

What would it have been like to eat at a barn raising meal?

Curious about what some the food tasted like at the barn raising meal? Found below are some simple recipes that you can try to make in class that would give you a flavor of what kind of food was eaten at a barn raising. Remember that early barn raisers used dairy products, fruits, vegetables, and meat from what they raised on their own farms. Very little was purchased from the general store in town. How is that different today?

Try some of these recipes and share with your classmates what you think about the taste, convenience, and the way that it is prepared.

Homemade Butter

Butter was one of the staples served at each meal. The dash churn , familiar to farm homes for centuries, consisted of a tall, narrow, nearly cylindrical stone or wood tub fitted with a wooden cover. The cream was agitated by a hand-operated vertical wooden plunger, stave, or dash. You can make this butter by using a mason jar, and heavy cream.

Measure about one cup of heavy cream and 1/8 teaspoon salt. Put in one quart jar, cover with lid and shake for about 10 minutes. After 10 minutes open the jar to let more air in, recap and continue. After some time you will see the butter separate from the rest of the liquid. The remaining liquid is buttermilk. When the butter is in one large chunk, drain off the buttermilk into another jar to use for homemade pancakes or biscuits. Refrigerate the butter and buttermilk until ready to use. This will yield about 3.4 ounces of butter.

Homemade Applesauce

Apples were a fruit that was plentiful and so the farm wives found many ways to use them in desserts for their families. One way to use apples was make homemade applesauce and serve it warm or over homemade ice cream as a special treat.

Preparation time: 45 minutes. If you want chunky applesauce, use a potato masher to mash the cooked apples. If you prefer smooth apple sauce, run the cooked apples through a food mill.

3 to 4 lbs of peeled, cored, and quartered apples.

1/4 cup of dark brown sugar

1 cup of water

3 inches of cinnamon stick

up to 1/2 cup of white sugar

1/2 teaspoon of salt

Put all ingredients into a large pot. Cover. Bring to boil. Lower heat and simmer for 20-30 minutes and remove from heat. Remove cinnamon sticks. Mash with potato masher.

Homemade Bread

Grains were also plentiful and the farmers would grow the wheat, thresh the wheat for the grain and then grind the wheat into flour. After the wheat had been ground into flour, the farmer's wives would make many different kinds of breads to feed their families. Bread was a staple on every table and served at barn raisings. Sometimes the women would make loaves of bread, or make rolls, and yes, even doughnuts from the wheat flour they had ground. This recipe "Bread in a Bag" will allow you to experience bread making and taste the results you have made yourself!

Bread In A Bag

Put the following ingredients into a gallon, zip-closure (not the zipper tab) freezer bag:

¼ cup all-purpose flour	¼ cup warm water
½ tbsp. yeast	1 tbsp. sugar

Blend the ingredients by working the bag. Close the top of the bag and set it aside for 15 minutes.

Add the following ingredients to the bag:

2 tbsp. nonfat dry milk	½ tbsp vegetable oil
1 cup whole wheat flour	6 tablespoons water
1 tsp. salt	

Squish and squeeze the bag until the dough is well mixed. Slowly add the all purpose flour to make the dough stiff. (Watch as you add the flour—you may need to add just a little more to make the dough stiff.) Knead the dough in the bag five to six minutes. If the dough is still sticky, slowly add more flour. Shape the dough into a loaf while it is still in the bag and put it in a greased pan. Cover the bag with a dishtowel and let it rise 45 to 60 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Move the bag and put the loaf back in the pan. Bake for approximately 25 minutes. Remove the loaf from the pan and cool it on a wire rack.

Homemade Vanilla Ice Cream

During a barn raising, the men would take a break in the afternoon for a cold drink and dessert. One treat that they really enjoyed was a scoop of homemade ice cream after working on the barn all afternoon. The women and children would churn the ice cream after lunch for all to enjoy. Using the cream and milk from the dairy cows and the eggs from their chickens, the families once again used the food stuffs they had to feed their families.

Ice Cream In A Bag

Ingredients: ½ cup milk
 1 tablespoon sugar
 ¼ tsp. vanilla

Supplies: 1 quart size zip-lock freezer bag
 1 gallon size zip-lock freezer bag
 6 tablespoons of salt
 ice

Mix the milk, vanilla, and sugar together in the quart bag. Seal tightly, allowing as little air to remain in the bag as possible.

Fill the gallon freezer bag half full of ice. Add the salt. Seal the bag.

Place the quart bag inside the gallon bag and seal carefully. Again let all the air escape. Wrap the bag in a towel. Gently shake the bag for 5-6 minutes. Ice cream should form. Wipe off the small bag before opening.

Enjoy your ice cream!

Lemon Drop Pie

Lemon drop pie is well known in the Amish communities and is mentioned in both menus for a barn raising. This recipe is more advanced than the others in this section, but might be worth having the students try for its unique taste and the way that it is made.

Pastry for a 1 crust deep-dish 9 inch pie.

1 cups sugar	3 tablespoons all purpose flour
¼ tsp. mace	1/8 tsp. salt
2 eggs	¼ cup fresh lemon juice
1 tbsp. plus 1 tsp. grated lemon zest	2 cups whole milk

TOPPING:

¼ cup (1/2 stick) butter at room temperature	½ cup sugar
1 tsp. vanilla extract	1 tsp. vanilla extract
1/c plus 2 tbs. all purpose flour	½ tsp. baking soda
1/8 tsp salt	¼ cup whole milk
mace	

Roll out the pastry until thin and use it to line a 9 inch deep-dish pie pan. Set aside.

Fill the bottom of a double boiler half full of hot water and bring to a simmer. Meanwhile, whisk together the sugar, flour, mace, and salt; set aside. In the top of the double boiler, beat the eggs thoroughly. Gradually whisk in the lemon juice and zest. Blend in the flour mixture gradually until the mixture is smooth, then gradually add the milk. Place the double boiler atop the simmering water. Cover and cook over low heat for 15 minutes, stirring now and then with a rubber spatula. The pudding will thicken and be puffy looking when done. Remove from the heat and allow to cool for ten minutes. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.

Now make the topping: In a mixer bowl, beat the butter, then gradually add the sugar and vanilla and continue beating until the mixture is fluffy, about 1 minutes. In a measuring cup, combine the flour, baking soda, and salt. Add the flour mixture to the butter sugar mixture alternately with the milk, the beginning and ending with the flour. (This can be done ahead of time and refrigerated until needed.

Transfer the partially cooled filling to the unbaked shell. Using a 1 ½ inch cookie scoop or heaping tablespoon, evenly drop 16 dollops of the topping on the pie, about 1 inch apart. Sprinkle a bit more mace on the top. Bake the pie for 10 minutes, then lower the heat to 350 degrees and continue baking the pie for 30 minutes longer or until the top of the pie is a deep golden brown and a bit puffy, Remove from the oven to a rack and cool thoroughly before cutting into wedges.

Recipes found at

BUTTER: www.psreader.com/article80.html

APPLESAUCE: Farm Journal's Country Cookbook, Edited by Nell B. Nichols, Doubleday and Company, Inc. Garden City, New York, 1972.

BREAD: Adapted from Iowa EFNEP Youth Curriculum Sourcebook, Vegetables, Fruits, Grains, 1995)

ICE CREAM: courtesy of Deb Gordon and Barb Demory, Life Management Instructors, Kirn Junior High, Council Bluffs, Iowa

LEMON DROP PIE: New Recipes from Quilt Country, Marcia Adams, Clarkson Potter/Publishers, New York, 1997.