

August 8, 2018

Amplifying Life

Shandi Andres, Family and Consumer Sciences Agent
K-State Research and Extension, Flint Hills District

Tips for Baking Success

My grandma loved to bake and her house always smelled of fresh baked goods. She inspired my love of cooking and baking as many of my favorite memories were created in her kitchen. Life is busy and I want to encourage you to allow time for family baking. Family baking is an activity that we can continue to participate in at any age. To make the most of the time together consider turning off the distractions like television, cell phones, and the computer. Let's look at a few other tips for baking success!

We want to keep everyone physically safe and free of germs and bacteria. Long hair should be restrained and long sleeves avoided or rolled up. Be sure to wash hands and sanitize counter tops before beginning. Many choose to wear an apron to protect clothes. To stay free from germs, be sure to cough or sneeze away from food and wash hands after touching anything other than food.

Before you start, be sure to read the recipe from top to bottom. This is to make sure you have all supplies and equipment as well as knowing the process to prepare the item. Next, you should gather all of the ingredients and equipment to get ready.

A few basics about ingredients that often get overlooked: dry ingredients should be spooned into dry measuring cups and leveled off with the flat edge of a knife. Scooping directly out of the package can produce more product than the recipe calls for. This is common when using flour. Sift ingredients only if the recipe calls for it. Avoid measuring ingredients over the mixing bowl; if you get too much you can't fix it. Large eggs are the standard size to use in home baking. For best results use butter or hard stick margarine, not a spread or reduced-fat product.

There are a few ins and outs when using the oven: before preheating the oven, make sure that the oven racks are in the right place for the pans and recipe. Allow 10 minutes for the oven to preheat. Place pans in the oven so they do not touch each other or the oven sides. Do not place pans on racks directly above or below another pan so the air can circulate during baking. Keep clean, dry oven mitts close by. Have your cooling racks ready before pulling the pans from the oven.

Clean up as you go during the food preparation process and while the product is baking. This will make the clean-up at the end much smoother and the baking process

more enjoyable. Don't forget to have fun and share the foods and recipes as you create memories as a family!

For more information on family baking tips, feel free to contact me. Shandi Andres, Flint Hills Extension District, 501 W Main, Council Grove, KS 66846. (620) 767-5136 or sdandres@ksu.edu