



FAQ's

Product Questions

Q: I just received my mix and I cannot find the preparation instructions?

A: Lift the label for the product instructions.

Q: How should I store my mixes and what is the shelf life?

A: Mixes should be stored in a cool, dry area. Our products are stamped with a lot number that contains the "Julian" date of when the mix was manufactured; for example **S1212311111**

S - internal use

12 - two digit year

123 - day of the year

11111 - internal use

Q: Can I freeze dry mixes?

A: Yes, store in an airtight freezer container for up to 6 months.

Note: According to the Sugar Industry:

Powdered Sugar should be stored in a cool, dry location (not refrigerator or freezer).

When it gets moist, it develops lumps and because of its physical properties, it tends to absorb strong odors, even through packages.

Cooking Questions

Q: Can I use fresh fruit in Homemade Gourmet® Texas Cobbler and Old Fashioned Apple Crisp?

A: Yes, the Research and Development Team (R&D) test kitchen recommends replacing pie filling with 3 cups sliced fresh fruit, 2 tablespoons sugar, 1 tablespoon lemon juice and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cinnamon. If using fresh apples, we recommend Granny Smith baking apples.

Q: Can I freeze casserole-type dishes?

A: Yes, allow the casserole to cool to room temperature before placing in the freezer and use within 3 months of the date frozen. Be sure to include, on the label, the date placed in the freezer and the reheating instructions.

Q: Can I freeze a casserole dish containing potatoes, rice or pasta?

A: Yes, however, they will lose some of their texture and may be softer than if baked immediately.

Q: Do I need to allow the casserole to thaw before baking?

A: Yes, if possible. Allow the casserole to thaw overnight in the refrigerator. If thawed completely, the baking time will be comparable to the original bake time of the recipe.

Q: Can I bake a frozen casserole?

A: Yes, you will have to increase the baking time significantly. After 1 hour of baking, if a baking thermometer inserted into the center does not read at least 160 degrees, continue baking and check every 10-15 minutes.

Q: Does altitude affect cooking instructions?

A: Yes, at higher elevations, water boils at a LOWER temperature, thus requiring a longer cooking time.

- For baked goods, add $\frac{1}{3}$ cup flour and increase baking time as needed. For best results in altitudes above 9500 feet, bake breads as mini loaves or muffins.
- Grease your baking pans thoroughly to keep your breads from sticking.
- Increase cooking time slightly, as needed.
- Use smaller pans whenever possible.
- Consult your local County Extension office for more information.

Q: A recipe calls for $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped onions: what size onion should I purchase.

A: A medium onion will yield anywhere from $\frac{3}{4}$ to $\frac{2}{3}$ cup chopped onion.

Below is a quick reference for some commonly used produce items:

1 medium onion.....	$\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{2}{3}$ cup chopped
1 medium bell pepper.....	$\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 cup chopped
1 medium cucumber.....	1 to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups sliced or chopped

1 medium apple.....	¾ cup diced or 1 cup sliced or chopped
3 medium apples.....	1 pound
1 medium potato.....	1 cup cubed
3 medium potatoes.....	1 pound
3 medium carrots.....	1 ½ cups diced or sliced
1 pound broccoli.....	3 ½ cups florets

Q: When a recipe calls for ‘1 cup nuts, chopped’, what does that mean? Should I measure a cup of nuts first and then chop them or do I chop the nuts and then measure them to make a cup?

A: That's a good question and an important one, too, because chopping an ingredient before after measuring it can make a difference in the outcome of the recipe. Here's a trick that might help you remember. If the word "chopped" comes before the ingredient when listed in a recipe, then chop the ingredient before measuring. If the word "chopped" comes after the ingredient, then chop after measuring. Using your example of "1 cup nuts, chopped," you should measure 1 cup of nuts and then chop them.

Q: How many saltine crackers equal 2 cups of crushed saltine crackers?

A: Approximately 44 crackers or 1 package from a 1 pound ½ ounce box will equal 2 cups of crushed crackers.

Q: Can I substitute oil for butter in baking?

A: Yes, ½ cup oil is equal to 10 tablespoons melted butter.

Q: What size eggs are used in Homemade Gourmet® recipes?

A: The R&D test kitchen uses large eggs in all recipes.

Q: Can I substitute egg whites for eggs?

A: Yes, 2 egg whites or ¼ cup egg substitute is equal to 1 egg.

Q: How can I tell if my eggs are fresh?

A: Fresh eggs’ shells are rough and chalky; old eggs’ shells are smooth and shiny.

Q: A recipe calls for 2 cups diced cooked chicken, how much raw chicken do I need?

A: One pound or approximately 2 raw chicken breasts equal 2 cups cooked chicken. For ground beef, 1 pound cooked lean ground beef will equal 2 ½ cups cooked ground beef.

Q: When I sliced my roast, all the juices spilled over the cutting board: what happened?

A: It is very important to let a roast, pork, turkey, lamb or chicken stand for approximately 10 minutes before slicing to allow the juices to settle.

Q: A recipe says it yields 36 muffins, but mine only made 28 muffins: what happened?

A: There are varieties of muffin tin sizes, therefore the yields will vary. Either the tins were filled more than ¾ full or the tins may be smaller or larger than what the recipe was tested with. The R&D test kitchen mini-muffin tin holds 2 tablespoons of water and regular muffin tin holds 6 tablespoons of water.

Q: Do I use salted or unsalted butter and why does it matter?

A: Unsalted butter has the freshest, most natural butter taste and does not contain any preservatives. Also, it allows you to control the amount of salt added to a recipe.

Q: What are the different baking dish sizes?

A: Here is a handy chart for your reference:

Baking Dish Casserole

8x8x2 or 11x7x1½2 quarts

9x9x2.....2 ½ quarts

13x9x2.....3 quarts

Q: What is a jelly roll pan and how does it differ from a cookie sheet?

A: A jelly roll pan is a rectangular baking sheet with a shallow rim. The R&D test kitchen uses a 15x10x1 and a 17x11x1 jelly roll pan. A cookie sheet is flat baking sheet with the shortest edges slightly turned up for handling. The R&D test kitchen cookie sheet measures 15 ½ x 13 ½.

Note: Any questions not answered here may be emailed to shop@homemadegourmet.com.