

Dear Teachers,

I am sorry that I wasn't able to make the conference due to the weather. Thank you for wanting to attend my presentation about meal planning with pork.

These notes were the script that I would have used at the conference. If you should have any questions, please contact me at 801-712-2164 or email me at pork4you@hotmail.com. The Utah Pork Producers also gives presentations on Today's Pork in CTE classes and ProStart classes. If you are interested in a presentation, please let me know.

How many of you eat pork?

How many of you eat pork 1/month?

How many of you eat pork 1x/week?

I have found when I was a young adult and learning to cook that when I went to the grocery store, I would buy meats that were familiar to me. Meats that I had eaten growing up or meat that I felt that I had a skill set to cook a successful meal.

I grew up in the generation of dry overcooked pork due to the scare of trichinosis. Not enjoying that type of pork, my early cooking years of using pork included bacon and sausage – Bacon for breakfast or wrapped around scallops and sausage in stuffed mushrooms.

Today, I am going to take you on a journey to introduce you to the new world of today's pork and talk about the different ways to cook the different cuts.

So let's start with the basics and talk about mealtime.

Meal time for the family starts at 5:30 or 6:00 or when the family sits down at the table. For whoever is preparing the meal, meal time starts at mental or physical planning either for the day or the week. I have found that with busy schedules that the concept of cook once, eat twice has been a huge help in preparing healthy nutritious meals.

There are three basic steps to meal preparation regardless of the meat and dishes that you choose.

1. Timing – How many of us as young cooks think at 5:00, I would like pulled pork sandwiches tonight. Unless you are going for take out, pulled pork isn't going to happen at 5:00.
2. Menu – skill sets, difficulty of dishes
3. Patience

In order to better understand these three concepts, let's even go back further to basics and talk about the cuts and temperature requirements of pork to better understand selecting specific cuts for meals.

Temperature: Last June the USDA approved the final internal temperature of 145 degrees with a 3 minute rest. With carry over cooking, you can take the meat out of the oven a few degrees less than 145 and let the meat rest for 3 minutes.

The reason that the temperature has changes is from a series of changes in the pork industry. Several generations ago trichinosis was a very real disease. This is how it would get into the pork – worm eggs from the dirt and spoiled food. The worm would grow in the pig but it wasn't detected by looking at the meat. In order not to get sick from pork, it was necessary to cook pork until it was very overdone and very dry.

In 1970, consumers became very aware of their diet and health. They realized that the more fat in their diet the more chance for a heart attack. The pork industry realized that consumption of pork was declining and went to work on research. The pork industry realized that three factors needed to be addressed: FEED, ENVIRONMENT and GENETICS.

I was going to now show a video showing pork production and the way that pork is raised today. Pork is raised in climate controlled barns and fed formulated pellets. This way they no longer eat garbage and dirt and their environment is clean, safe from predators and they are kept safe from disease. Becky Low is trying to download this video on their website. There is also a u tube video titled animal safety in the hog industry that explains the hog industry right here in Utah.

Now you have seen how the environment and feed is different but what about genetics? All of the pork that you buy in the grocery store is crossbred. Cross breeding of the 8 main meat pigs for the best genetic traits – flavor, muscle mass, and, size.

Pork is not termed like beef, prime, select or choice. Pork does have 4 grades, but these are termed at the processor for determining the fat and muscle mass.

Pork is divided into 5 primal cuts which are the wholesale cuts. Butchers then cut the primals into retail cuts.

There is now another video showing a chef cutting up a half carcass of pork to better understand the cuts and cooking methods. Becky is trying to download this video as well.

You also have received in the envelope a brochure showing all the cuts and where they come from on the pig. Muscles that aren't used a lot are more tender and require faster cooking times as well as dry heat cooking. Muscles that are used a lot are tougher and require a longer cooking time and moist heat cooking.

Let's talk about which cuts you would use depending on how much time you have to prepare a meal.

You also have a sheet on rubs. Tenderloins and roasts respond very well to rubs. Use one of these rubs when baking a tenderloin, roast or pulled pork for delicious flavors to enhance your meat.

For a fast meal: Pork Chops – cooked with dry heat cooking, left over loin roast, left over pulled pork for burritos or pulled pork sandwiches, ground pork burgers, ham steaks or ham sandwiches.

30 minute meal: tenderloin or baked pork chops (this would give you left overs for the following night)

1 hour meal: small loin roast or sirloin roast

Longer time: ribs, pulled pork which can be used for several dishes

Now let me tell you how to cook each of these cuts: These are just basics but they are simple ways for you to have success in your cooking if some of these cuts are new to you.

Pork Chops: These can be grilled or fried. A ½ pork chop can be grilled for 3 minutes on each side.

Ground pork patties – These can be either grilled , fried or baked. Don't make them over ½ thick or you will have them browner on the outside than you may like. Make a dimple on the patty and it won't puff up when cooking.

Tenderloin: I like to roast the tenderloin – use a rub from the sheet on rubs that is in your packet and roast at 425 degrees for 17 minutes. Test for the temp of 145 and if not reached, cook a few more minutes. Always have a calibrated thermometer to test your meat for successful meals. I have included another recipe page that has several tenderloin recipes and rub recipes. Note that on the tenderloin recipes sheet that the temperature should be 145 and not 148. This was the old temperature and the recipe sheet hasn't been changed yet.

Baked Pork Chops: There is a delicious recipe in the pig and pork brochure that has been a favorite. It can be made and cooked in about 34 minutes.

Loin or Sirloin Roast: Always use a rub to enhance the flavor of the meat. For a sliceable roast, I like to cook mine at 350 degrees for 20 minutes per pound. Test for temperature and either take out or continue cooking to reach desired temperature.

Pulled Pork: You have the recipe as a handout and this is delicious. You can either use a butt roast or a loin or sirloin if you want less fat.

Ribs: You also have this recipe on the handout. Try to always buy ribs that are 2 1/4 pounds or less.

Remember the three concepts of meal planning and have fun with trying new recipes. Mealtime will be enjoyable when understanding different cuts of pork and different cooking methods depending on your time and what you like to eat.

Have fun with learning new recipes that will fit into your lifestyle and skill sets. You will find over 1,700 recipes on www.porkbeinspired.com.