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FAMILY FEATURES

The holiday season is ripe with opportunities to gather around the table with loved ones and enjoy a delicious meal.

Elevate your holiday menu with freshly harvested ingredients like naturally sweet pecans. As America’s only native tree nut, the pecan boasts a proud heritage shared by the farmers who have grown it for generations – but this tree nut is more than a pie ingredient.

While the American Pecan Council’s Classic Pecan Pie is an ideal grand finale, consider including nutrient-dense pecans throughout the holiday season as a snack or in innovative pecan-filled dishes like Roasted Acorn Squash with Pecan Vinaigrette and Pecan Wild Rice Pilaf.

In addition to being a versatile addition to your holiday feast, in each 1-ounce serving of pecans, you’ll get 12 grams of “good” monounsaturated fat with zero cholesterol or sodium, according to the USDA. Compared to other nuts, pecans are among the lowest in carbs (4 grams) and highest in dietary fiber (3 grams) per serving.

Classic Pecan Pie

Prep time: 15 minutes
Cook time: 70 minutes
Servings: 10

1 pie dough (9 inches)
6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and cooled
1 cup light corn syrup
1 cup light brown sugar
2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract
3 large eggs, lightly beaten
1/2 teaspoon salt
2 1/2 cups raw pecan halves

Place baking sheet in oven. Heat oven to 350 F.

Line pie pan with rolled out pie dough. Press into edges and up sides. Use fingers or fork to create decorative edge. Set aside.

In large bowl, whisk together butter, corn syrup, brown sugar and vanilla extract. Add eggs and salt, and whisk until mixture is even. Fold in pecan halves.

Pour mixture into pie crust and spread evenly with spatula. Use pieces of aluminum foil to cover edges of pie crust. Place pie on prepared baking sheet and bake 60-70 minutes, or until pie is set in center.

Remove pie from oven and allow to cool completely before serving or chilling.

Note: Pie can be made 1 day ahead and refrigerated overnight. Allow pie to come to room temperature before serving.

Deliver *Holiday Flavor* with Pecans

Pecan Wild Rice Pilaf

Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 45 minutes
Servings: 12

2 cups chicken or vegetable stock
2 cups water
1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
1 teaspoon kosher salt, plus additional, to taste
1/4 teaspoon cloves

1 cinnamon stick
3/4 cup wild rice, rinsed
1 cup black rice, rinsed
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil or pecan oil
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1/2 large sweet onion, diced
2 cups butternut squash, diced
1 medium tart apple, peeled and diced black pepper, to taste
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme

1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
3/4 cup chopped pecans or pecan pieces
1/3 cup dried currants

In medium saucepan, bring stock, water, nutmeg, ginger, 1 teaspoon kosher salt, cloves and cinnamon stick to boil. Add rice and bring back to simmer. Reduce heat to low and half cover with lid. Allow rice to simmer about 45 minutes, or

until tender and liquid is absorbed. Remove and discard cinnamon stick.

While rice is cooking, in large skillet, heat olive or pecan oil and butter. Add onion and cook, stirring frequently, until translucent, about 4 minutes. Add in butternut squash and cook, stirring often, until squash is tender and beginning to caramelize at edges, about 8-10 minutes. Add in apples and cook additional 3-4

minutes, or until apples soften. Season with salt and pepper, to taste, along with thyme and ground cinnamon. Stir in chopped pecans and currants, and cook until pecans are slightly golden and fragrant. Remove mixture from heat.

Stir butternut squash mixture with cooked rice and season, to taste, with salt and pepper. Serve warm or at room temperature.

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