

WHAT'S COOKING, ARK-LA-TEX?

We don't know about you, but we love to read all sorts of tidbits about cooking. If you love to eat, you will love these tidbits! (Even if you are like us and eat out a lot!!)

For a juicer hamburger add cold water to the beef before grilling (1/2 cup to 1 pound of meat).

Let raw potatoes stand in cold water for at least half an hour before frying to improve the crispness of french-fried potatoes.

Lettuce keeps better if you store in refrigerator without washing first so that the leaves are dry. Wash the day you are going to use.

Microwave a lemon for 15 seconds and double the juice you get before squeezing.

Microwave garlic cloves for 15 seconds and the skins slip right off.

The best way to store fresh celery is to wrap it in aluminum foil and put it in the refrigerator--it will keep for weeks.

A dampened paper towel or terry cloth brushed downward on a cob of corn will remove every strand of corn silk.

Fresh eggs' shells are rough and chalky; old eggs are smooth and shiny.

No "curly" bacon for breakfast when you dip it into cold water before frying.

When working with dough, don't flour your hands; coat them with olive oil to prevent sticking.

Butter pie pastry scraps: sprinkle with cinnamon and sugar, and bake like cookies.

Noodles, spaghetti and other starches won't boil over if you rub the inside of the pot with vegetable oil.

To hasten the cooking of foods in a double boiler, add salt to the water in the outer boiler.

Cure for headaches: Take a lime, cut it in half and rub it on your forehead. The throbbing will go away.

Don't throw out all that leftover wine: Freeze into ice cubes for future use in casseroles and sauces.

Sunlight doesn't ripen tomatoes, warmth does. Store tomatoes with stems pointed down and they will stay fresher, longer.

Sausage patties rolled in flour before frying won't crack open during cooking.

Two drops of yellow food coloring added to boiling noodles will make them look homemade.

When separating eggs, break them into a funnel. The whites will go through leaving the yolk intact in the funnel.

For the perfect boiled egg, cover eggs with cold water and a pinch of salt. Bring the water to a full boil. Remove the pan from the heat and cover. Let the eggs sit for 8-9 minutes. Drain the water and place the eggs in ice water to cool to stop the cooking process.

If you need only 1/2 an onion, save the root half. It will last longer.

To keep salt from clogging in the shaker, add 1/2 teaspoon of cooked rice.

When using spaghetti, keep in mind that 8 ounces of uncooked pasta makes 4 cups cooked.

When using rice, keep in mind that 1 cup of uncooked long-grain white rice makes 3 cups cooked.

Ultimate Disposable Pastry Bag:

Take a heavy-duty zipper-seal plastic bag and snip off one corner, making a slightly curved cut. Using a standard two-piece plastic coupler (available wherever cake decorating supplies are sold), insert the larger piece into the hole. Choose a tip and secure it with the coupler's ring. Fill the bag and zip the top closed. Decorate away, then remove the coupler/tip assembly and toss the bag. No messy cleanup!

Pancakes are lighter and fluffier when you substitute club soda for milk in the batter.

Before opening a package of bacon, roll it. This helps separate the slices for easy removal of individual slices.

A simple way to sharpen kitchen shears: cut a piece of steel wool.

Don't just keep dental floss in your medicine cabinet. Keep some in the kitchen. It's a great tool. Unflavored dental floss is often better than a knife to cleanly cut all kinds of soft foods, soft cheese, rolled dough, layered cake and cheesecake.

