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Foodways A 4-H Folkpatterns Project – Thanksgiving Foodways

Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Service

4-H Club Bulletin

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Thanksgiving Foodways



Food Preparation

PURPOSE: To become aware of some of your foodways traditions at Thanksgiving

YOU'LL NEED: Pen or pencil

TIME: One or more meetings

HOW TO DO IT: Food is an important part of many holidays and celebrations, but every person or family has special food traditions. Thanksgiving is a particularly "American" festival, but in many areas, the foods eaten for this celebration differ. Have you heard of cornbread dressing, mincemeat pie, potato pie, or goose for Thanksgiving dinner in Michigan? Have you heard of the custom of giving the "oysters" (the two small hollows of tender meat along the back of the bird) to the parents or the senior people present at the meal? What do you do with the wishbone? Answer as many of the following questions as you can to find out about your Thanksgiving foodways. Space is also provided for you to share a special Thanksgiving recipe.

What meat do you usually serve? Why? _____

Who gets the meat and where does it come from? _____

Who prepares the meal? _____

What kinds of desserts do you have? _____

What else do you have with the main dish? _____

What happens to the leftovers? Why? _____

Who sits at the head of the table? Why? _____

Do you say a special prayer? Who gives it? Why? _____

In what room is the meal served? Why? _____

Are special dishes used for serving and eating? What are they? _____

Are special linens used? What are they? _____

Who gets to start eating first? Why? _____

How do you know when the meal is finished? _____

Who do you ask for the last piece of food on the serving plate? _____

What do you do with the wishbone? _____

Who comes to your Thanksgiving dinner? _____

What sorts of activities take place before or after the meal? _____
