



MEDIA RELEASE

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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KEEP COUNTRY CORNMEAL TRADITION WITH UPDATED RECIPES

NASHVILLE, Tenn. -- Tennessee has a long and abiding relationship with corn products. Songs like "Rocky Top" famously explain the connection between corn and moonshine; Tennessee even hosts The National Cornbread Festival in South Pittsburg, which will be held this year April 28 and 29.

Humble "cornpone" remains the best companion for bean soups, greens and all manner of traditional Southern fare, but these days, cornmeal can have a tough time fitting in at modern tables. For those who like to eat local products when possible, it seems a shame to not have more ways to use locally grown and ground cornmeal.

In addition to Tennessee's national brands of cornmeal, which are available at most retail food stores, serious localvores can find local cornmeal across the state at www.picktnproduct.org. Visitors can click on "Food" at the left hand side of the home page, then click on "Baking Products."

Cornmeal Upside Down Coffee Cake, the latest Pick Tennessee Products recipe from Tammy Algood, is a great way to discover just how versatile, delicious and even elegant dishes made with cornmeal can be. This cornmeal coffee cake is full of flavors and textures that guarantees the recipe will become a favorite.

Pick Tennessee Products is the statewide campaign developed by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture to help consumers find Tennessee farms, farm products and foods processed in Tennessee. More than 1,600 farmers and about 7,000 products, services and events are currently listed at the site.

Tammy Algood, TDA produce marketing specialist and author of The Complete Southern Cookbook, creates seasonal recipes featuring products grown and processed in Tennessee. A collection of Algood's recipes ranging from traditional to trendy are posted at the Pick Tennessee Products website, www.picktnproducts.org.

To continue the textural theme of the cornmeal and pecans, Cornmeal Upside Down Coffee Cake calls for Demerara sugar, a coarse, light brown raw cane sugar. Demerara is

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only partially processed, leaving large grains that remain crunchy throughout cooking, making it a great choice for creating “crumbled” or sprinkled toppings.

Visit picktnproduct.org for more seasonal recipes and to find farm-direct and other locally grown and processed foods.

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Cornmeal Upside Down Coffee Cake

Yield: 6 to 8 servings

1-1/2 sticks unsalted butter, divided
1/4 cup + 3 tablespoons Demerara sugar, divided
1/4 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1-1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
3 tablespoons chopped pecans
3 tablespoons golden raisins
1 cup plain yellow cornmeal
1 cup all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup milk
1 egg
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 9-inch springform pan and set aside.

Melt 4 tablespoons of the butter in a small saucepan over medium-low heat. Stir in 1/4 cup of the Demerara sugar, along with the brown sugar and cinnamon. Stir constantly for 2 minutes or until the sugars completely dissolve. Remove from the heat and stir in the pecans and raisins. Pour into the prepared pan and spread evenly across the bottom. Set aside.

In the bowl of a food processor, combine the cornmeal, flour, remaining Demerara sugar, baking powder, salt and the remaining butter. Pulse until the mixture resembles coarse meal. Add the milk, egg and vanilla. Pulse several more times to blend well. Spoon the batter on top of the nut mixture in the bottom of the pan. Bake 40 minutes or until the edges are brown and a tester inserted in the center comes out clean.

Cool 5 minutes on a wire rack. Unmold the sides and invert onto a serving plate. Lift off the bottom of the pan. Cool to room temperature before serving.