

Haddam Garden Club

January 1, 2019 Garden Blog Article

by Cindy Tillson



Digging In

At the last garden club meeting I suggested sharing a recipe from "[Digging In](#)" in each of my articles. This is the cookbook published by the Haddam Garden Club members in 2008. The suggestion was well received. Browsing it just now for a recipe, I began looking closely at the book and seeing not just another cookbook, but one written by my fellow gardeners. These are people I know, or at least know of. This automatically lends credibility to it.

Before the internet, (and even after) many civic groups used to publish cookbooks like this. Members would submit their own tried and true recipes. There is interesting history in these books. Recipes were submitted by Mrs. John Doe, not Mary Doe. I recall lots of casserole recipes, many calling for ingredients like Campbell's soup, Kraft Velveeta and Cheez Whiz. (I'm embarrassed to admit that I actually like Velveeta though my conscience won't let me eat it now.) Social and food trends of the times are seen in these books.

"[Digging In](#)" is recent enough that the recipes are submitted by individuals, not necessarily someone's wife. I only found six recipes in the book calling for processed foods. That leaves most created completely from real foods found primarily on the perimeter of the grocery store, at the Farmers Market or in your own garden. There are even vegetarian main dishes.

The recipe I chose to share is for Turkey Meatloaf. Meatloaf feels to me like January food--this with a baked potato and veggie. It was submitted by Debbie Karpf. I would trust a recipe from her to be delicious any day.



TURKEY MEATLOAF

Yield 4 servings

2 Tbs butter or olive oil

1/2-1 cup chopped onion

2-3 cloves minced garlic

1.5 pounds of ground turkey (not extra lean)

1/2 cup breadcrumbs

1 large egg

1/2 cup catsup

1/4 cup BBQ sauce

2 tsp Worcestershire sauce

3/4 tsp salt

1/2 tsp pepper

Heat oven to 350. Melt butter or olive oil in small pan and sauté onion and garlic until translucent. Set aside to cool. Mix catsup and BBQ sauce together in measuring cup. Mix together turkey, breadcrumbs, egg, ¼ cup catsup mixture, Worcestershire, salt and pepper. Add onion and garlic. Mix well. Form into a loaf in a square Pyrex pan or loaf pan. Spread remaining catsup mixture over the top. Bake 50-55 minutes uncovered. Let stand 5 minutes before slicing.



There are a number of yummy sounding soups and stews too. I will be making one on the next snowy day, maybe the Seafood Stew. The Brownie Pudding and the Black Forest Cake are calling me now!

Garden tips are shared at the beginning of each chapter as well. One such tip is “Throw egg shells, vegetable scraps, tea bags, etc. into your blender with a little water to puree. Add this “compost smoothie” to your compost pile for much needed moisture in the summer, and pre-mixed material speeds the composting cycle.” I would alternatively suggest pouring this directly over your garden in the winter months where it will be all ready for spring.

There is another tip on how to protect your potted plants from slugs—and you don’t have to share your beer!

I had forgotten what a wonderful resource [this book](#) is both for the recipes and the gardening tidbits. There are a limited number of these books still available for \$10—and it is well worth \$10. They are available at the Brainerd Library and the Town Hall.

A Couple More Thoughts...

There’s much more to gardening than tending plants. It is a passion people share. I find that I have much in common with my gardening buddies. We respect and care for the soil and the environment that we and the plants need to thrive. We also have fun together socially, appreciating good food (hence producing a cookbook) and drink as well as each other’s company. We get excited about sharing our favorite plants, tips and experiences with each other. I am always interested to see and hear what other gardeners have to share. I guess you are too!

If you haven’t taken your Christmas tree down yet, prop it up outside for the birds. Be sure there is NO tinsel left on it. (Do people even put that on anymore?) It provides an excellent source of shelter for the birds as do all of your evergreen shrubs and trees. My mother puts suet in her Christmas tree when she puts it out.

The January 9, 2019 meeting of the Haddam Garden Club will feature Gail Reynolds of the UCONN Master Gardening Program for Middlesex County. She will talk about the Master Gardening program as well as water conservation for our gardens and lawns. The program is open to the community and will begin at approximately 11:30 at the Haddam Community Center in Higganum.