



News Column for week of November 19, 2018

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The Blessing of Leftover Thanksgiving Turkey

After the gathering, most Thanksgiving hosts find they have an abundance of turkey leftovers. Lucky you! Even if your family quickly tires of re-heated turkey, these leftovers can be counted among your Thanksgiving blessings with just a little planning. Cooked turkey freezes beautifully and can then be used in many dishes for a quick, easy meal. This is especially nice with the busy Holiday season upon us!

To prepare cooked turkey for freezing, simply de-bone and package measured amounts into freezer bags or freezer containers. Remove as much air as possible from the bag or container, and freeze. Frozen, cooked turkey should be used within 4-6 months for best quality and can be used in any recipe that calls for cooked turkey or chicken. Some recipe ideas include soups, white chili, enchiladas, casseroles, turkey tetrazzini, and my favorite, turkey pot pie.

Growing up, and well into my adulthood, my mom's turkey pot pie was as eagerly anticipated following a holiday meal as the original meal itself. Her flaky, made-from-scratch crust filled with a hearty mix of turkey and vegetables in thick gravy, baked to golden perfection was always a meal you didn't want to miss! Although mom never used a recipe for her savory creation, the one below is as close as I could find if you add some green beans and peas.

Turkey Pot Pie

Ingredients:

1 recipe pastry for a (10 inch) double crust pie	salt and pepper to taste
4 tablespoons butter	2 cubes chicken bouillon
1 small onion, minced	2 cups water
2 stalks celery, chopped	3 potatoes, peeled and cubed
2 carrots, diced	1 1/2 cups cooked turkey, cubed
3 tablespoons dried parsley	3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon dried oregano	1/2 cup milk

Directions:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Roll out bottom pie crust and place in the 10 inch pie pan and set aside.

Place 2 tablespoons of the butter in a large skillet. Add the onion, celery, carrots, parsley, oregano, salt and pepper. Cook and stir until the vegetables are soft. Stir in the bouillon and water. Bring mixture to a boil. Stir in the potatoes, and cook until tender but still firm.

In a medium saucepan, melt the remaining 2 tablespoons butter. Stir in the turkey and flour. Add the milk, and heat through. Stir the turkey mixture into the vegetable mixture, and cook until thickened. Pour mixture into the unbaked pie shell. Roll out the top crust, and place on top of filling. Flute edges, and make 4 slits in the top crust to let out steam.

Bake in the preheated oven for 15 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 350 degrees F and continue baking for 20 minutes, or until crust is golden brown.

So, as we enter the busy holiday season, count your frozen Thanksgiving turkey leftovers as a blessing for those days you need to fix a quick meal.

For more information about planned leftovers or other recipe ideas, contact Kathy in the Southwind Extension District's Iola office at 620-365-2242 or by email at kmcewan@ksu.edu.