



Collection Corner: Apple Picking & Preservation

In the 1800s, apples were grown in small orchards on the farm. The majority of these apples were cider-making apples, which are highly acidic. They are not good to eat raw, but they have good fermenting properties, which is why they were used to make ciders. Apple picking was done delicately and in teams of two or three. Part of this job required the picker to sort through the bruised apples, and the apples that could still be eaten safely. Pickers would use the tools pictured on the next page to reach the apples high in the trees.

For large orchards, an apple sorter or grader (pictured on the next page) would be used to separate the blemished apples from those in mint condition. It could also sort the apples by size so the bigger apples, that would fetch a higher price, could be taken and sold at market.

Bruised and blemished apples would be turned into cider using the cider press – a wrought-iron machine that would smash the apples (pictured on the next page). The smashed apples would be placed in a wooden bin and have a wood block placed on top so that when the second press was cranked, it would squeeze the cider out of the smashed apples. The remains of the apples – mostly cores and peels – were given to the pigs and chickens as a treat. Hard ciders were common but eventually went out of style during the temperance movements of the late 1800s and early 1900s.

These apples could also be sliced and dried in ovens to be used in cakes or pies. Sometimes farm families would have a weekend event to make apple butter. Often large quantities were made in a large copper kettle set outside over a fire so there was plenty to share with family and friends. It is believed that the Pennsylvania Dutch (descendants of German immigrants) came up with the idea and recipe/instructions for apple butter with each family having a different, but specific, recipe.

What is your favorite type of apple?

Do you visit an orchard to pick apples in the fall?

What do you make out of the apples you pick or buy?





Apple Items from the Collection

These items are part of the Carroll County Farm Museum's collection and are on display in the bottom of the Alms Barn. They have been donated throughout the years from members of the community.





Soft Apple Cake

Ingredients:

- 3 eggs
- 1 ½ cup granulated sugar
- ¾ cup applesauce
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 3 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 cups chopped apples
- Glaze –
- 4 tablespoon salted butter
- ½ cup brown sugar packed
- 2 tablespoons heavy cream, half & half, or milk
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract



Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 9x13 inch baking dish.
2. Beat eggs in a large mixing bowl. Add sugar, applesauce & oil and mix.
3. Stir in flour, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, salt & vanilla until combined.
4. Gently stir in the chopped apples.
5. Pour batter into the baking dish. Bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until the top is golden brown and a toothpick inserted near center comes out clean.
6. Cool on a wire rack.
7. Make the glaze by combining butter, brown sugar, heavy cream & vanilla in a small saucepan over medium heat. Stirring often, bring to a light boil. Stirring constantly, let mixture boil for a minute for a thin glaze and two to three minutes for a thicker glaze. Let the glaze cool for a few minutes and then spoon it evenly over the cake.
8. Serve and enjoy. Store leftover cake loosely covered.

