year.

With his diverse background and spirit of ingenuity, Jamie never stops growing. Whiskey Acres is breeding new hybrid forms of corn for use in his spirits. He also has a constant eye on enhancing the sustainability of his farm, which is already energized by a small solar array on the grounds. The Walter family's 460 acres are now committed to being a part of LRE's 290-megawatt Red Maple Solar project in DeKalb. He will continue to lease an additional 1,500 acres nearby to produce corn, soybeans, wheat, barley and rye, some of which is sold on the market, and the remainder to help make Whiskey Acres whiskey.

"Aside from the crops we use for whiskey, much of the corn we grow is also used to produce ethanol for transportation," he said. "As a family farmer I have been and still am in the energy business. Having solar panels on our land is just a continuation of that. Instead of just growing ethanol and crops for our whiskey, we're also going to grow clean energy for the future."





### **Bourbon Slush**

INGREDIENTS -

9 cups water, divided

3 black tea bags

2 cups sugar

2 cans of frozen lemonade concentrate

1 can of frozen orange juice concentrate

2 cups of Whiskey Acres Bourbon

Ginger Ale for a splash finish

PREP -

In a small saucepan, bring 2 cups of water to boil.

Add tea bags and allow to steep for 10 minutes.

Discard teabags.

Stir in sugar until completely dissolved.

In large container, combine tea/sugar mixture, lemon and orange juice concentrates, water and bourbon

Pour into a flat Tupperware container and freeze for 4-6 hours, or over night if possible.

Serve using an ice cream scoop. Top with a splash of ginger ale.

# BOURBON WHISKEY

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## 01 Minnesota Goodbye

As a native Wisconsinite, Jared Zvonar is very familiar with the nuances of the Midwest. One of those is a cultural phenomenon known as the Midwest or Minnesota Goodbye. The Goodbye refers to a tradition focused in, but not limited to, states like Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin. It's a recognition that, mainly out of politeness, saying goodbye when leaving a social event or family gathering can take upwards of an hour. Midwesterners are known to be polite, so no one wants to leave a social setting first for fear of being rude. The result is seemingly endless goodbyes.

The drink itself doesn't take long to consume but does take a while to make. The Midwest Goodbye is made with a homemade cranberry simple syrup, gin, and prosecco. The long part is

in making the cranberry syrup, which requires mulling down real cranberry juice, sugar and several spices, including cinnamon, anise, cardamom, and cloves.

"It's a great holiday drink and delicious," Jared said, "and it makes your house smell amazing, like mulling spices, when you're making it."

Both Jared and his fiancée Abby make the cocktail in batches, and it's become one of their favorites, especially during the holiday season. Jared, however, warns that with both gin and prosecco, the cocktail can be a little powerful. "You have to be careful with the Midwest Goodbye," he warned, "this one will get you snookered faster than the ice freezes on Lake Minnetonka."

-Jared Zvonar

#### INGREDIENTS ·

For the Spiced Cranberry Cordial:

- 3 Cinnamon sticks, broken in half
  2 Whole star anise pods
  5 Cardamom pods
  3 Whole cloves
  1 Cup water
  2 Cups sugar
  Peel of one orange
- 2 Cups cranberries
- 1 Cup fresh juice from about 8 limes
- 3/4 Teaspoon kosher salt

#### For the Cocktail Mix (8 Servings):

1 Cup spiced cranberry cordial 1 Cup fresh-squeezed juice from 2 pink grapefruits 1 1/2 Cups London Dry gin

#### To Serve:

1 Bottle chilled dry sparkling wine, to top Fresh cranberries threaded on cocktail picks

#### PREP

Spiced Cranberry Cordial: Add cinnamon sticks, star anise, cardamom, and cloves to a saucepan and toast over medium heat, shaking pan frequently, until fragrant; make sure not to let them burn. Add water, sugar, orange peel, cranberries, lime juice, and salt and stir over medium-high heat until sugar dissolves. Bring to a simmer and cook, using a wooden spoon to smash fruit against side of pan, until all of the cranberries have popped. Remove from heat and let cool completely, 1 to 2 hours. Strain through a fine-mesh strainer into a resealable container. Cordial can be kept up to 3 weeks in the refrigerator.

**Cocktail Mix:** Up to 2 hours before serving, mix cordial, grapefruit juice, and gin in a pitcher, bottle, or resealable container. Use immediately or store up to 2 hours in the refrigerator. Cocktail mix makes 8 servings; feel free to double the recipe.

**Cocktail:** Fill a Collins glass with ice and add 3 1/2 ounces Cocktail Mix and 2 ounces chilled sparkling wine. Stir gently and garnish with skewered cranberries.





## 02 Italian Margarita

After living and working for a number of years in the cold climate of upstate New York, Bill Branca, LRE's VP of Development Engineering, needed something to relax and warm both he and his wife Caroline.

Enter the Margarita.

A long-time fan of the tequila, triple sec and lime juice cocktail, Bill had a standard margarita recipe he used for years. But Caroline wanted something a little sweeter, so necessity being the mother of invention, he developed his own alternative Margarita – the Italian version.

While Italian Margaritas are not completely rare, Bill's personal version is. To augment a little sweetness to the usually tart drink he adds a touch of two sweet liqueurs, Amaretto and Grand Marnier.

"It's refreshing and smooth," he says. "and my wife likes it."

So do a lot of others. Bill has shared his recipe with other Margarita aficionados including some LRE employees, and it's a hit. In fact, LRE Civil Engineering Manager Karla Brawner was so taken by it she created a personalized Margarita container for Bill which she called the a Yum Yum jug.

"You can find an Italian Margarita at some bars and restaurants," Bill adds, "but I think mine might be the best."

- Bill Branca

#### INGREDIENTS -

12oz can of limeade

12oz of tequila

6oz of Cointreau

6oz of Amaretto

24oz of water

PREP

Mix and keep in a jug in the fridge and shake it up and pour over ice when you are ready!

You can experiment with the sweetness by adjusting the Amaretto to your liking.

You could also do this frozen in a blender with ice. Give it a try.

You could also use fresh lime juice but you would need to experiment with the amount.









## Grandma Dimp's Peanut Butter Pie

There was a time when the recipe for Grandma Dimp's Peanut Butter Pie was a well-kept secret.

Grandma Dimp, whose real name was Bernice Allen, was the paternal grandmother of LRE CEO Jason Allen. She was a celebrity baker in her hometown of Columbus Grove, Ohio where everyone knew Grandma Dimp's pies, cakes and cookies. They just didn't know the recipes for them.

"Grandma Dimp was super secretive about her recipes," Jason said. "She wouldn't even share them with family. But she was a great baker and would make pies, cakes and cookies for family gatherings and holidays. Plus, whenever there was a church bake sale she'd handmake 15 angel food cakes in her kitchen. Everyone loved them."

One of the distinctions that set Grandma Dimp's pies apart was her habit of placing chocolate shavings on top as a finishing touch, including on her peanut butter pie. "She was famous for that," Jason said.

Allen family lore has it that Grandma Dimp's Peanut Butter Pie made its way to the restaurant serving the U.S. House of Representative where it's allegedly still served today.

- Jason Allen

#### INGREDIENTS \_\_\_\_\_\_ 3 oz cream cheese 1 Cup powdered sugar 1/2 cup peanut butter 1/2 cup milk 1 cup whipping cream (whipped)

Graham cracker crust

PREP

With a mixer beat the cream cheese until soft and fluffy.

Add powdered sugar and peanut butter. Slowly add in milk. Fold in the whipped cream. Pour into the graham cracker crust. Freeze until firm. Cover with plastic wrap after frozen.

To serve, set out 8 minutes.

Pie will keep well in the freezer for 1 week.









## 02 Zucchini Bread

Several years ago, Andrea Buhr's Aunt Lucy decided to ask everyone in their family for a favorite recipe with the offerings being combined into a family cookbook collection. As it happened, two of the recipes, from both Aunt Lucy and Aunt Mary, were for zucchini bread, playing into two of Andrea's great passions – growing vegetables and cooking.

Andrea, LRE Director of Project Engineering, used the two recipes as the basis for her own unique zucchini bread, which she named "I let the zucchini grow too big again bread."

"Anyone who grows zucchini like me knows how quickly it can get out of hand," Andrea said. "If you don't watch it closely your tiny zucchini can grow to be over a foot long seemingly overnight. You want to pick it to roast or cook between five and seven inches, but the larger ones get tougher and just don't roast as nicely."

Zucchini bread is a great solution to that problem. For many years Andrea grew and harvested her own zucchini and made the bread every week in season. She continues to bake regularly and has now added her three young children Delilah (10), Conrad (8) and Orson (4) as partners. She does garden less, though, using store bought or rescued produce, but that leaves her more time for raising and loving her three baking helpers.

"My kids have always enjoyed both harvesting the zucchini and helping make the bread," she concluded. "On a lot of fronts, it's a real family recipe. And the best part is that my kids love it, and it's the only way my husband will eat zucchini."

- Andrea Buhr

#### INGREDIENTS ·

- 2 Cups sugar
- 1 T cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. Kosher salt
- 3 Cups flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 3 Eggs beaten
- 1 Cups coconut oil
- 2 Cups of grated zucchini
- 1 T vanilla
- 1 Cup chopped pecans and/or semi-sweet
- Chocolate chips (Optional)

PREP

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

Grease two standard bread loaf pans and set aside.

Grate zucchini with a cheese grater. I leave the peel on because I like the little specs of color and added fiber. If your zucchini is so large that you have big slimy seeds, cut the zucchini in half first and spoon out the guts to discard first. Set grated zucchini aside.

Mix dry ingredients together in large mixing bowl.

Mix wet ingredients excluding zucchini in a separate bowl.

Pour wet ingredients and grated zucchini into the dry ingredients, and mix with a wooden spoon until fully incorporated.

Optional - fold in pecans and/or semi-sweet chocolate chips.

Pour half mixture into each prepared bread loaf pan and bake for 1 hour or until a wooden toothpick comes out clean. Set pans on drying rack to cool before removing.





## Aunt Robin's Best Butter Cake

When LRE Project Finance Analyst Jacob Kaller tried his hand at making his Aunt Robin's Best Butter Cake, he said the result was good, but something was missing.

That something was his family.

Jacob comes from a big family, with nearly a dozen cousins and a handful of aunts and uncles. His Aunt Robin in particular has the reputation for outstanding baking.

Her butter cake has been a continual treat at family gatherings for years and a family favorite around the table.

Her recipe is fairly simple, he noted, consisting of mainly yellow cake mix, cream cheese vanilla extract, butter, and powdered sugar. That blend takes a bit of mixing, Jacob pointed out, but the end result is "real gooey butter cake goodness."

"Recipes like these are an important way for our employees to connect with our communities and highlight our unique backgrounds and stories," he said. "When I thought about submitting a recipe, I thought right away about my family, Aunt Robin's Butter Cake, and those afternoons together spent hiking, going to the beach, and joking around the table all together. It reminds me that I'm part of a special community, and that I'm fortunate to have so many great memories of time spent with family and friends. I hope this recipe inspires and helps create all the same fond memories for those who try it."

- Jacob Kaller

#### INGREDIENTS ·

1 (18.25 oz) Package yellow cake mix

3 Eggs

16 T melted, divided butter

1 (8 oz) Package softened cream cheese

1 tsp vanilla

1 (16 oz) Box powdered sugar

PREP

Preheat oven to 350\* F.

Combine the cake mix, 1 egg and 8 tablespoons butter and mix well with an electric mixer.

Pat the mixture into the bottom of a lightly greased 13 by 9-inch baking pan.

In a large bowl, beat the cream cheese until smooth. Add 2 eggs, vanilla and 8 tablespoons butter and beat together.

To this bowl, Add the powdered sugar and mix well.

Spread over cake batter and bake for 40-50 minutes.

Make sure not to over bake as the center should be a little gooey.



## 04 Nana Pacifico's Italian Biscotti

Kelly Pacifico, Origination Lead for LRE's Central Region, has a shared lineage. Her father's side of the family is Italian, her mother's Irish. "I'm half Irish, half Italian," she said. "I always say I'm Gaelic and garlic."

While the Notre Dame grad is deeply proud of her Irish roots, for her recipe, Kelly chose to share her Italian side, and her family recipe for Nana Pacifico's Italian Biscotti.

The Biscotti recipe originates from Kelly's paternal grandmother, Barbara Pacifico, a skilled Italian baker from New Jersey. Kelly has fond memories of standing in Nana's upstairs white kitchen in the Garden State working for hours to learn to make biscotti from the master. Later, when Kelly began making the family biscotti on her own, she would sometimes call Nana for tips. Nana's biscotti recipe is a go-to for Kelly, an avid baker who was nicknamed "Bakezilla" in high school for her baking passion. Initially Nana would always make her biscotti for Christmas and Easter gatherings, but it's now become Kelly's go-to for special occasions, including bringing a batch over when first meeting her soon-to-be husband's parents.

"I developed a passion for baking at a young age, inspired by my memories of making Christmas cookies with my dad, Irish soda bread for St. Paddy's Day, and helping Nana make biscotti around the holidays," Kelly noted. "I hope to continue making this recipe with my own children one day. It will aways remind me of family and Nana in particular. I hope others can enjoy this bite of my Irish-Italian heritage. Mangia!"

- Kelly Pacifico







INGREDIENTSBiscotti dough (makes 2 loafs):6 Eggs1/2 Cup of vegetable oil1 Stick margarine (cold, cannot be butter)1 1/2 Cups of sugar4 1/2 Cups of flour5 tsp baking powder2 T of almond extract OR anise extractIcing drizzle:1 1/2 Cups confectioners sugar2 T milk1/2 tsp margarine (just a pea-sized amount)1 tsp of almond/anise flavor, respectivelyAlmond slivers/rainbow sprinkles to garnish

PREP

#### Biscotti Loaf:

Preheat oven to 375 degree F.

Beat eggs, oil, margarine, extract, and sugar together.

Gradually add Flour and baking powder, while continuously beating (you may have to scrap batter/ margarine off of the beater or sides).

Once fully mixed, separate dough into two loaves, slightly needing/tossing it together. Drop each loaf onto it's own, ungreased, cookie sheet. The loaf will feel wet and should look like a large oval once dropped onto the sheet.

Bake for 15-20 mins, watching for a slightly golden edge.

Take out of oven and leave on tray to cool for a few minutes. Once the loaves feel secure enough, slide off cookie sheet onto wooden cutting board/platter to all to fully cool.

Wait for loaves to be completely cool; this will help prevent the drizzle from running.

#### Drizzle:

Mix confections, milk, margarine, and extract together on low/med heat on the stovetop.

Have almond sliver/rainbow sprinkles ready, as you will follow the hot drizzle immediately with the topping so they solidify together.

Slowly pour icing over biscotti loaf and follow directly behind with garnish sprinkle.

Allow to fully cool, then slice horizontally (either in 1 long row or once vertically and then in 2 medium rows).





## ED GUINN

### WRITING A NEW HISTORY AT AN OLD GEORGIA FARMHOUSE

Ed Guinn's heart is in two places at once – both the past and the future.

In the present, Ed sits in the dining room of the farmhouse on his family's property in Butler, Georgia. Behind him, the long-standing walls of the house have been laid bare, exposing not just the original pine wood, but the place where, as a young boy, Ed signed his name more than 50 years ago.

"I was born and raised here," he says. "My parents and grandparents lived and died here. There's an awful lot of memories in this house."

Ed and his family are adding to that, holding on to the past while looking ahead to a future where renewable energy will also play a significant role. A portion of the Guinn farm has been committed to LRE's Sandhills II Solar project, a proposed 200-megawatt renewable energy facility. As part of their agreement with LRE, solar panels will be placed on some of the land, but the house and its heart and history will remain.

"It would grieve me to know my family would ever sell this house," he says. "It will always be home."

The Guinn family farmhouse, built in 1904 by a local dentist, sits on 100 acres in Taylor County in Central Georgia, an area defined by pecan and pine trees and a fierce pride in the Peach State. Ed's grandfather Austin E. Guinn, Sr. purchased the farm in 1948 from a family that had had lost it during the Depression.

The property is scattered with old pecan trees, some of which are estimated to be a century old and once produced a small crop and the fruit of homemade pecan pies. The family's history at the farm is long and diverse with deep connection to the local community. Ed's grandfather was a chicken farmer. Ed's father was a farmer who raised corn and wheat on the property while also working full-time as a forest ranger with the Georgia Forestry Commission planting pine trees throughout the state. Ed would leave to earn a degree in political science at Georgia Southwest College, then return for an MBA. But Taylor County would always be his home.

Ed worked with his dad for several years after college, planting up to 10,000 pine trees a year in Georgia. He would eventually land a job in Regulatory Affairs with the area's telephone company where he worked for 30 years.

After retiring he's continued to serve his community. In 2015 Ed was appointed Mayor Pro Tem of Butler's City Council. He also serves as Finance Minister for his church and works part-time for a local funeral home.



"I want to serve," he says. "I believe in making an investment in people and the community. You always get a good return."

Ed continues to be fully invested in the family farm, which he owns along with his sisters Ellen Peacock and Kathy Mathis. Ed is there nearly every day, refinishing furniture in a back barn and restoring the home to its roots. The farm also serves as a gathering place for family holidays with his wife, children, sisters, two grandchildren, and his commitment to the past and the future.

"I love Georgia history, my family and this community," he concludes. "This house is a labor of love and holds a significant part of our history. I believe the solar project will just add to that. I want to do everything I can to preserve it."

### **Pecan Pie**

INGREDIENTS ·

- Stick of margarine
   Large eggs
   Cup of sugar
   tsp vinegar
   tsp vanilla
   Cup nuts, chopped
- Homemade pie shell or pre-bought

#### PREP

Mix melted margarine and sugar. Add eggs, vanilla and vinegar. Add nuts. Put in unbaked pie shell. Bake at 350°F for 30 minutes or until set.





## 05 Norwegian Rice Mush

Brent Ethington, a Plant Manager for LRE, traces much of his heritage to Norway. With Scandinavian roots, he recalls his great grandmother and grandmother making traditional Norwegian delicacies such as lefse, the Norwegian pancake, and krumkake, a Norwegian wafer-like cookie. His mother also cooked Norwegian, using the family recipe to make Norwegian Risgrøt.

Risgrøt, or Norwegian Rice Mush, is a staple of traditional Norwegian households. It's a simple, sweet porridge made mainly from rice, sugar, milk, butter and cinnamon. It's traditionally reserved for lunch on the day before Christmas.

Working in operations in the energy industry has meant Brent has moved often throughout his career, and with that kind of mobility he drifted from family traditions.

"I hadn't had Risgrøt in 15 years, but I thought of it when asked for a recipe," he said. "I reached out to my mom and she sent me the family recipe. I wanted to make sure I got the genuine one."

At Christmas that year he made his mom's recipe, and like him as a boy, his children loved it. "Honestly, I'd forgotten about it," Brent said, "It's such a great treat in cold weather especially. Tasting it again brought me back to my Norwegian roots. Now that I've rediscovered it, I hope to keep it with us and keep making it for a good long while."

- Brent Ethington

#### INGREDIENTS -

- 1 Cup long grain white rice
- 2 Cups water
- 4 T sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/2 tsp ground cardamom (optional)
- 6 Cups whole milk
- 2-4 T butter
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- Berries (optional)

#### PREP '

Add rice and Water to large pot. Bring water to boil. Reduce heat to simmer stirring until water is absorbed into rice. Approximately 10 minutes.

Add sugar, vanilla, and cardamom, stirring to incorporate.

Bring heat back up to medium low adding 1/3 cup of milk at a time spaced a few minutes apart. Stir constantly to prevent burning the milk.

Once all the milk is incorporated and liquid has absorbed into the rice, spoon the rice into bowls. sprinkle each bowl with 1/2 teaspoon of ground cinnamon, additional sugar to taste, 1 tablespoon of butter on top of the cinnamon sugar mixture.

Add fresh or dried fruit of your choice. (Optional)





## 06 Apple Crumble

When LRE Development Associate Isabella Avilez is making her family recipe French Apple Crumble Pie, she's once again a young girl in her parent's kitchen peeling and cutting fresh apples.

The family's Apple Crumble Pie recipe originally came from her aunt who discovered it in an old cookbook. When she was young, Isabella's aunt would visit her family in Iowa, and Isabella would soon be happily peeling.

"It's a simple recipe," Isabella noted. "You don't need to go to a specialty store, it's just five or six ingredients. Well, maybe one more since my dad puts ice cream on it. It's easy and delicious and definitely has a history with my family."

Apple crumble pie is a close relative of classic apple pie but has the added gift of a buttery, streusely, crumbly delicious topping. It's often served in Fall when apples are in abundance, but can be made anytime you want a sweet, cinnamon, buttery classic.

For Isabella, whose parents are Japanese and Mexican, the crumble's timing doesn't really matter – it's the heart behind the recipe that does. "We make it for family gatherings like Christmas and Thanksgiving but you can have it anytime," she said. "I make it myself now, but it always takes me back to my family's kitchen as a young girl peeling and cutting apples. It really is a comfort food."

- Isabella Avilez

#### INGREDIENTS ·

#### Pie:

Deep dish pie crust (homemade or pre-bought)

6 Medium apples (Granny smith preferred)

- 1/4 Cup Flour
- ¾ Cup Sugar
- ½ T Cinnamon
- ½ T Nutmeg
- Pinch of Salt

#### Topping:

1/2 Cup Unsalted Butter (refrigerated)

1 Cup Flour

½ Cup Brown Sugar

#### PREP -

Preheat oven to 425 F.

Peel and thinly slice apples.

To make the pie filling, mix ¼ cup of flour, sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt in a large bowl. Add the sliced apples and coat in filling.

To make topping, combine unsalted butter, flour, and brown sugar and mix until it resembles a crumble (Do not over mix as then it will become a dough).

Place the deep dish pie crust on a baking sheet and put pie filling in deep dish pie crust and top with crumb topping.

Cover the top of the pie with aluminum foil, and place in the over for 1 hour.

After baking, let cool for a bit then enjoy! Best served hot with vanilla ice cream.





## **07** Sour Cream Apple Pie

Sour cream and apple pie may sound a bit incongruous. Even LRE Public Affairs Manager Ben Lenet, who shared the recipe, finds the combination and the name a bit difficult to grasp.

"My grandmother was quite a pie baker," he said, "but clearly not the greatest pie namer."

Naming aside, Ben describes the Sour Cream Apple Pie as a 'showstopper.'

"Those brave enough to make it and try it will be greatly rewarded," he said.

Grandma Lu is Ben's maternal grandmother, Lucille Rosenberg, a native of Louisville, Kentucky, and an accomplished baker. Her Sour Cream Apple Pie recipe has been handed down through generations and is now made not only by Ben and his mother, but his sister, and niece.

According to Ben, the pie has been a standard desert at Thanksgiving and other family holidays for as long as he can remember. "Someone in the family makes it every year," he said, "it's a holiday staple."

According to Ben the sour cream added to the apples may seem unusual, but it mellows the sweetness of the apples and truly makes for a delicious pairing.

"Unfortunately, Grandma Lu passed away when I was very young," Ben added, "so I don't really have too many memories of her. But I remember her through the sour cream apple pie recipe. When I eat it, it tastes like family."

- Ben Lenet

#### INGREDIENTS ·

1/3rd Cup of flour + 2 tablespoons of flour, separated

1/4th tsp of salt

3/4th Cup of sugar + 1/3rd cup of sugar, separated

1 Egg

1 Cup of sour cream

1 tsp of vanilla

1/4th tsp of nutmeg

3 Cups of sliced Granny Smith apples

1 tsp of cinnamon

1/4th Cup of cold, cubed butter

PREP

#### Filling:

Mix 2 tablespoons of flour, 1/4th tsp of salt, 3/4th cup of sugar, 1 egg, 1 cup of sour cream, 1 tsp of vanilla, 1/4th tsp of nutmeg, and 3 cups of sliced Granny Smith apples. Spread over any pie crust of your choice.

For streusel topping:

Mix and blend 1/3rd cup of sugar, 1 tsp of cinnamon, and 1/3rd cup of flour. Once dry ingredients are blended, cut in 1/4th cup of cold, cubed butter with forks or a pastry blender until chunks of butter are the size of peas.

Spread over filled pie.

Bake at 400F for 15 minutes and then 350F for an additional 30 minutes. CAREFULLY brown underneath the broiler.





## **CORNERSTONE AG** BUILT ON FAITH, FAMILY, AND BLUEBERRIES

Three pillars firmly support Cornerstone Ag Enterprises in Grand Junction, Michigan: Faith, family, and blueberries.

Cornerstone Ag was formed in 1986 by the Bodtke family, a tight-knit group with deep farming roots in Michigan's fruit belt. The company manages the family's numerous agricultural business interests and holdings, none more prominent than blueberries.

The anchor of Cornerstone Ag is the 3,000-acre Bodtke family farm, producing a blend of corn, soybeans, timber and 600 acres of blueberries.

The farm produces an average of five million pounds of blueberries each year and is in partnership with blueberry farms in Washington and Oregon. Working with local co-op, MBG Marketing, Bodtke blueberries are sold under the Naturipe brand throughout the U.S. and in Canada.

Even with the farm's growth and success, nothing is more important to the Bodtke clan than their faith and their family. The farm began operating in 1969 when family patriarch Ron and his wife Phyllis moved with their four children from the suburbs of Detroit to Grand Junction. They purchased a 40-acre farm which included 12 acres of blueberries. Over the years, the family purchased additional land. While Ron tried everything from cattle to cranberries to hogs, it was blueberries that stuck.

#### And family. Always family.

Ron and Phyllis passed away several years ago. The family business is now run by three of their children, brothers Larry and Tom and sister Kay who serve as co-CEOs. As the three move toward retirement, a family succession plan is already in place with three nephews set to take over.

"This has always been a family business and one based in our faith," said Larry Bodtke. "The name of the company - Cornerstone – represents our faith in Jesus. Jesus is the cornerstone of who we are in business and life." "My dad insisted that before any of us could work here we'd have to leave the farm and take other jobs to broaden our experiences. We didn't have to come back to the farm, but we all did come home. It was our family. It was our faith."

"My brother, sister and I have developed a trust over the years," he added. "We make all major decisions together. We've always said if we got to a point where we couldn't get along in business, we'd still always be family."

While continuing to grow and market blueberries, the Bodtkes will also be adding something new to the family farm over the next several years – solar energy. The family has committed 1,200 acres to be used as part of LRE's Lakeview Solar project, a proposed 250MW solar energy facility currently in the early development stages. The remainder of the family's land will continue to grow blueberries and other crops.



"You have your time and your heart in this land," added Larry. "But growing fruit can be a cyclical business. Solar is an opportunity for us to diversify and look to the future for our family."

"When we moved out here my parents began to take their faith more seriously, they focused on living lives that were pleasing to God. They instilled that in us. Blueberries and farming have been very good to us and we're grateful. But there's more important things than economic status. There's our family and there's our faith. That's where our priorities are."

### **Blueberry Pie**

#### INGREDIENTS -

Crust:	Filling:
1 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> Cups of flour	1qt Fresh blueberries
½ Cup of vegetable oil	1 Cup of sugar
2 Tablespoons Milk	3/4 cup of water
1 ½ Tablespoons Sugar	3 Tablespoons of flour
	Pinch of salt

#### PREP

#### Crust:

Combine flour, salt, oil, milk, and sugar, and mix to form pie dough

Press out into a 9-inch pie pan.

Prick the bottom and sides with a fork.

Bake at 375° F for 10-15 minutes or until lightly browned.

#### Filling:

Wash blueberries, pick over and drain.

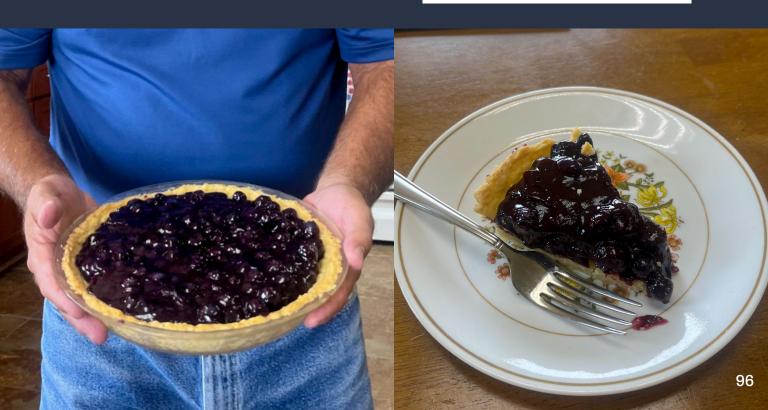
Bring to boil 1 cup of berries, sugar, and ¼ cup water. Make flour paste of ½ cup cold water, flour, and salt. Add flour paste to the boiled mixture, stirring quickly with a whisk.

Cook until thickened. Let the filling cool.

When cold, fold in the remaining blueberries.

Spoon into baked pie shell. Refrigerate.

When ready to serve, garnish with whipped cream.



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