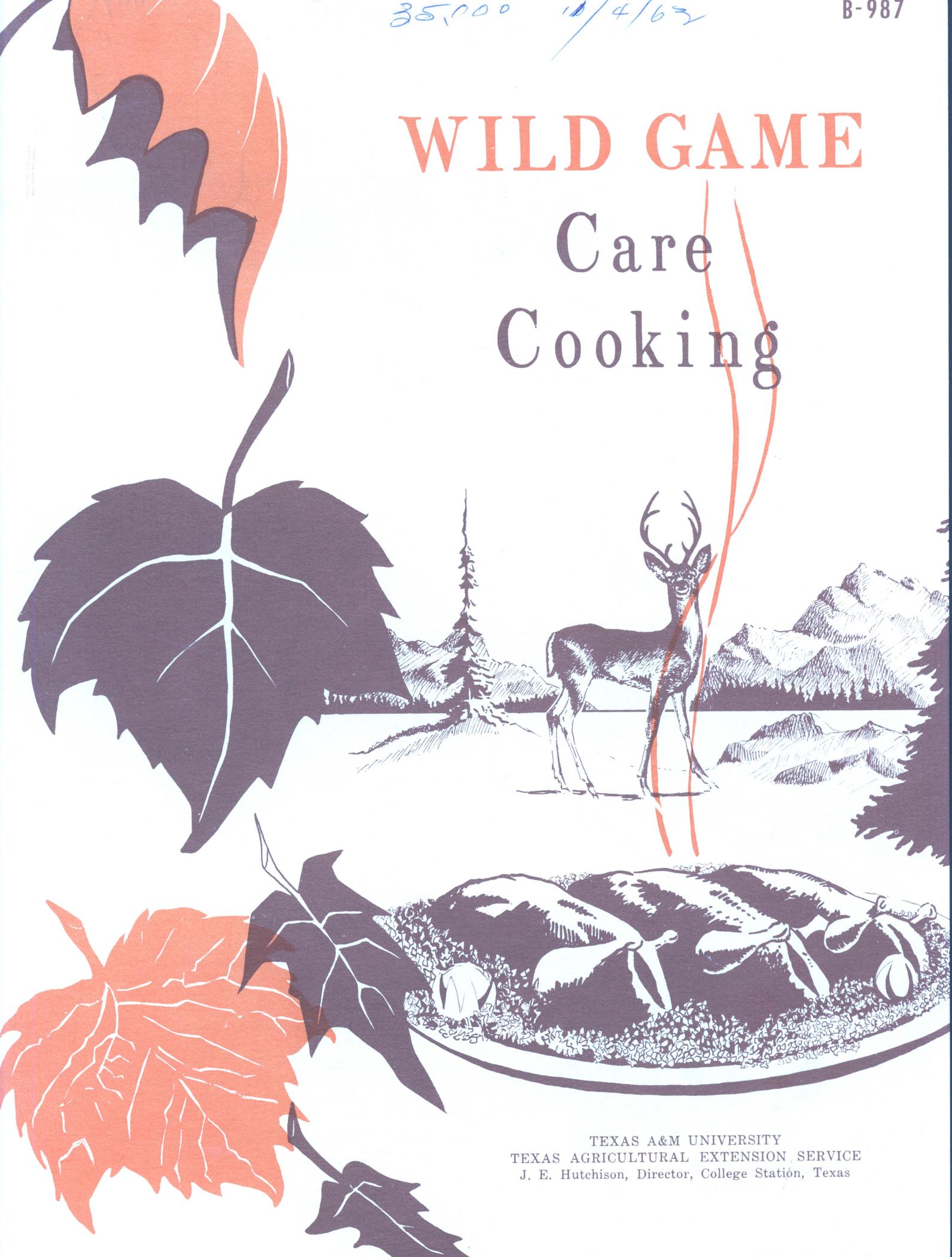


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WILD GAME

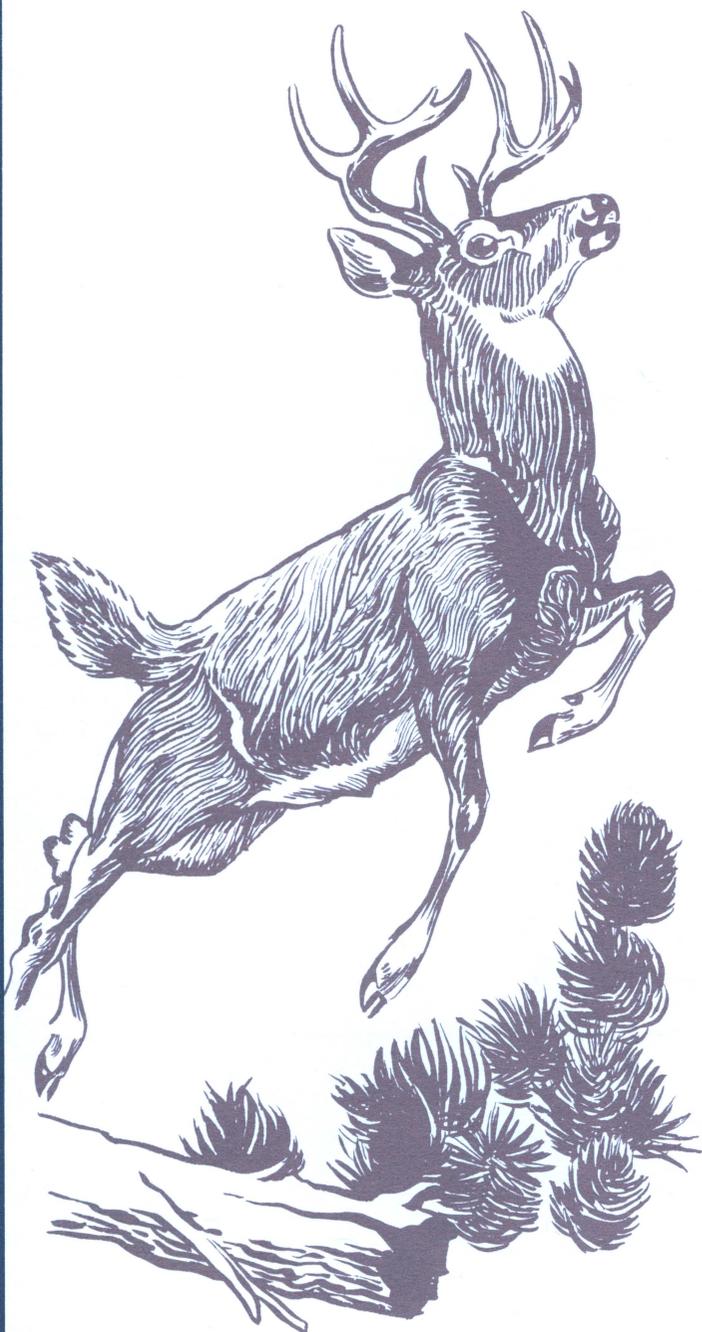
Care Cooking



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
TEXAS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE
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WILD GAME —

Care · Cooking

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The quality of game meat depends on how the game is handled from the time of kill until served on the family table. While modern hunters pursue their sport mostly for the thrill of outdoor recreation, game foods properly dressed and prepared can add pleasant variety to the family menu.

Since the first hunter took weapon in hand to search for game, experience has accumulated in the field dressing and preparation of game for eating. This publication describes the time-tested methods of handling game in the field until it is tastefully served on your table.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Edwin Cooper, former extension wildlife specialist, was a senior author for the original manuscript of this publication.

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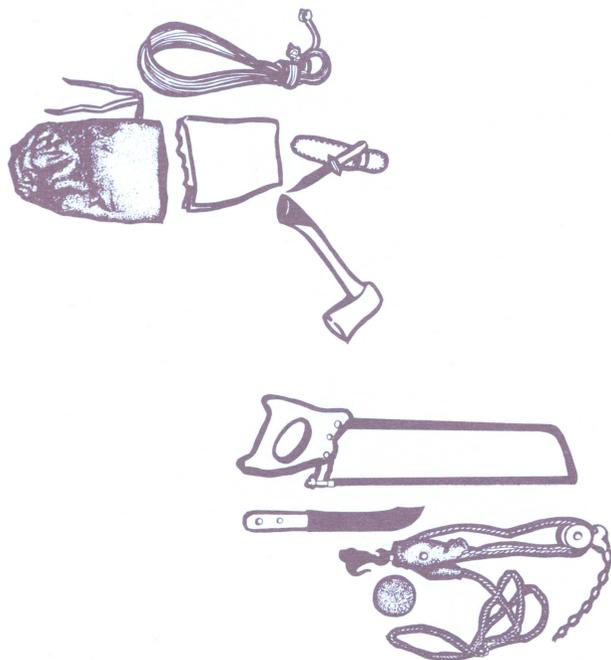


BIG GAME

Big game animals include deer, antelope, elk, moose, bear and other large animals. The field care of big game after the kill is similar for most species. Field, camp and home care of deer carcasses will be used as an example since deer are the most commonly hunted big game animals in Texas.

IN THE FIELD

Before the hunt, check to see that you have all the equipment needed for hunting and handling your deer kill. Important items include a sharp hunting knife, some strong cord or small rope, enough cheesecloth or canvas to wrap the carcass



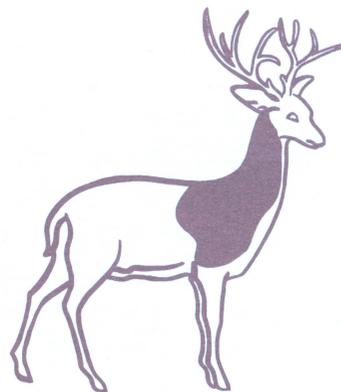
in camp, a box of salt if you want to keep the hide or the "cape" for mounting, a small hatchet, warm clothing and your regular camping gear, if needed. Many hunters find that a small but powerful set of binoculars or a good telescopic sight on the rifle is a great aid in locating and determining the sex of deer.

When a deer is sighted, try to make certain that it is in healthy condition. Do not shoot an

animal that is obviously poor in flesh, one that moves in an unusual or weakened manner, or one whose coat appears "rough." Animals that have been running a great distance usually are breathing heavily and their meat is not of top-quality flavor. A "hot" animal usually breathes with an open mouth and should not be killed for meat value.

A well-placed shot will prevent the mutilation of choice meat cuts. It will also prevent a loss of meat quality caused by the exhaustive running of an injured or dying animal. If the head is not desired for a trophy, a head or neck shot is effective. Otherwise, a shot in the heart or lung (the front shoulder region) is preferable.

Approach the downed animal with caution. The greatest danger from a wounded animal is that of being struck by the sharp hooves or the antlers; approach from the back side. Nudge the animal with a stick or your toe to see if it is dead. If you see that the shot did not hit a vital region



or the animal is struggling to escape, kill it with a pistol or rifle shot aimed into the neck or just under the ear.

If the animal was shot in the heart or lungs, additional bleeding is usually unnecessary. If you want to bleed the animal and yet prevent damage to the hide, open the carcass and sever the large

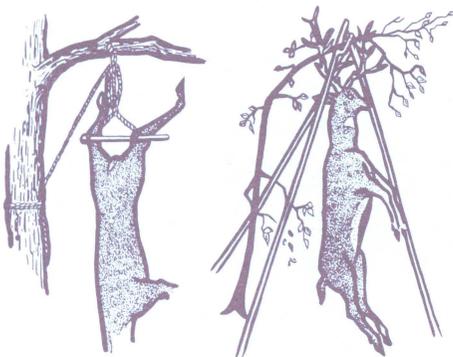




blood vessels leading to the heart. If you want to bleed the animal and do not want the trophy mounted, insert a knife into the base of the neck just above the brisket and cut sideways to sever the jugular vein.

The deer should be dressed immediately after the kill. This can be done by placing the carcass on sloping ground, with the head and back on the upper slope.

Insert the knife blade beneath the hide and belly muscle where the breastbone ends. Cut along the center line towards the tail. Keep the sharp edge of the knife upward and do not puncture the paunch or intestines. End the cut about 6 inches from the tail. Cut from the first ribs up to the throat. Finally, the pelvic bone between the hind legs can be cut with a heavy knife or small hatchet. After removing the heart and liver, which should be saved, roll the intestines away from the carcass. The skin around the vent should be cut so that the entire visceral mass can be removed without severing any part.



There are variations in the steps of cleaning a deer; nevertheless, it should be done thoroughly and soon after the kill.

If you need help to carry the carcass to camp or if you cannot carry it out immediately, hang it to a tree branch so that the carcass will cool in the shade. Prop the body cavity open with a stick for better air circulation. Transport the carcass to camp as soon as possible. Whistle, sing and be as conspicuous as possible while carrying the animal to camp; this may prevent your being shot by some other hunter who might mistake your moving deer for a live one.

Under ideal conditions, the carcass can be taken to a locker plant for rapid cooling. Skilled personnel can age the meat at the proper temperature, then butcher and wrap it for the freezer.



IN THE CAMP

You may be in camp for several days before the deer carcass can be taken to a locker plant or butchered at home. If so, do these things to improve the meat quality:

Cut away all tainted or mutilated portions of meat. Do not wash the carcass. To clean, wipe the carcass with a clean cloth. Remove hair and any debris that adheres to the meat. Skin and quarter the carcass for more rapid cooling, if possible. Otherwise, hang the carcass outside at night and wrap it in a large sack, tarp or game bag in the shade or indoors during the day. Protect the meat from flies and moisture. Many hunters prefer to leave the skin on the carcass to protect

the meat from contamination until it is butchered. If the head is to be mounted, take the unskinned deer to the taxidermist and let him remove the necessary parts. Otherwise, the "cape" and head can be removed as shown on the diagram.

If you want to save the hide, allow it to cool and dry. Then salt the hide and roll or fold it until delivered to the taxidermist or tanner.

AT HOME

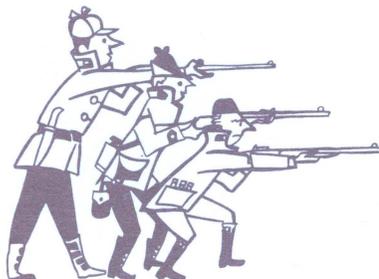
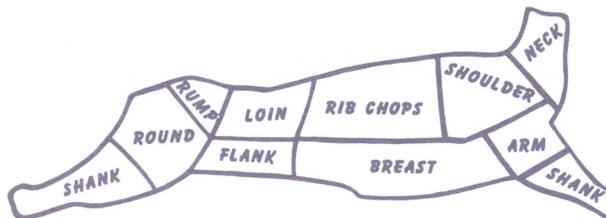
When taking the deer carcass home, do not expose the meat to motor heat or exhaust gases. Wrap the meat loosely and transport it on top of the car, the bed of a pick-up truck or the car trunk.

Butchering can be done professionally usually at a moderate cost. Locker plants do excellent jobs of aging, butchering, wrapping and quick-freezing the meat. They also can take inferior cuts, combine them with pork and make good sausage.

If you want to butcher the carcass, hang it by the hocks or hock tendons. Split the carcass along the backbone with a meat saw or hand axe. Cut between the last two ribs and through the backbone to quarter the carcass. Discard or use as pet foods the badly mutilated portions.

The drawing below indicates the cuts to be made. See page 7 for the cuts of venison and method of cookery.

See the section on freezing for final care of the meat before cooking.



COOKING BIG GAME

Game meat differs in flavor from domestic meat, with each species of game having its own distinctive flavor and aroma. Flavor is more strongly marked in older and more active animals, in the more exercised muscles and in the fat of the animal.

The success of cooked game depends to a great extent on the treatment the animal received when killed. If the hunter properly cares for the game after it is killed, the homemaker can prepare delicious and palatable game.

Game meat adds variety to meals and is high in nutritive value. It is an excellent source of high-quality proteins, fats, minerals, iron, copper and phosphorus and the B vitamins, thiamin, niacin and riboflavin.

Fresh and properly handled game meat can be tender and palatable when cooked by dry or moist heat. The method of cooking is determined by the quality and tenderness of the carcass.

Young and tender game is best cooked by dry heat such as roasting, broiling, pan-broiling and frying. Dry heat preserves flavor and insures tenderness. Basting with additional fat may be necessary if the meat is lean.

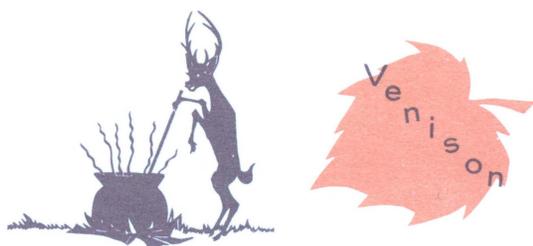
Old and less tender game is best when cooked by moist heat such as braising, stewing and simmering. Swiss steaks and pot roasts are cooked by braising. Add a small amount of liquid to the meat which is cooked in a covered container. Stews, fricassees and boiled game are prepared by simmering (not at boiling point) in hot liquid which partially or completely covers the meat. With moisture, the high temperature necessary to soften the connective tissues can be obtained.

Parboil only strong game to reduce flavor if a strong game flavor is objectionable. Parboiling

well-conditioned carcasses will remove some of the soluble nutrients and produce a mild game flavor.

The strong, gamey flavor some people find objectionable is concentrated in the animal fat. To reduce this flavor, remove fat in more mature, highly fattened carcasses.

Many people prefer to marinate meat from more mature animals to reduce gamey flavor and make the meat more tender. A marinade is made by combining one-fourth part vinegar, three-fourths part water, sugar and seasoning. Place meat in the solution and refrigerate for 72 hours or longer.



Venison is a rather dry meat and can be improved by adding butter or margarine, suet or other fat when broiling, pan-broiling or roasting. If you have a less tender carcass, there are ways of preparing the meat to make it tender and appetizing.

The methods of cooking venison are the same as those for cooking other lean meats. Use dry heat for tender cuts and moist heat for less tender cuts.

Cuts of Venison and Suggested Uses

The *hind* and *fore shank* are used in soups, stews and are ground for sausage, meat loaf and patties.

Round of the carcass is usually tender enough for steaks. If less tender, use it for Swiss steaks or grind it for sausage, patties or meat loaf.

Legs, if small, may be roasted in an uncovered pan without adding liquid.

Loin of venison is used for sirloin and porterhouse steaks or choice roasts.

Shoulder or *chuck* should be cut into roast for pot roasting or ground.

Rump roast is used for pot roast. From a tender, young buck it may be roasted in an uncovered pan with no added liquid.

Flank and *breast* cuts contain considerable meat. Use them for soups, stews or grind for patties, meat loaf or sausage.

Neck of the carcass should have the tendons removed. It can then be roasted, used as stew or ground.

BROILED STEAKS OR CHOPS

Preheat the broiler compartment. Place meat on cold broiling grid and place in broiler compartment with top surface 3 inches below the source of heat. Close or leave broiler door open, according to instructions on use of range. For a 1-inch steak, broil 5 to 7 minutes for each side. When nicely browned, season with salt, pepper and butter or margarine.

VENISON ROAST

Season meat with salt and pepper. Place fat side up on a roasting rack. Lay beef suet or bacon strips across the meat. Do not add water and do not cover. Roast at 300-350° F. 20 to 25 minutes per pound. If roast becomes too brown on top side, turn to aid uniform cooking.

VENISON STEW

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 2 cloves garlic | 4 green peppers, chopped |
| 1 onion, sliced | 3 potatoes, quartered |
| 3 tablespoons shortening | 6 carrots, halved |
| 2 pounds venison | 2 bay leaves |
| 1 can tomato sauce | 6 medium onions |
| 1 cup water | Salt and pepper to taste |

Fry sliced onion and garlic in shortening; add the meat and brown. Cover with tomato sauce and 1 cup water; simmer 1 hour. Remove garlic; add carrots, pepper, potatoes and whole onions. Add additional water, if necessary, seasonings, and cook approximately 30 minutes, until vegetables are tender. Serves 6.

VENISON CHILI

| | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| ½ gallon cooked kidney beans, optional | 1 tablespoon salt |
| 2½ pounds ground venison | 1½ pounds bacon |
| 1 tablespoon chili powder | 1 quart onions |
| 1½ teaspoon pepper | ½ gallon tomatoes or 4 No. 303 cans |
| | ½ teaspoon comino seed |

Cut bacon into small pieces; brown to a crisp. Add venison and brown. Combine rest of ingredients in large utensil. Add the browned meat and enough water to cover. Simmer 2 hours. Serves about 20.

VENISON POT ROAST WITH VEGETABLES

(shoulder, rump, round)

3 to 4 pounds of venison 6 whole small potatoes
6 whole carrots 6 whole onions
¼ to ½ cup water
Turnips and celery, optional

Dredge meat with flour, salt and pepper and brown in fat. Add water and cover tightly. Cook over low heat 2 or 3 hours. Add the vegetables ½ hour before the meat is done. Make a gravy of the liquid in the pan and pour over the meat and vegetables. Serves 6.

VENISON SWISS STEAK

1½ pounds round steak 2 tablespoons Worcester-
3 large onions shire sauce
1 medium stalk celery Salt and pepper
1 cup tomatoes

Steak should be about 1½ inches thick. Dredge with flour and season with salt and pepper; brown in fat on both sides. Add the other ingredients. Cover tightly and cook at 350° F. or over low heat on top of range until tender (about 1¼ hours). Remove meat to platter and make a gravy from drippings in the pan. Serves 4.

VENISON SAUSAGE

30 pounds venison, cut 3 ounces black pepper
20 pounds fat pork, 2 ounces sage, optional
about 50 to 60 percent 1 ounce red pepper,
lean, cut optional
1 pound salt

Sprinkle seasonings over meat. Grind through coarse chili plate. Re grind through sausage plate. If sausage is to be frozen, season only half the total amount. Wrap sausage, in sizes needed for a meal, in moisture-vapor-proof paper. Thaw and cook seasoned sausage. Thaw and season unseasoned sausage just before using. Unseasoned sausage will keep fresh 5 or 6 months, while seasoned sausage will turn flat and rancid after 3 months.

BARBECUED VENISON ROAST

4 pounds venison roast 6 tablespoons vinegar
Salt and pepper 3 tablespoons catsup
3 tablespoons fat 3 tablespoons Worcester-
2 cloves garlic, chopped shire sauce
1 stalk celery

Season roast with salt and pepper. Melt fat in heavy pan; add roast and brown slowly on all sides. Add garlic and celery. Combine vinegar, catsup and Worcestershire sauce in a 1-cup measure. Add water to make 1 cup of liquid. Pour over roast; cover and cook slowly about 3 hours or until tender. Remove roast and add flour and water paste to liquid to make gravy. Serves 6.

ANTELOPE AND ELK

Antelope and elk meat are similar to venison. The carcass is cared for and cut up like a deer carcass. Use dry heat methods for tender cuts and moist heat methods for less tender cuts. Antelope and elk may be substituted in any of the venison recipes.



SMALL GAME

Squirrels are small game in Texas and are hunted during prescribed seasons. Rabbits are not considered legally as game animals and may be taken at any time. They are of good eating quality, especially cottontails and swamp rabbits. Opossums and raccoons are fur-bearing animals which can be taken for their furs only during prescribed seasons. They can be taken throughout the year for food purposes.

Field care for small game is simple and most animals can be dressed in a similar manner. The procedure consists of removing the entrails immediately after the kill, wiping the body cavity clean, protecting from dirt and debris and skinning prior to cold storage or cooking.



To remove the entrails of a small animal, make a cut from the anus to the ribs, taking care to avoid cutting the intestines. Remove the entrails and allow the animal to bleed a few minutes. Leave the skin on the animal. Wipe the body cavity dry with a clean cloth, paper or grass. Place in the game bag.

Small game animals are skinned just prior to wrapping for freezing or before cooking. Near the middle of the back of a squirrel or rabbit, cut across 2 or 3 inches. Insert your fingers beneath the skin on each side of the cut and pull in opposite directions. If needed, wipe the carcass with a damp cloth to remove hair or debris. Remove the head, feet and tail.

Opossums and raccoons are more difficult to skin than rabbits or squirrels. Allow the carcass to hang in a cool place for 24 to 48 hours. When

it is time to skin the animal, cut the skin from where you stopped when removing the entrails up to the chin. From the cut extending from the chin to the tail, cut the skin up to the foot on each leg. Cut the skin around the base of each foot and around the neck. Pull the skin loose from each leg, neck and finally the back. Wipe clean with a damp cloth after removing the feet, head and tail. Remove excess fat from the carcass.

COOKING SMALL GAME

The natural tenderness of small game is influenced by the age of the animal. It is helpful to the homemaker if the hunter tags the animal as to "young" or "mature." Young animals require less cooking than older and less tender ones.

Because game animals lead a vigorous life in foraging for food, muscles of older animals are likely to be less tender, drier and less palatable than muscles of domestic animals. Older game animals require more attention when cooking than domestic animals which are confined during fattening.

The meat of squirrels is tender and delicately flavored. It has very little of the gamey taste present in most game meats. Young squirrel can be broiled or fried. The older and less tender animals will be more palatable when cooked with moisture.



FRIED SQUIRREL

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 squirrel, cut in serving pieces | 1 teaspoon salt |
| 1/8 teaspoon pepper | 1/4 cup flour |

Combine salt, pepper and flour in a paper bag. Drop a few pieces of squirrel in the bag; shake bag to coat meat. Coat all pieces. Brown on all sides in 1/2-inch hot fat. Reduce heat and cook 20 to 30 minutes, or until tender. Serves 2 to 3.

BRUNSWICK STEW

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 3 squirrels, cut in serving pieces | 1 cup chopped onion |
| 3 quarts water | 4 cups or 2 No. 303 cans tomatoes |
| 1/4 cup diced bacon | 2 cups diced potatoes |
| 1/4 teaspoon cayenne | 2 cups lima beans |
| 2 teaspoons salt | 2 cups corn |
| 1/4 teaspoon black pepper | |

Place squirrel pieces in a large kettle. Add water. Bring slowly to boil; reduce heat and simmer 1 1/2 to 2 hours, or until squirrel is tender, skimming surface occasionally. Remove meat from bones and return to liquid. Add bacon, cayenne, salt, pepper, onion, tomatoes, potatoes and lima beans. Cook 1 hour. Add corn and continue to cook 10 minutes. Serves 6 to 8.

BROILED SQUIRREL

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1 squirrel | 1/8 teaspoon pepper |
| 1 teaspoon salt | 1/2 tablespoon fat |

Clean squirrel. Rub with salt and pepper. Brush with fat and place on a broiling rack. Broil 40 minutes, basting every 10 minutes with drippings. Serves 2 to 3.



Rabbit meat can be prepared the same as chicken. It is mild-flavored, fine-grained and practically all white meat.

Rabbit meat should always be cooked until well done. Rabbits usually weigh from 2 to 6 pounds and young and tender ones can be cooked the same as young tender chickens.

FRIED RABBIT

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| 1 1/2 to 2 pounds, ready-to-cook small young rabbit, cut in serving pieces | Flour |
| | Salt and pepper |
| | Cooking fat or oil |

Roll rabbit in mixture of flour, salt and pepper. Heat fat or oil about 1/4 inch deep in a heavy fry pan large enough to hold the pieces without crowding.

Use moderate temperature. Put in the large meaty pieces of rabbit first and cook about 10 minutes before adding the smaller pieces and giblets. Turn the pieces often for even cooking, and cook until well browned and tender, about 30 to 35 minutes. Serves 3 to 4.

RABBIT IN BARBECUE SAUCE

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 3 pounds rabbit cut in serving pieces | 3 tablespoons cooking fat or oil |
| Flour | Barbecue sauce |
| Salt and pepper | |

Roll rabbit in mixture of flour, salt and pepper. Heat the fat and brown rabbit on all sides over moderate heat, about 20 minutes. Pour sauce over rabbit; cover pan.

Bake at 325° F. about 45 minutes or until meat is tender. Uncover pan and place under broiler. Broil 15 minutes or until meat is brown. Serves 6.

BARBECUE SAUCE

| | |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2 tablespoons brown sugar | 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce |
| 1 tablespoon paprika | 1 cup tomato juice |
| 1 teaspoon salt | ¼ cup chili sauce or catsup |
| 1 teaspoon dry mustard | ¼ cup vinegar |
| ¼ teaspoon chili powder | ½ cup chopped onion |
| Few grains cayenne pepper | |

Combine ingredients and cook over low heat 15 minutes.

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| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| ½ cup vinegar | 2½ pounds rabbit, cut in serving pieces |
| 2 cups water | Flour |
| 2 teaspoons salt | 3 tablespoons fat |
| ¼ teaspoon pepper | 3 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce |
| ½ teaspoon whole cloves | 3 tablespoons flour |
| 2 teaspoons sugar | |
| 4 bay leaves | |
| 1 medium onion, sliced | |

Make pickling mixture by combining the vinegar, water, salt, pepper, cloves, sugar, bay leaves and onion in a glass or enamel-ware bowl.

Add pieces of rabbit and sliced giblets; cover the bowl. Let stand in refrigerator 8 to 12 hours, turning the pieces occasionally to absorb the flavor evenly.

Remove the rabbit pieces. Save liquid and onions but discard bay leaves and cloves.

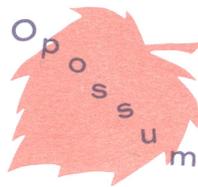
Roll the rabbit in flour. Heat fat or oil in a heavy pan and brown the rabbit on all sides.

Pour the pickling mixture over the rabbit. Cover pan and cook over low heat about 1 hour or until rabbit is tender.

Remove rabbit from pan and keep it hot. Add Worcestershire sauce to the liquid. Mix 3 tablespoons of flour with a little cold water. Add a few tablespoons of hot liquid and pour the mixture into the pan. Stir and cook until the sauce is thick and smooth.

Pour sauce over rabbit. Serves 4.

To use a large rabbit (4 to 5 pounds ready-to-cook) double the amount of ingredients for the pickling mixture. It is important to have enough to flavor all of the meat. Use 1/3 cup fat to brown the rabbit and 1/3 cup flour to thicken the sauce. It may be necessary to skim off part of the fat before thickening the sauce. Serves 6 to 8.



Opossum meat is light in color, fine-grained and tender with generous fat deposits between the bands of muscle. Remove as much of the fat as possible before cooking to make the meat less greasy.

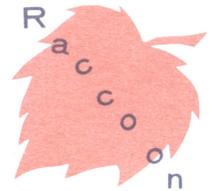
ROASTED STUFFED OPOSSUM WITH SWEET POTATOES

| | |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1 opossum | Dash pepper |
| ¼ cup fat | 1¼ teaspoons poultry seasoning |
| ½ cup chopped onion | 1/3 cup water |
| ½ cup chopped celery | 1 sweet potato per person |
| 6 cups bread cubes | |
| 1 teaspoon salt | |

Melt fat in skillet; add onion and celery and cook until tender. Combine bread cubes, salt, pepper and poultry seasonings with onions and celery. Add water and mix thoroughly. Fill the body cavity. Close by sewing the skin together with a heavy string or by skewering the skin together and lacing with a heavy string. Place, underside down, on rack in shallow roasting pan. Roast at 300-350° F. 2 to 2½ hours, or until well done, basting occasionally with drippings and sprinkling lightly with flour after each basting for a crisp, crackly crust. When almost done, place boiled or baked sweet potatoes around meat and baste frequently with drippings. Remove browned opossum and potatoes to a heated large platter. Allow ¾ to 1 pound per portion.

BARBECUED OPOSSUM

Cut opossum in half; place on rack and roast at 300° F. about 2 hours. Baste frequently with barbecue sauce. See left column for barbecue sauce.



Raccoon meat is dark, coarse and long fibered. Trim excess fat from the carcass. Soak only the strong and gamey carcasses in brine or a vinegar solution 4 to 16 hours before cooking.

ROASTED RACCOON

Leave a ¼-inch layer of fat on raccoon. Cover carcass with cloth dipped in fat. Place on a roasting rack in a shallow pan. Do not cover nor add water. Bake at 275-300° F. 3 to 4 hours. Remove cloth the last ½ hour; baste several times with drippings and dust with flour after each basting for a crackly and crisp crust.

FRICASSEED RACCOON

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 raccoon, cut in serving pieces | ½ teaspoon pepper |
| ¼ cup flour | 3 tablespoons fat |
| 1 teaspoon salt | 2 cups water |

Remove fat from lean meat. Combine flour, salt and pepper in a bag. Add meat and shake bag to coat. Fry in hot fat until brown. Add water, cover and simmer 2 hours or until tender.



GAME BIRDS

Some of the more popular game birds include ducks, geese, quail, dove, turkey, pheasant, rail and woodcock. Pheasant and other game birds uncommon in Texas are sometimes raised in captivity or killed in other states and brought home for eating. The native game birds are taken during prescribed hunting seasons and offer excellent wild game taste treats when properly dressed and prepared.

DUCKS AND GEESE

Many duck and goose hunters suggest that the bird be bled to improve flavor. This can be done by breaking the neck or cutting the throat immediately after shooting. They should be dressed completely as soon as possible.

Although skinning ducks and geese may be easier than plucking, moisture and flavor may be improved by plucking the feathers and leaving the skin intact. Remove the wings at the joint nearest the body. Cut off the feet at the first joint above the feet. Most hunters prefer to pick ducks and geese dry rather than wet. The fingers of the picker can be moistened occasionally to facilitate plucking. The thumb and index finger are used to pick feathers while the bird is held firmly with the other hand. After "rough picking," the down feathers can be removed by "skidding" or rubbing across the bird firmly with the thumb. Use a knife blade and your thumb as a stop to pull pinfeathers. The bird can be singed over a flame to remove down. Remove the head and most of the neck.

To remove the entrails, cut a slit just below the breastbone, down to and around the vent. Remove all the contents. Save the gizzard, heart and liver for eating purposes. Cut near the base of the neck and remove the craw. Wipe the body cavity clean with a moist cloth. Most hunters remove the two oil glands found on the upper surface of the tail, or the entire tail structure.

Aging dressed waterfowl for 24 to 48 hours just above freezing will remove much of the usual gamey flavor.

PHEASANTS, QUAIL, DOVES, TURKEYS, RAIL AND WOODCOCK

Most hunters agree that dry plucking rather than skinning conserves flavor and moisture in quail, doves, turkeys, rail and woodcock. Pheasants may be skinned or dry plucked with seemingly little change in flavor or moisture content.

All game birds should be dressed as soon as possible following the kill. Aging at a temperature just above freezing for 24 to 48 hours generally removes some of the gamey flavor which might detract from eating pleasure.

After the feathers are removed from game birds, singe over flame to remove the down. Remove the entrails, head, craw and feet. Wipe the body cavities clean with a damp cloth. Some hunters find it easier to remove entrails of small birds, such as quail and dove, by making a cut along or across the back to split the bird apart. Larger birds, such as pheasants and turkeys, are dressed in about the same manner as domestic fowl or waterfowl.

COOKING GAME BIRDS



Duck meat is at its best when served rare. If well-done meat is desired, additional cooking time should be given, taking care not to overcook and toughen the birds. Meat of wild duck is dark and drier than domestic meat. Roasting with strips of bacon or in a covered roaster helps retain moisture and reduce dryness of less tender and larger ducks.

ROASTED WILD DUCK

- 1 1/4 pound duck
- 2 cups quartered apples
- 1 slice of onion
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Clean duck and wash thoroughly. Fill the duck with peeled quartered apples. Truss duck. See page 15. Rub with a slice of onion; then with salt and pepper. Roast uncovered at 325° F. allowing 20 to 30 minutes per pound. If desired, duck can be basted every 10 minutes with 1 cup orange juice. Basting is not required, however, at this low temperature. Total cooking time is 45 minutes. Serves 2.



BARBECUED DUCK BREASTS

- | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|
| 2 large duck breasts | 1 tablespoon butter or |
| 4 teaspoons lemon juice | margarine |
| 1 teaspoon Worcestershire | 1 teaspoon salt |
| sauce | ½ teaspoon paprika |
| 1 teaspoon tomato catsup | |

Broil breasts 3 inches from source of heat until brown or about 10 minutes. Baste frequently with barbecue sauce. When meat begins to brown, sprinkle with salt and paprika. Broil for 20 minutes or until done. Serves 2.

SMOTHERED WILD DUCK

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| 1 duck | ½ cup flour |
| 1 teaspoon salt | ½ cup fat |
| ¼ teaspoon pepper | 1 cup milk |

Cut duck into 6 or 7 pieces. Season with salt and pepper and roll in flour. Fry duck slowly in hot fat until brown on both sides, about 30 minutes, turning only once. Add milk; cover tightly and simmer slowly 1 hour or until tender. (May be baked at 325° F.) Serves 3 to 4.



Wild turkeys vary in weight from an average of 14 pounds for the male and an average of 8 pounds for the female. When roasting wild turkey, allow ¾ to 1 cup stuffing per pound of ready-to-cook meat.

ROASTED WILD TURKEY

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1 turkey, 8 to 10 pounds, ready-to-cook | 2 to 3 teaspoons sage |
| Salt and pepper | 1 teaspoon salt |
| 8 cups partially dry bread cubes | ¼ teaspoon pepper |
| ¾ cup finely chopped celery | 1½ cups chopped onion |
| ½ cup chopped walnuts | ¼ cup butter or margarine |
| | ¼ cup water |

Sprinkle turkey inside and out with salt and pepper. Combine bread, celery, walnuts and seasonings. Cook onion in butter or margarine until tender, but not brown; pour over bread mixture. Add the water and toss lightly. Spoon stuffing lightly into body cavity. Put remaining dressing in a greased casserole. Cover and bake in oven with turkey during last 30 minutes of roasting time. Truss bird. See page 15. Cover breast with bacon slices and cheesecloth soaked in melted bacon fat. Place turkey, breast up, on rack on roasting pan. Roast at 325° F. 20 to 25 minutes per pound or until tender, basting frequently with bacon fat and drippings in pan. Remove cheesecloth, skewers and string. Serves 8 to 10.

BARBECUED TURKEY

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| 1 turkey, about 8 pounds | <i>Barbecue Sauce*</i> |
| Salt and pepper | 1 cup catsup |
| Liquid smoke, if desired | 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce |
| Celery leaves from 1 bunch celery | 1 cup water |
| 2 coarsely chopped onions | ¼ cup vinegar |
| ½ to ¾ cup salad oil | 2 or 3 dashes Tabasco sauce |
| 1 recipe barbecue sauce | 1 tablespoon sugar |
| | 1 teaspoon salt |

Remove turkey neck if still attached, but leave skin. Rub cavity of bird with salt; brush with about 1½ teaspoon liquid smoke. Stuff with celery leaves and onion. Truss bird. See page 15. Add 1 teaspoon liquid smoke to salad oil; brush on bird. Sprinkle well with salt and pepper. Place on rack in roasting pan and roast at 325° F. about 3½ hours or until tender. Brush several times during cooking with oil mixture. Thirty minutes before cooking is completed, add remaining oil mixture to hot barbecue sauce. Brush bird with sauce several times during last 30 minutes.

**Barbecue Sauce:* Combine ingredients. Heat to boiling and simmer 30 minutes.



Young geese are a delicacy and very little of their meat is wasted. The meat is rich, dark and lean. Old birds are tough and not easily tenderized by cooking with moist heat. They are identifiable by few pinfeathers, coarse plumage and extremely large wingspurs.

STUFFED WILD GOOSE

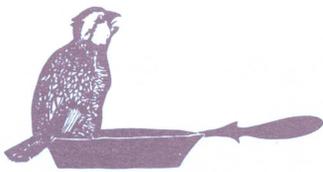
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| 1 young goose, 6 to 8 pounds, ready-to-cook | 1 cup chopped dried apricots |
| Juice of 1 lemon | 3 cups soft bread crumbs |
| Salt and pepper | ½ teaspoon salt |
| ¼ cup butter or margarine | ½ teaspoon pepper |
| ¼ cup chopped onion | 4 to 6 slices bacon |
| 1 cup chopped tart apple | Melted bacon fat |

Sprinkle goose inside and out with lemon juice, salt and pepper. Melt butter or margarine in a large saucepan. Add onion and cook until tender. Stir in apple, apricots, bread crumbs, salt and pepper. Spoon stuffing lightly into cavity. Truss bird. See page 15. Cover breast with bacon slices and cheesecloth soaked in melted bacon fat. Place goose breast up on rack in roasting pan. Roast at 325° F. 20 to 25 minutes per pound or until tender, basting frequently with bacon fat and drippings in pan. If age of goose is uncertain, pour 1 cup water into pan and cover last hour of cooking. Remove cheesecloth, skewers and string. Serves 6 to 8.

ROASTED GOOSE

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|------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 goose, 6 to 8 pounds | 2 teaspoons salt |
| 1 apple, sliced | ¼ teaspoon pepper |

Fill the goose with sliced apples. Truss bird. See page 15. Cover breast with bacon slices and cheesecloth soaked in bacon fat. Place goose breast up on rack in roasting pan. Roast at 325° F. 20 to 25 minutes per pound or until tender, basting frequently with drippings in pan. Serves 6 to 8.



Quail are small birds weighing about 4 to 6 ounces. When considering the number of servings, allow at least one bird per person to be served. Quail meat is white and it tends to be dry. It needs a protective cover of bacon or other fat and frequent basting.

ROASTED QUAIL WITH MUSHROOMS

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|----------------------------------|--|
| 4 quail | Juice of half lemon |
| 4 slices bacon | ½ cup hot water |
| 1 tablespoon butter or margarine | 1/3 ounce can broiled mushrooms, drained |

Wipe quail inside and out. Bind each bird with a slice of bacon. Put birds into a buttered pan and roast at 350° F., basting occasionally, about 30 minutes or until tender. Remove birds and add butter or margarine, water and lemon juice to drippings in pan, stirring to make a gravy. Add mushrooms. Serve the birds on toast with gravy poured over them. Serves 4.

FRIED QUAIL

| | |
|-------------|-------------------|
| 4 quail | 1 teaspoon salt |
| ¼ cup flour | ½ teaspoon pepper |

Dredge quail with mixture of flour, salt and pepper. Have deep frying pan half filled with hot fat. Brown quail on both sides. Cover skillet and reduce heat. Cook slowly until tender, about 20 minutes, turning once to brown evenly. Serves 4.



Doves are dark-meated and the young ones are tender. They are considered a delicacy in many families, especially when prepared to be tasty and tender. Two doves are considered a portion for serving. To fry dove, follow the procedure given for quail.

BRAISED DOVES

Salt and pepper the doves and dredge in flour or a combination of flour and corn meal. Heat fat in heavy pan, such as a dutch oven. Brown birds quickly on both sides. Remove most of the fat; add a small amount of water, cover and simmer 1 hour over low heat. Serve hot.

DOVE PIE

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 6 doves | 2 tablespoons flour |
| 1 quart water | 2 tablespoons butter or margarine |
| 1 onion, chopped | Salt and pepper |
| 1 small bunch parsley, chopped | Pastry |
| 3 whole cloves | |

Clean and split the doves; cover with water and add onion, parsley and cloves; cook until tender. Remove the doves. Skim liquid. Thicken the liquid with paste made of flour and butter or margarine. Season with salt and pepper.

Remove from heat. Line a baking dish with pastry. Place cooked birds in dish. Cover with gravy. Top with pastry. Bake at 350° F. 1 hour or until crust is brown. Serves 4 to 6.



Pheasants have white-meated breasts and wings and dark-meated legs. The cock usually weighs from 2¾ to 5 pounds and the hens from 2 to 3 pounds. Like other game birds, it is best to consider age when cooking pheasant. Age can be determined by the claws. Short, round claws indicate a young bird and long, sharp ones an older bird. Broil or bake young birds and braise or stew older ones. Pheasant meat tends to be dry; roast with strips of bacon on the breast and baste frequently. Most chicken recipes are suitable for preparing pheasant.

PHEASANT WITH RICE STUFFING

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 2 pheasants, about 2½ pounds each | 3 tablespoons minced onion |
| 2 teaspoons salt | ½ cup mushrooms, sliced |
| 1½ cups long-grain rice | ⅛ teaspoon crushed sage |
| 3 cups water | ⅛ teaspoon crushed thyme |
| 1 teaspoon salt | ⅛ teaspoon savory |
| ½ cup butter or margarine | 6 strips bacon |
| 1 cup finely chopped celery | |

Sprinkle 1 teaspoon salt into cavity of each pheasant. Brown rice in dry frying pan. Transfer to saucepan, add water, 1 teaspoon salt and cook until tender. Melt butter or margarine in frying pan; add celery, onion and mushroom and cook about 10 minutes. Add to rice along with herbs. Stuff bird lightly. Extra stuffing may be baked in a greased, covered casserole last 30 minutes of roasting time. Truss birds. See page 15. Brush birds with melted butter or margarine and place bacon across breast. Place on rack in roasting pan, cover and roast at 350° F. about 2 hours or until tender. Serves 6 to 8.

ROASTED PHEASANT

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1 pheasant | 1 teaspoon salt |
| 1 quart boiling water | 1/8 teaspoon pepper |
| 3 stalks celery | 4 strips bacon |
| 1 onion | 1 cup water |

Put pheasant in pan and pour boiling water over bird and into cavity. Put the celery and onion in bird. Do not sew up. Sprinkle bird with salt and pepper. Place in roasting pan and put bacon over breast. Add 1 cup water and roast at 350° F., uncovered, 2 hours or until tender. Serves 6 to 8.

FRIED PHEASANT

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 pheasant, cut in serving pieces | 1 teaspoon salt |
| 1/4 cup flour | 1/8 teaspoon pepper |

Roll pheasant in mixture of flour, salt and pepper. Brown well in hot fat. Cover, reduce heat and cook slowly until tender, about 1 hour, turning occasionally. Add 1/4 cup water during latter part of cooking period.



Woodcock and rail are small migratory game birds with rich, dark meat. Season lightly and always roast or broil with a generous amount of bacon, butter or margarine to prevent dryness.

BROILED WOODCOCK OR RAIL

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 4 woodcock or rail | 1/4 cup butter or margarine, melted |
| Salt and pepper | 1 tablespoon chopped parsley |
| 4 slices bacon | |

Sprinkle birds inside and out with salt and pepper. Wrap each bird with a slice of bacon and fasten with string or toothpick. Place birds on broiler grid and broil about 6 inches from source of heat 8 to 10 minutes on each side, or until tender. Baste frequently with butter or margarine. Remove string or toothpick, sprinkle with parsley and serve on buttered toast. Serves 4.

BAKED WOODCOCK OR RAIL

Split birds in half, dip in milk and dredge with flour. Fry until brown; salt and pepper. Place in a casserole and cover with sweet or sour cream. Bake at 350° F. 30 minutes or until tender.

FREEZING WILD GAME

BIG GAME

Freezing game meat is a simple process; however, there are a few points to follow to produce a good-quality product.

Selection and preparation:

1. Start with a good-quality animal that has been properly cared for and dressed.
2. Age big game 1 week or longer at 40 degrees F. to improve the tenderness and flavor.
3. Cut the carcass the same as for beef. See page 6. Boneless cuts for the freezer save space. While it may not be advisable to bone steaks, chops and short ribs, bone roasts and shoulders should be boned.

Packaging:

1. Store the size package required for a meal. Thawing and then refreezing lowers the quality of meat.
2. Divide steaks or chops with two pieces of freezer paper if more than one is to be frozen in a package. This permits the meat to thaw uniformly and the pieces are easier to separate.

Wrapping:

Only moisture-vapor-proof freezer paper should be used for freezing. Use the "drug store" wrap for freezing meat. Place the meat in the center of a sheet of paper. Bring the two sides of the paper evenly together at the top. Make a drug store fold by turning the paper down towards the meat in 1/2-inch folds. Continue folding tightly and snugly against the meat. Press the fold flat against the meat and make a double fold in each end of the wrapping. Fold these ends under the package to make a tighter wrap, fold the end over and seal with freezer tape. Label all packages as to the cut of meat and the date.

SMALL GAME AND GAME BIRDS

Small game and game birds should be cleaned thoroughly and cooled before freezing.

The carcass should be frozen since it will be used in preparation by either leaving whole, halving or cutting into serving pieces. Wrap each animal or bird individually in moisture-vapor-proof freezing paper using the "drug store" wrap described under Big Game. Label each animal as to name and date.

Storage:

Freeze wild game immediately after packaging. Keep the meat at 0° F. or lower until it is used. Quality meat correctly wrapped in moisture-vapor-proof freezing paper will keep frozen at this temperature from 6 months to a year, except the heart and liver which should be used within 6 months.

Thawing frozen game:

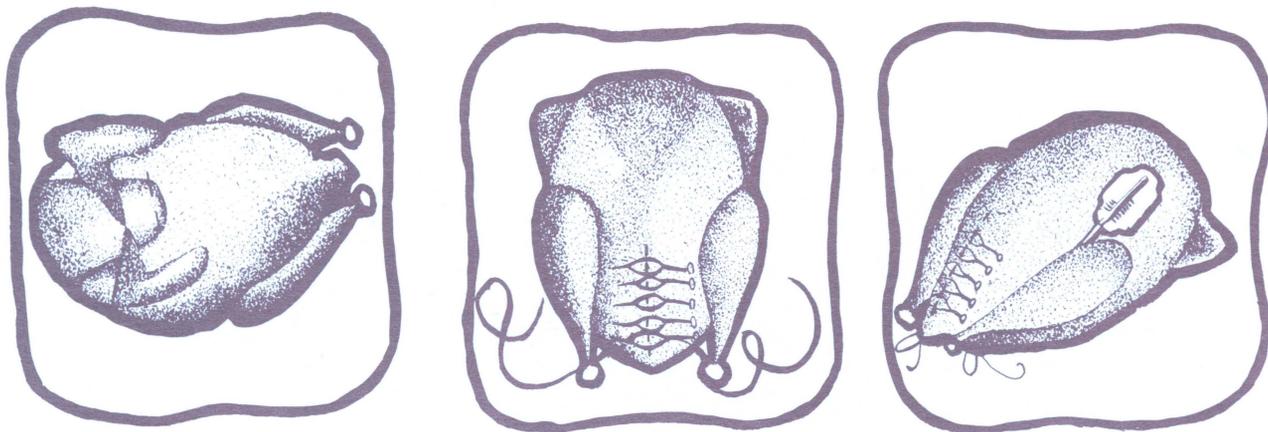
Thawing meat before cooking retains the greatest amount of moisture content. At room temperature meat usually thaws in about 2 hours per pound. If thawing is done in the refrigerator, allow about 5 hours per pound.

Do not refreeze thawed game.

TRUSSING GAME BIRDS

1. Fold neck skin over and skewer it to the back. For turkey, duck, geese and pheasant, twist wing tips and bring onto back. Skewer duck wings on either side of the breast.

2. Insert skewers through skin across cavity opening; lace with cord to close. Tie drumsticks together. For turkey, tie drumsticks to tail.



REFERENCES

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VENISON, Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Service, East Lansing, Michigan, 1960.

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Game Dinner Menus

Barbecued Venison Roast
 Buttered Noodles English Peas with Mushrooms
 Tossed Salad
 Hot Rolls Butter or Margarine
 Tart Jelly

Brunswick Stew
 Cole Slaw
 Cornbread
 Berry Cobbler

Hasenpfeffer
 Dumplings Buttered Broccoli
 Waldorf Salad
 Hot Biscuits Butter or Margarine
 Ice Cream

Roasted Stuffed Opossum with Sweet Potatoes
 Buttered Green Beans
 Vegetable Relish Tray
 Cornbread Butter or Margarine
 Fruit Compote

Fricassee Raccoon
 Mashed Sweet Potatoes with Marshmallows
 English Peas
 Head Lettuce with French Dressing
 Cornbread Butter or Margarine
 Apple Crisp

Barbecued Duck Breast
 Rice Green Beans Amandine
 Grapefruit and Avocado Salad
 Hot French Bread Butter or Margarine
 Lemon Tarts

Roasted Wild Turkey
 Baked Acorn Squash Buttered Whole Onions
 Cranberry Sauce Relish Tray
 Hot Rolls Butter or Margarine
 Ambrosia

Stuffed Wild Goose
 * Corn Fritters Red Cabbage
 Hot Muffins Butter or Margarine
 Baked Apples with Sour Cream

Roasted Quail with Mushrooms
 Wild Rice Baked Tomatoes Stuffed with Peas
 and Corn
 Applesauce
 Buttered Toast
 Pound Cake with Custard Sauce

Roasted Dove
 Wild Rice Dressing Pickled Beets
 Green Salad
 Toasted Garlic Bread
 Lemon Sherbet with Raspberries

Roasted Pheasant
 Cauliflower Parmesan Green Beans
 Spinach, Lettuce, Celery Salad with
 Garlic Dressing
 Hot Rolls Butter or Margarine
 Prune Cake

Broiled Woodcock or Rail
 Potato Cakes Yellow Squash Casserole
 Watercress - Orange - Grapefruit Salad
 Buttered Toast
 Custard Pie

