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Eat more pecans



TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

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EAT MORE PECANS

Extension Foods and Nutrition Specialists
The Texas A&M University System

Pecans have a place in the well-planned diet because of their good flavor, food value and many uses in main dishes, breads, cakes, cookies, desserts, salads and candies.

Nutrition studies show that pecans provide essential vitamins and minerals and are particularly good as energy food. The American Indians who first used pecans for food were aware of their nutritional benefits.

Cabeza de Vaca, one of the early Spanish explorers wrote, "The Indians came to the place of which we had been told, to eat walnuts (as pecans were then known). These are found with a kind of small grain, and this is the substance of the people for 2 months in the year, without any other thing."

While no one food provides all the nutrients needed for good health, pecans are a good source of protein, phosphorus, thiamin, unsaturated fats and energy. Pecans also provide some iron, calcium, vitamin A, potassium, riboflavin, niacin and small amounts of vitamin C. Although pecans are a high energy food, they have fewer calories than most nuts.

Two general types of pecans are available — native and papershell.

Two and one-half pounds of native pecans in the shell yield a pound of meats (about 4 cups).

Two pounds of paper shell pecans yield 1 pound of meats.

MAIN DISHES

Meat Loaf With Pecan Stuffing

- 1½ pounds ground beef
- ½ cup chopped green pepper
- ½ cup chopped onion
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 cup white bread crumbs
- ½ cup milk
- 2 eggs
- ¼ cup fat
- 2 cups whole wheat bread crumbs
- ½ cup chopped celery
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ¾ cup meat stock or water
- ½ cup chopped pecans

Combine beef, green pepper, onion, salt, sauce, white bread crumbs, milk and 1 egg. Mix thoroughly. Place one-half of this mixture in bottom of greased loaf pan. Combine 1 egg, fat, whole wheat bread crumbs, celery, black pepper and meat stock or water.

Add chopped pecans and mix thoroughly. Spread on top of meat mixture. Arrange remaining meat mixture on top of pecan stuffing. Bake at 350° F. 1½ hours and cool slightly before removing from pan. Serves 10.

Pecan Stuffed Peppers

- 6 green peppers
- 1½ cups cooked rice
- 1½ cups chopped pecans
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- ¾ cup tomato juice
- 3 tablespoons shortening
- 2 pounds ground beef
- 1½ tablespoons minced onion
- 3 tablespoons celery chopped
fine
- ¾ cup water or ¾ cup tomato
juice

Boil green peppers, which have been seeded and cored, until just tender enough to prick with a fork. Drain and keep warm. Make stuffing by combining rice, pecans, salt and tomato juice. Saute in shortening, beef, onion and celery.

Mix meat mixture with rice mixture, stirring thoroughly but, with minimum handling. Stuff peppers and place in greased baking pan. Pour ¾ cup of water or ¾ cup tomato juice into pan around peppers. Bake for ½ hours and serve with sauce. Serves 6.

Pecan Stuffing for Turkey, Capon or Roasting Chicken

Turkey, capon or roasting chicken

- 4 cups water
- 2 stalks celery
- 1 peeled carrot, cut into ½-inch
slices
- 1 small onion, cut into quarters
- 1 cup butter or margarine
- 2 cups thinly sliced celery
- 2 cups chopped onions
- ½ cup finely chopped parsley
- 1 cup long-grain rice
- 4 cups small torn corn bread
pieces
- 2 cups small torn whole wheat
bread pieces
- 2 cups chopped pecans
- 2 cans (4 oz. each) mushroom
stems and pieces, undrained
- 3 teaspoons poultry seasoning
- 1½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper

Combine turkey, capon or roasting chicken neck and gizzard, water, stalks of celery, carrot slices and onion quarters in saucepan; cover and simmer gently until gizzard is tender. Set aside to cool stock. Discard vegetables and neck piece. Cut gizzard into small pieces.

Melt ½ cup butter or margarine in fry pan. Add sliced celery, chopped onions and parsley; cook over low heat until tender but not brown. Set aside. Brown unwashed rice in remaining ½ cup butter in fry pan or Dutch oven. Add poultry stock and enough water to make 3 cups liquid.

Simmer 10 minutes, stirring constantly. Combine in large mixing bowl the breads, celery-onion mixture, rice and stock, pecans, mushrooms, seasonings; mix well. Season cavity of bird with salt; stuff loosely with dressing; skewer and roast poultry as desired. Yields 12 cups stuffing.

VEGETABLES

French Butter Pecan Sauce

- ½ cup butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons chives
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- ¼ teaspoon marjoram
- 2 to 4 tablespoons lemon juice
- ½ cup chopped pecans

Combine all ingredients; heat to blend flavors. Serve over cooked vegetables. Makes 1 cup sauce.

SALADS AND RELISHES

Waldorf Mold

- 1 package lemon-flavored gelatin
- 2 teaspoons vinegar
- 2 cups diced unpeeled red apples
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- ½ cup mayonnaise

Dissolve gelatin in 1 cup hot water. Add 1 cup cold water and vinegar. Chill until slightly thick. Combine apples, celery, pecans and mayonnaise; fold into gelatin. Turn into oiled mold and chill until set. Serve on salad greens with additional mayonnaise. Serves 8.

Cranberry Salad

- 2 packages lemon-flavored gelatin
- 4 cups water
- 1½ cups sugar
- 2 cups fresh cranberries, ground
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped nuts
- 1 orange, ground rind and all
- 1 cup crushed pineapple

Dissolve gelatin in 2 cups hot water. Add 2 cups cold water and chill. Combine sugar, cranberries, celery, nuts, orange and pineapple. Add to partially congealed or rather thickened gelatin. Pour into mold and chill. Serve on lettuce leaf topped with salad dressing thinned with cream and/or pineapple juice.

Pecan Fruit Salad

- 1 can shredded pineapple
- ½ pound pecans
- ½ pound marshmallows, diced
- 4 egg yolks
- 4 tablespoons sugar
- 4 tablespoons vinegar
- ½ pint whipped cream

Combine pineapple, pecans and marshmallows and refrigerate overnight. Make a dressing by combining egg, sugar and vinegar. Cook together until thick and smooth. Cool; add to salad mixture; then add whipped cream. Place in refrigerator tray and freeze. Serve on lettuce with cherry garnish. Serves 6.

Pecan-Cranberry Relish

- 4 cups fresh cranberries
- 2 seeded, quartered unpeeled oranges
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup fresh pecans, broken

Put cranberries and oranges through food chopper using medium blade. Add sugar and pecans. Blend these ingredients well and store in covered container in your refrigerator. Relish will keep several weeks.

DESSERTS

Pecan Sponge Cake

- ½ pound shelled pecans*
- 6 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon cream of tartar
- 10 eggs
- 1¼ cups sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 375° F. Line bottom of a 10-inch tube pan with waxed paper. Grease the paper. Grind the nuts in a food grinder, using medium blade. Sift flour and cream of tartar together and mix with the ground nuts. Separate the eggs. Beat the yolks, adding the sugar gradually. This requires about 15 minutes with electric mixer. Add vanilla flavoring. The yolk mixture should be light in color, thick and very smooth. Beat egg whites until they hold a precise peak. Sprinkle flour-nut mixture over beaten egg yolks; pile beaten egg whites over this and gently mix or fold all ingredients together, but only enough to disperse all patches of egg white. Pour batter into pan, leveling the top with a rubber spatula. Bake 50 minutes in 375° F. oven or until cake tester comes out dry when inserted in center of cake. Invert cake on wire rack. Cool about 1 to 2 hours.

This unusual cake can be served alone, or with a scoop of ice cream or whipped cream on top.

*Nuts must be weighed. Cup measurement will not work.

Pecan-Cranberry Dessert

- 1 pound cranberries
- 2 cups white seedless grapes
- 1 cup pecans, coarsely chopped
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 cups marshmallows, cut up
- 1 cup cream, whipped

Grind cranberries, add sugar and put in refrigerator overnight, or set about 4 hours. Then add other ingredients and fold in the whipped cream. Place back in refrigerator to chill before serving. Serves 15. Holds up well in refrigerator for second day.

Pecan Cake

- 1¾ cups butter or margarine
- 2 cups sugar
- 4 cups shelled pecans
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 2 cups white raisins
- 4 cups flour
- 6 eggs
- 4 tablespoons lemon extract
- 4 ounces candied cherries
- 4 ounces candied pineapple

Cream butter or margarine with sugar until smooth and fluffy. Sift dry ingredients together and mix with fruit and nuts. Add well-beaten eggs to creamed mixture. Add flour mixture. Mix well until fruits and nuts are coated with cake batter.

Line bottom of pans with greased wax paper. Grease sides of pans. Bake in 10-inch tube pan at 325° F. 2 to 2½ hours. The cake may be baked in 1-pound bread pans at 300° F. for about 2 hours.

Banana Pecan Cake

- ½ cup shortening
- 1½ cups sugar
- 2 eggs
- ¾ cup mashed bananas
- 2 cups sifted cake flour
- ¼ teaspoon baking powder
- ¾ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ¼ cup buttermilk
- ¾ cup chopped pecans

Cream shortening. Add sugar gradually; cream well. Add eggs one at a time, beating thoroughly after each addition. Add bananas. Sift together flour, baking powder, soda and salt. Add alternately with buttermilk to which vanilla has been added. Stir in pecans.

Pour into two greased 9-inch cake pans and bake for 30-35 minutes in a moderate oven, 350° F. Remove from pans and cool. Spread whipped cream between layers and on top and sides of cake, or frost with 7-minute frosting.

Texas Pecan Pie

- 1 cup pecans, halved or chopped
- 3 eggs
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 cup light or dark corn syrup
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ¼ cup melted butter or margarine

Beat eggs. Add sugar and syrup, then salt and vanilla and last, the melted fat. Place the pecans in the bottom of an unbaked pie crust. Add the filling and bake at 350° F. for 50 to 60 minutes. The nuts rise to the top of the filling and form a crusted layer.

Pecan Pie Crust

- 2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ⅔ cup shortening
- 4 tablespoons cold water
- 1 cup finely chopped pecans

Sift flour and salt together. Cut in shortening, sprinkle water over mixture. Mix with a fork. Press into smooth ball. Divide and roll two crusts. Sprinkle pecans over top and roll again lightly, being careful not to tear pastry. Fit one crust into a 9-inch pie pan and pour in filling. Top with the other crust. Good for apple pie.

Pecan Chocolate Torte

- 6 eggs, separated
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ¾ cup sugar

1 cup sifted all-purpose flour

1 cup finely chopped pecans

Chopped pecans for topping

Separate eggs. Combine egg yolks, salt and vanilla; beat until very light and lemon-colored. Beat $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar in gradually; continue beating until very light and fluffy (about 5 minutes at medium speed). Stir in flour and pecans. Beat egg whites until they form soft peaks; beat in remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar gradually and continue beating until glossy. Fold into egg yolk mixture.

Divide batter equally between three greased and floured 8-inch layer pans. Spread just enough to level. Bake at 300° F. about 20 to 25 minutes. Cool in pans on rack 10 minutes; remove from pans and cool thoroughly on rack. Put layers together with chocolate creme filling using one-third of filling on each layer. Sprinkle top with chopped pecans.

Chill in refrigerator until filling is firm. Scrape excess filling off torte. Cover sides of torte with chocolate frosting. Chill and serve. Serves 8 to 10.

CANDIES AND COOKIES

Pecan Brittle

3 cups sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt

2 cups pecans, chopped

**2 tablespoons butter or
margarine**

Heat sugar with salt in a heavy frying pan over high heat until sugar begins to lump. Lower heat and stir until sugar melts. Stir in pecans. Add butter. Pour immediately onto greased cookie sheet, quickly spreading out thin. When cool, break into pieces of desired size.

Pecan-Meringue Chews

2 egg whites

2 cups brown sugar

4 cups pecans, chopped

Beat egg whites until stiff. Fold in brown sugar; add pecans. Drop by spoonfuls onto greased baking sheet and bake at 375° F., until golden brown; about 10 to 12 minutes.

Pecan Clusters

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter or margarine

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar

1 egg

$1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons vanilla

**$1\frac{1}{2}$ 1-ounce squares unsweet-
ened chocolate, melted**

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup sifted flour

$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon baking powder

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt

2 cups broken pecans

Cream butter or margarine and sugar. Add egg, vanilla, melted chocolate and mix well. Sift together flour, baking powder and salt and stir into creamed mixture. Add pecans. Drop from teaspoon on greased baking sheet. Bake at 350° F. for 10 minutes. Makes $1\frac{1}{2}$ doz.

Pecan Balls

1 cup butter or margarine

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup confectioners sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt

2 teaspoons vanilla

2 cups sifted flour

2 cups finely chopped pecans

Cream butter or margarine and sugar. Add remaining ingredients and mix well. Chill dough 2 hours. Shape dough into 1-inch balls and place on ungreased baking sheet. Bake at 350° F. 12 to 15 minutes. While cookies are warm, roll in confectioners sugar. These may be made several days in advance. Makes 4 to 5 dozen.

Pecan-Buttermilk Pralines

- 2 cups sugar**
- 1 teaspoon soda**
- 1 cup buttermilk**
- 2 teaspoons vanilla**
- 2 cups pecan halves**

Mix sugar, soda and milk in heavy saucepan and cook over medium heat to softball stage (234° F.). Remove from heat and add vanilla and pecans. Begin beating immediately. Beat until candy begins to thicken. Drop by teaspoon on waxed paper or greased baking sheet. Cool. Yields 30 small patties. Note: If mixture becomes too thick before all is dropped, stir in one or two drops of warm water.

BREADS

Orange Pecan Bread

- 1 egg**
- 1 cup orange juice**
- 1 cup raisins, finely cut**
- 1 tablespoon grated orange rind**
- 2 tablespoons shortening,
melted and cooled slightly**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla**
- 2 cups sifted flour**
- 1 teaspoon baking powder**
- ½ teaspoon baking soda**
- ¼ teaspoon salt**
- 1 cup sugar**
- 1 cup pecans, chopped**

Beat egg; stir in orange juice, raisins, orange rind, shortening and vanilla. Sift flour, baking powder, soda, salt and sugar into liquid mixture. Mix well. Stir in pecans. Pour into well-greased 5 x 9 x 2½-inch loaf pan. Bake at 350° F. for 1 hour.

Pecan Waffles

- 2 cups sifted all-purpose flour**
- 3 teaspoons baking powder**
- ¼ teaspoon salt**
- ¾ cup chopped pecans**
- 2 eggs, separated**
- 1½ cups milk**
- 6 tablespoons shortening,
melted**

Sift together dry ingredients and add pecans. Beat egg yolks until light; combine with milk and melted shortening and add to dry ingredients, mixing just until smooth. Beat egg whites until stiff and fold into batter. Bake on hot waffle iron. Yields 6 to 8 waffles.

SNACKS

Zippy Pecan Cheese Roll

- 1 pound processed American cheese**
- 4 cloves garlic**



- 1½ cups pecans**
- 3 tablespoons chili powder**

Put cheese, garlic and pecans through food chopper using fine blade. Mix well. Shape into roll about 1½ inches in diameter. Sprinkle chili powder over waxed paper. Roll cheese log in chili powder until well-coated. Wrap in waxed paper, plastic film or aluminum foil. Chill several hours or over-night. Slice to serve. Yields 2 rolls 1½ inches in diameter and 10 inches long. Will keep in refrigerator several weeks.

Barbecued Pecans

- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine**
- ⅓ teaspoon tobasco sauce**
- 2 cups pecans**
- ½ cup worcestershire sauce**
- ¼ teaspoon garlic salt**

Heat fat over low heat; add pecans and parch slightly, adding 1 tablespoon of sauce and salt mixture slowly until completely parched.

Salted Pecans

Melt 2 tablespoons butter, margarine or salad oil in heavy skillet over low heat. Add 1 cup shelled pecans and stir until hot. Avoid overcooking because pecans darken after being removed from the fat. Drain on absorbent paper. Sprinkle lightly with salt while still warm.

Sugared Pecans

- 1 cup sugar**
- ¼ cup water**
- 1½ cups pecan halves**
- 1 teaspoon light corn syrup**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla**

Boil sugar, water and syrup together until the long thread stage is reached at 230° to 234° F. on a candy thermometer. Add vanilla; cool until lukewarm. Beat until the mixture becomes creamy. Add pecan halves. Stir until pecans are well coated. Pour on waxed paper and separate pecans. Store in tightly covered containers.

NOTE: If mixture becomes too firm before all pecans are coated, add a few drops of warm water and continue stirring.

STORAGE

Pecans become rancid after several months storage unless properly canned or frozen.

Canning Pecans in Pressure Canner

Select well-cured nuts; sort according to size. Place in shallow pan and heat in 250° to 300° F. oven for 10 minutes. Pack hot into hot, dry jars or tin cans. Leave 1-inch headspace in jars; fill cans to top. Close jars or seal cans. Process in pressure canner at 5 pounds pressure for 10 minutes. Open petcock, let steam out. Remove jars or cans from canner. Complete seal on jars if closures are not self-sealing type. Cool cans in cool water.

Canning Pecans in Water Bath

Follow directions for preparing pecans for pressure canner. Place jars in water bath, with water 1 inch below the rim of the jar; water should cover cans. Process in boiling water for 15 minutes. Remove jars and complete seal if closures are not of self-sealing types. Cool cans in cool water.

Freezing Pecans

Package freshly shelled pecans in moisture-vapor-proof bags, freezer tin cans, freezer jars or plastic containers. Seal or close containers. Quick freeze and store at 0° F.

Shelled Pecans

Place pecans in covered containers and store in refrigerator not longer than 6 months.

Unshelled Pecans

Store unshelled pecans at a temperature range of 32° to 38° F. They will keep fresh for about a year.



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