The Thanksgiving holiday is just around the corner. Every year we look for something new to bring to the table. This week, we will look at side dishes that will complement the main event!

Sausage & Cornbread Dressing

Prep Time: 1 hr.
Cook Time: 1 hr. 15 min.
Total Time: 2 hr. 15 min.
Servings: 12

1 pkg. of giblets from a turkey, chopped
2 C. water
1 (8.5 oz.) package corn muffin mix (such as Jiffy®)
1/2 C. milk
5 eggs, divided
2 T. shortening, melted
3 lbs. hot Italian sausage
6 C. diced celery, or more to taste
1 lg. white onion, diced
1/2 C. diced hot peppers
1 (14 oz.) can turkey broth
1 C. dry bread crumbs
3 T. dried sage
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. ground black pepper

Bring water to a boil in a saucepan. Add giblets and boil for 10 to 15 min. Remove and discard giblets, reserving water.
Preheat the oven to 400°F. Grease an 8-inch square baking pan.
Mix corn muffin mix, milk, egg, and shortening together in a bowl. Pour into the prepared baking pan.
Bake in the preheated oven until golden brown, 15 to 20 minutes. Set aside to cool.
Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Cook and stir sausage in the hot skillet until browned and crumbly, 5 to 7 min. Add celery, onion, and hot peppers and continue cooking 3 to 5 min. more. Drain and discard grease. Transfer sausage mixture to a large mixing bowl.
Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease a 9x13-inch casserole pan.
Add giblet water, turkey broth, bread crumbs, cornbread, remaining eggs, sage, salt, and black pepper to the sausage mixture in the mixing bowl. Mix together well and transfer to the prepared casserole pan.
Bake in the preheated oven until slightly brown on top with darker brown edges, about 45 min., checking often. Let cool 10 to 15 min. before serving.

Sesame Green Beans

Prep Time: 5 min.
Cook Time: 20 min.
Total Time: 25 min.
Servings: 4

1 T. olive oil
1 T. sesame seeds
1 lb. fresh green beans, cut into 2 inch pieces
1/4 C. chicken broth
1/4 tsp. salt
freshly ground black pepper

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add sesame seeds and stir until seeds begin to darken. Add green beans; cook and stir until beans turn bright green.
Pour in chicken broth, salt, and pepper. Cover and cook until beans are tender-crisp, about 10 min. Uncover and cook until liquid evaporates.

Glazed Carrots

Prep Time: 10 min.
Cook Time: 15 min.
Total Time: 25 min.
Servings: 8

2 lb. carrots, peeled and cut into sticks
1/4 C. butter
1/4 C. packed brown sugar
1/4 tsp. salt
1/8 tsp. ground white pepper

Place carrots into a large saucepan; pour in enough water to reach depth of 1 inch and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer carrots until tender, 8 to 10 min. Drain and transfer to a bowl.
Melt butter in the same saucepan over low heat. Stir in brown sugar, salt, and white pepper until dissolved.
Add carrots to the saucepan and toss until coated in the brown sugar mixture. Cook and stir until carrots are heated through and fully coated with glaze, 1 to 3 more minutes.

Cream Corn

Prep Time: 5 min.
Cook Time: 10 min.

Total Time: 15 min.
Servings: 8

2 (10-oz.) packages frozen corn kernels, thawed and drained
1 C. heavy cream
1 tsp. salt
2 T. granulated sugar
1/4 tsp. ground black pepper
2 T. butter
1/2 C. whole milk
2 T. all-purpose flour
1/4 C. grated Parmesan cheese

Combine corn, heavy cream, sugar, butter, salt, and black pepper in a skillet over medium heat. Cook, stirring occasionally, until butter melts, 3 to 5 min. Meanwhile, whisk milk and flour together in a small bowl until smooth.

Whisk in milk mixture; cook, stirring constantly, until the sauce thickens enough to lightly coat the corn and the corn is heated through, about 4 min.

Remove from heat and stir in Parmesan cheese until melted. Serve hot.

Garlic Mashed Potato Casserole

Prep Time: 15 min.
Cook Time: 1 hr. 5 min.
Total Time: 1 hr. 20 min.
Servings: 6

3 lb. Yukon Gold potatoes, or more as needed
1/2 C. milk, hot
1/2 C. cream cheese, softened
1/2 C. chopped green onions, divided
3 T. butter
1 lg. egg, lightly beaten
3 cloves garlic, or to taste, chopped
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 C. shredded Cheddar cheese

Place potatoes in a large pot and cover with lightly salted water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer until tender, about 20 min. Drain and return to pot.

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Grease a glass baking dish. Combine milk, cream cheese, 1/3 C. green onions, butter, egg, garlic, and salt in a bowl; add to potatoes. Mash until smooth; transfer to the prepared baking dish. Sprinkle with Cheddar cheese and remaining green onions.

Bake in the preheated oven until lightly browned, about 40 min.

Maple Glazed Sweet Potatoes

Prep Time: 30 min.
Cook Time: 1 hr. 5 min.
Total Time: 1 hr. 35 min.
Servings: 12

4 lbs. sweet potatoes, peeled and cut in 1-inch chunks
2 T. olive oil
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. ground black pepper
5 strips smoked bacon, chopped
1 lb. onions, thinly sliced
1 C. pure maple syrup
2 tsp. fresh thyme

Preheat the oven to 425°F.

Toss sweet potato chunks, olive oil, salt, and black pepper in a bowl; spread onto a large rimmed baking sheet.

Roast in the preheated oven until browned and tender, about 40 min., stirring halfway.

Cook bacon in a large skillet over medium heat until crisp and brown, about 10 min.; transfer bacon to a bowl, leaving drippings in the skillet. Add onions to the skillet; cook and stir until browned, about 10 min. Reduce heat to low. Continue cooking and stirring until onions are very soft, brown, and sweet, 10 to 15 min. more; transfer to bowl with bacon. Set aside.

Pour maple syrup and thyme into the hot skillet; bring to a rolling boil. Boil until reduced by half, 3 to 4 min. Add sweet potatoes and bacon mixture to the skillet; stir to coat with maple glaze. Transfer to a serving dish.

Wild Turkey and Dressing Casserole

1 side of a wild turkey breast
32 oz. chicken broth
4 T. butter, divided
2 bay leaves
1 med. yellow onion, chopped
1 bell pepper, chopped
1 stalk celery, chopped
2 T. vegetable oil
2 T. fresh sage, diced
12 oz. prepared herb stuffing
1 can (10.5 oz.) condensed cream of mushroom soup

1/2 C. dried cranberries
Salt and pepper to taste

Place the wild turkey breast, chicken broth, 3 T. of butter, and bay leaves into a slow cooker; cook on low for 10-12 hr. (or high for 4-6 hr.) until the meat easily shreds, then shred the turkey and reserve the cooking broth.

Heat the vegetable oil and remaining 1 T. of butter in a pan over medium heat, then sauté the onion, bell pepper, and celery for 4-6 min. until soft.

Stir the fresh sage into the vegetables, cook for another 1-2 min., and remove from the heat.

In a large bowl, mix the herb stuffing, sautéed vegetables, cream of mushroom soup, dried cranberries, and 2-1/2 C. of the reserved cooking broth.

Fold the shredded turkey into the stuffing mixture, season with salt and pepper to taste, and spread evenly into a buttered 9×13-inch baking dish.

Bake at 350°F for 35-40 min. until golden brown and cooked through, then slice into squares to serve.

Roasted Butternut Squash

Prep Time: 15 min.
Cook Time: 25 min.
Total Time: 40 min.
Servings: 6

1 butternut squash
1 C. chopped red onion
2 T. olive oil
3 oz. fresh spinach, stems removed and leaves torn in bite-size pieces
1/3 C. sweetened dried cranberries
1/3 C. chopped pecans

Preheat oven to 450°F). Lightly grease a baking sheet.

Slice butternut squash cross-wise into 1-inch slices; peel and clean each slice, removing and discarding seeds and stringy pulp from the center. Cut cleaned slices into 1-inch cubes.

Toss squash cubes, onion, and olive oil together in a bowl until coated; transfer to the prepared baking sheet.

Roast in the preheated oven until squash is tender and starting to brown, 25 to 30 min.

Toss squash mixture, spinach, dried cranberries, and pecans together in a serving bowl and serve warm.

Pear and Pomegranate Salad

Prep Time: 10 min.
Cook Time: 10 min.
Total Time: 20 min.
Servings: 2

3 C. green leaf lettuce, rinsed and torn
1 Bartlett or Anjou pear - halved, cored, and cut into slices
1/3 C. pomegranate seeds
1 T. vegetable oil
2 T. pomegranate juice
1 T. lemon juice
1 tsp. prepared Dijon-style mustard
1/2 T. honey
ground black pepper to taste

Divide lettuce, pear slices, and pomegranate seeds between two bowls and mix gently.

Combine vegetable oil, pomegranate juice, lemon juice, mustard, honey, and pepper in a saucepan. Bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat and simmer, stirring frequently, until dressing thickens slightly, about 2 min. Pour warm dressing over salads and serve.

Quote of the Week:

"Honor to the soldier and sailor everywhere who bravely bears his country's cause." (Veterans Day, 11th)

~ Abraham Lincoln