

Sure-fire recipes

Cooking wild game takes know-how

By PAT CAUDILL

A lot of discussion among the families of wild game hunters is likely to revolve around the preparation and cooking of their prize.

First, Mom may not be too wild about tangling with the animal in the kitchen, and even the saltiest game hunter may turn chicken when faced with the task of getting his catch into the pot.

And then there may be some discussion between confident wild game chefs about the best preparation of the meat to maximize its natural flavor.

N.C. Extension specialists in game preparation at N.C. State University say that steps for preparing the animal meat begin right on the field. The type of animal, the age of the animal and the speed at which the animal was killed will make a difference in the taste.

Meat toughens as the animal gets older. An animal killed quickly will be more tender and immediate bleeding and dressing and cooling will retard spoilage, especially critical on warm days.

Aging of the meat is often a topic of disagreement. Game that is hung outside for several weeks develops a strong flavor due to decomposition, but hanging game from the deer family at cold or freezing temperatures for a few days to three weeks tenderizes and causes some flavor change.

Keep in mind that the amount of fat in game is much lower than that in similar domestic animals. If a game animal is broiled, roasted or fried, extra fat must be added. This can be done by adding fat to ground game or by barding, that is by placing strips of fat over the meat during cooking. Or it can be done by larding, inserting pieces of fat into the meat.

They don't recommend using the fat of a wild game animal because it has a strong, wild flavor. In fact, they suggest you remove as much fat as possible from the meat and replace it with other kinds of fat.

Here are some more specific directions for field preparation from the Home Extension Service in Haywood County; along with some tried and true recipes for game cooking.

DEER

In The Field, bleed carcass thoroughly as soon as possible after the kill. (Placing head

and shoulders downhill makes this easier.) Dress-out to aid in lowering body heat. (Keep hair and other contamination from touching meat.) Drain off remaining blood, wipe with clean cloth, trim away damaged parts. Cool rapidly and thoroughly, hang carcass in shade. (Prop chest cavity open with a stick.) Keep cool, clean and don't abuse while transporting.

In The Home, skin carcass. (Can also be done in field.) Wash away dirt, leaves, blood, hair and other contaminants with clean, cold water. (Use hose and brush if possible.) Let carcass drip dry. (This forms protective glazed covering.) Age at 34° to 36° in dry place for 7-10 days. (This develops best flavor and tenderness, plus making easier to handle, cut and wrap for storage.)

In The Locker, cut up carcass as you would beef. Add fat (beef suet is best) to ground meat. Wrap with moisture-vapor proof packaging designed for freezer storage. (Do immediately after meat is cut.) Freeze quickly at 0°F. or lower and keep at that temperature. Don't keep ground meat longer than 2 to 3 months, roasts and steaks 8 to 12 months.

In Preparation, compensate for lean or dry meat by cooking carefully or using bacon, salt pork, suet or butter for basting. Use of herbs, spices, condiments, onions, or garlic will help bring out flavor. Marinate less tender cuts in tomato or citrus fruit juice, or weak vinegar solution. Commercial tenderizers may also be useful. Otherwise prepare as you would beef.

In Cooking, use dry heat methods (roasting, broiling, pan-broiling) for tender cuts of meat — sirloin, back, ribs, top round and shoulder steaks from young animals. Combination of dry and moist heat methods (using aluminum foil) may also be used. Overcooking venison may result in loss of tenderness and moistness.

BEAR

Remove all fat from bear meat at once, as it turns rancid very quickly.

If marinated at least 24 hours in an oil-based marinade, all bear, except black bear, is edible. Cook after marinated, as for any recipe for Beef Pot Roast or Stew. A bear cub will need about 2½ hours cooking; for an

older animal, allow 3½ to 4 hours. Bear, like pork, can carry trichinosis, so be sure the meat is always well cooked.

VENISON HAMBURGER

To make this lean meat more interesting in ground form, combine 2 parts ground venison with 1 part fresh sausage meat. Cook as for hamburger but allow extra time to be sure the meat is no longer pink.

VENISON WITH MUSHROOM GRAVY

5 lb. venison
1 can cream mushroom soup
pepper

VENISON SWISS STEAKS

¾ Cup flour
3 T fat
2 tsp. salt
2 T. onion salt
¼ tsp. pepper

4 venison steaks

Combine flour, salt and pepper. Cut steaks into individual servings. Pound dry ingredients into steaks. Brown steaks in hot fat in pan. Sprinkle each piece with onion salt. Remove meat; make gravy. Replace meat and cook over low heat for 1½ hours or until tender.

RABBIT

Most hunters prefer to dress rabbits immediately after they are shot. Removing of the entrails and letting the blood drain at this time has a two-fold advantage. The draining of the blood gives the meat a better quality. Discarding the entrails removes the chief cause of spoilage and eliminates the necessity of carrying that extra weight around for the rest of the hunting day.

Some people prefer rabbits that are soaked in vinegar or wine before cooking. Others like them soaked in salted water and still others prefer to take them as they come with no soaking.

RABBIT RAGOUT WITH DUMPLINGS

1½ pounds rabbit meat
½ cup flour
1 teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
3 tablespoons fat
4 potatoes, diced
4 carrots, sliced
2 onions, diced
1 tablespoon parsley
flour
water

Cut rabbit meat into 1-inch cubes. Mix flour, salt, and pepper together and dust meat with mixture. Melt fat in large kettle, add meat, and brown. Add enough hot water to cover meat, cover kettle, and simmer 2 hours, or until meat is tender. Add vegetables and cook an additional half hour. Thicken stew with 1½ tablespoons flour and water. Once gravy is thick enough, drop in dumpling-batter by spoonfuls to make dumplings (below). Cover kettle tightly and boil gently for 15 minutes. Serve gravy, meat and

VA Accelerates Collection

The Veterans Administration has announced that the State of North Carolina has approximately 2,869 cases of delinquent debts by veterans under immediate review in which legal action will be taken unless the debts are paid.

VA Administrator Robert P. Nimmo, in announcing the agency's accelerated program of debt collection, said, "Our plans are to substantially reduce the number of outstanding debts owed to the government by veterans, and I am instructing our various state district counsels to pursue an aggressive program of debt collection."

Robert E. Lee, the VA's district counsel for the state, said new cases of uncollected debts are being referred to his office on an average of 300 each month. His office will bring suit against approximately 150 North Carolina veterans this month.

Lee said the VA is "more serious than ever" in seeking to recover debts owed by veterans. He added that his

collection activities "are part of a nationwide effort to recover all debts owed by veterans and non-veterans alike."

Debts as a result of VA programs are detected by the VA's Central Accounts Receivable Section in St. Paul, Minn. That office sends notification to the indebted veterans. If the veteran fails to resolve the indebtedness, his case is then sent to the appropriate VA District Counsel for legal action.

Due to increased authority to proceed directly with a lawsuit and expanded technical capability, legal action for even small amounts has become cost-effective.

"A veteran owing debts to the Veterans Administration must realize the seriousness of the matter," Lee said. "The filing of a law suit, if deemed necessary, is a part of the collection effort. It is important for veterans receiving letters from this office to answer and

arrange repayment. Otherwise, legal action is almost a certainty." He said that most cases will be settled through repayment plans and default proceedings.

PROFESSIONAL UNIFORMS at DISCOUNT PRICES
Open Mon. - Fri. 12 Noon - 6 Fri. & Sat. 11 am. - 5
TOWN & COUNTRY SQUARE
Roz's Uniform Outlet
175 Weaverville Hwy. 645-9714
Off Newbridge Exit

TERRY'S TV SALES & SERVICE

We Have A Good Stock Of Re-Conditioned Used Television Sets
NOW OPEN
9am - 6pm MON-SAT

Repairs On All Makes & Models
In Home Repair (When Possible) **689-2296**
"ALL WORK GUARANTEED"
Hwy. 23 North 9-6 Monday - Saturday Mars Hill

30 Days Warranty On All Parts & Labor
FINANCING AVAILABLE
Over 30 Years Experience

Hunting Safety Tips

For many North Carolinians, cold weather means time to take the rifle off the shelf, bundle up and go hunting. But along with all the fun and adventure, there is danger if you're not careful.

A pre-season physical is always a good idea to determine if you're in shape for a strenuous hunting season. Several states reported last year that three times as many hunters die from heart attacks as gunshot wounds. An eye exam is also a wise idea, since many of those hunters who were injured from gunshots were thought to be "prey" as they crept through the woods in search of game. If you wear glasses, get industrial strength glasses for hunting. They will protect your eyes from limbs and underbrush as well as from any stray or ricochet bullets.

The North Carolina Medical Society passes along these suggestions to ensure you a happy hunting season:

— Wear bright or reflective clothing; blaze orange is the most effective color. Although you may be more conspicuous to game if you wear bright clothing, you will also be more

noticeable to other hunters. — AIM before you shoot. It sounds silly but judging where your bullet will strike will help prevent accidents. Don't shoot at hard, flat surfaces — they cause the bullet to ricochet and actually travel farther than you had intended.

— Keep the safety catch on until you are ready to fire. This will prevent a possible injury should you trip or fall. Also, practice firing the gun before your first trip of the season.

— Make sure that the barrel of your gun is clean and clear of any obstructions. A clogged barrel may burst when the rifle is fired.

— Keep guns away from children and adults who do not know how to operate them. Allowing an inexperienced person to tamper with a loaded rifle is asking for trouble.

— Carry a first-aid kit with you on all your hunting trips. Should any mishap occur,

minor or otherwise, the kit will provide aid for the victim until he can reach a hospital.

— As with any sport, exercise to get in shape prior to the beginning of the season.

Bell Ringing Buys
Christmas Tablecloth
Material and Placemats
Christmas Tree Ornament Patterns
Great Stocking Stuffer Ideas
— Stuffed Animal Prints

NEW Patterns To Choose From
Crib Quilt Material
\$239 NEW PRINTS YD.

ALL PATTERNS
1/2 OFF
Thru Dec. 19

WOOL & WOOL BLENDS
In Plaids & Solids
\$3.98 TO \$6.98

SPECIAL
Polyester Quilt Batting
72x90 Roll **\$3.50**
Fleece And Flannel **\$1.69** YD.

Calicos, Solid Colors
For Quilting
\$1.69 TO \$2.59
To
Stitch & Save Fabric Shop

We Close At 12 Noon On Wednesday
Hwy. 25-70
Down On The River 649-3721 Marshall

SHOP EARLY
MAIL EARLY

HOLIDAY ROUNDUP

JEANS BY Chic, Lee Riders And Levi Super Straights \$18.95

Look At Our NEW SELECTION OF Gloria Vanderbilt Jeans

A Good Selection Of Men's Jeans Including LEE RIDERS

A Selection Of Ladies Western Style Boots **\$19.95**

Register For \$50 Gift Certificate To Be Given Away Each Friday Nite

DISCOUNT SHOES AND COUNTRY CASUALS

WESTERN BOOTS BY Texas, Dingo, Acme Frye
WORK BOOTS BY Redwing, Herman Wolverine

1282 Brevard Road
Between I-26 and The
Entrance To The Blue Ridge Parkway
667-0085

Births

A son, to Mr. and Mrs. Charles B. Brillison, Leicester, Nov. 28.

A daughter, to Mr. and Mrs. J.D. Rice, Weaverville, Nov. 28.

A son, to Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Reece, Marshall, Nov. 29.

SLUDER'S GROCERY and HARDWARE
Hwy. 23 N. Mars Hill
COAL
By The Bag Or Ton
WOOD & KINDLING FOR SALE
CALL
689-4232

Home Electric & Appliance

Make last year's items as it costs. A Home Electric can save up to 20 percent of your buying costs.

Home Electric & Appliance
1282 Brevard Road
Marshall, N.C.