



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

GRAND CHAMPION CHAI-PUMPKIN CHEESECAKE: ALL TREAT, NO TRICK
Ohio's Poultry and Dairy Industries Feature Ohio State Fair Winning Cheesecake

COLUMBUS (October 18, 2007) – As the weather cools down, the oven is heating up with delicious fall flavors. It's that time of year again, and the best part of October is the triumphant return of pumpkins, featured in cookies, breads, dumplings, ice cream, pies – and cheesecake.

“Chai-Pumpkin Cheesecake will be a hit at holiday gatherings and get Ohio's cooks in the mood for fall,” said Jim Chakeres, executive vice president of the Ohio Poultry Association (OPA). “This delicious treat offers an alternative to the traditional pumpkin pie and features wholesome Ohio eggs and dairy foods.”

The featured 2007 Ohio State Fair first place and grand champion cheesecake in the Smile and Say Cheesecake Contest is not only full of great taste, but also contains many essential nutrients. The recipe features cardamom, which is a spice used as a flavoring for coffee that has an intense, pungent and sweet flavor.

Chai-Pumpkin Cheesecake contains five Ohio eggs, with each providing 13 essential nutrients and only 75 calories. In addition, the cream cheese featured in this dessert is made from milk. One serving of milk includes nine essential nutrients including calcium, potassium, phosphorous, protein, Vitamin D, Vitamin A, Vitamin B₁₂, Riboflavin and Niacin.

Following are some tips to prepare the perfect cheesecake:

- Before starting to bake, be sure that all of the ingredients are at room temperature. If there is not time to bring the elements to room temperature before mixing, soften the cream cheese in the microwave: Unwrap and place in a microwave safe dish. Microwave on high for 15-30 seconds.
- Do not over beat the filling. This will cause additional air in the batter and may cause cracking.
- Invest in a spring form pan.
- Before filling the pan with the crust and batter, generously grease the sides. Cheesecakes shrink as they cool and grease will cause it to shrink in on the sides rather than pulling apart in the middle.
- To prevent cracking, bake the cheesecake in a water bath to maintain moisture.
- Don't open the oven frequently when the cake is baking.
- A cheesecake is ready when the edges are slightly puffed and the center jiggles when shaken.
- When removing the cake from the oven, run a butter knife around the top edge of the pan. This will help the crust naturally cool away from the sides of the pan.
- Allow sufficient time to cool and chill before serving.
- Garnish a cheesecake directly before serving.

Ohio is the second largest egg producing state in the nation, behind Iowa. The state produces nearly eight billion eggs each year. According to the American Dairy Association Mideast, Ohio's dairy industry has gross receipts of more than \$660 million, and the state is home to 274,000 dairy cows that produce 4.86 billion pounds of milk each year, ranking Ohio 11th nationally in the amount of milk produced and first in Swiss cheese production.

For more information, visit the OPA Web site at www.OhioPoultry.org or the American Dairy Association Mideast's Web site at www.drink-milk.com.

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(Recipe following on next page)

CHAI-PUMPKIN CHEESECAKE

(Makes 12 to 14 servings)

Crust:

*1 1/4 cups graham cracker crumbs
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1/4 cup butter, melted*

Filling:

*4 8-ounce packages cream cheese, softened
1 1/2 cups packed brown sugar
5 OHIO eggs
1 cup canned pumpkin
2 tablespoons cornstarch
3/4 teaspoon ground cloves
3/4 teaspoon ground cardamom
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground white pepper
Whipped cream*

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Fill a large roasting pan halfway with water and place on the lower rack of the oven. Coat a 9-inch springform pan with vegetable cooking spray.

In a small bowl, combine the graham crackers crumbs, 2 tablespoons brown sugar and melted butter. Press onto the bottom and one inch up the side of pan. Bake 10 minutes and cool. Wrap a large piece of aluminum foil around the pan.

In a large mixing bowl, using an electric mixer, combine the cream cheese and brown sugar. Add the eggs, one at a time. Add the pumpkin, cornstarch and spices. Pour batter into the crust. Bake on the center rack for one hour, or until the center is still moist. Turn off the oven and allow the cheesecake to sit with the door closed for an additional 20 minutes.

Run a knife around the edge of the pan to loosen the cheesecake. Cool on a rack for one hour, then cover and place in the refrigerator for 8 hours, or until well chilled. Remove the springform ring. Garnish with whipped cream, if desired.