

Enjoy these 2017 N.C. State Fair winning recipes

Jackie Boegel of Raleigh earned first place and \$200 with her Baked Apple French Toast in the North Carolina Apple Growers Association's apple recipe contest at the N.C. State Fair.

Samantha Leonard of Archdale took home first-place honors and \$125 for her Papi's Pecan Pie Pancakes in the N.C. Pecan Association pecan recipe contest.

Entries into the apple contest had to have two cups of N.C. grown apples and could be a dish to serve for breakfast, lunch, snack or dinner. Recipes were judged on taste, appearance and creative use of apples in the recipe.

Recipes in the pecan contest had to contain one cup of North Carolina pecans. Judging was based on taste appeal, creative use of pecans, appearance and ease of preparation.

Baked Apple French Toast

- 4 cups day-old whole grain bread, cubed
- 5 large eggs
- 1 ½ cups milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 ½ teaspoon cinnamon, divided
- 1/8 teaspoon ginger
- 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon cloves
- 5 tablespoons coconut-palm sugar
- 2-3 apples, cored, peeled and sliced into wedges
- 2 tablespoons butter
- ¼ cup brown sugar

Preheat oven to 375 degrees and grease a 9x9 baking pan. Add bread cubes to the baking pan. In a medium bowl whisk eggs, milk, vanilla, ½ teaspoon cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, cloves and coconut-palm sugar. Pour over the bread, pushing the bread down to soak up the liquid.

In a large skillet over medium-low heat, add the apples and butter. Sprinkle with 1 teaspoon cinnamon, stir and cover to steam for about 3 minutes. Sprinkle with brown sugar. Continue cooking with cover off until tender and slightly caramelized (you don't want them to get mushy). Remove from heat to cool slightly. Spoon caramelized apples over the bread.

Bake on center rack for 20-30 minutes. Knife inserted in the middle should be dry. Remove from oven. Drizzle with maple syrup.

Papi's Pecan Pie Pancakes

- 2 cups flour
- 3 tablespoons white sugar
- 2 tablespoons baking powder
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 1 3/4 cups milk
- 1 1/2 cups chopped pecans
- 2 tablespoons cinnamon
- 1/2 cup brown sugar (to be sprinkled on pancakes)

Mix the flour, white sugar, baking powder and pecans until well combined. Add the milk and eggs and mix until the mixture is combined; you will still have lumps. Then add cinnamon and melted butter. Preheat pan to 350 F and butter lightly. Pour a healthy 1/2 cup of batter to the pan, distributing the pecans. Before flipping the pancake, sprinkle about a tablespoon of brown sugar on pancake. Try to avoid edges, because it will burn. For a crunchier cake, you can add more pecans with the brown sugar as well.