

Cook Wild Kentucky

Introduction to Wild Game in Kentucky

In Kentucky, many people enjoy being outdoors to hunt, fish, and trap. Kentucky is home to a wide range of wildlife with nearly 1,000 kinds of animals. We have the most elk this side of the Mississippi River. You can also find black bear, white-tailed deer, turkey, waterfowl, and bobwhite quail in our state.

About 550,000 anglers take to the waters and nearly 350,000 hunters go afield each year in Kentucky. They hope to find local game meat. Wild-game meat is tasty and healthy and can replace most protein found in recipes. Nearly all game meat is lean and offers a mix of nutrients with rich flavors. Game animals are active and have varied eating habits giving their meat a distinct flavor and texture. When cooking game meat, use the right method. Lean game meats are best when stewed,

roasted, or slowly cooked in moist heat such as a slow cooker or pressure cooker. Marinades can boost both the flavor and texture of game meats. Be sure to cook all game meat to 165 degrees F using a calibrated metal stem thermometer. Fish should be cooked to 145 degrees F.

Proper handling of game meat from field to table is key for food safety. Heat, dirt, and water can cause wild game meat to spoil. All meat and fish should be cooled to 40 degrees F or below shortly

after harvest. To start cooling, remove the inside organs without cutting them. If the organs are cut, feces could infect the carcass. This should be done as soon as large animals, such as deer, elk, and bear, are recovered because it can take quite a few hours to remove the carcass from the field. Do not rinse game meat in the field. Extra moisture boosts the growth of bacteria that can cause it to rot. Keep the meat clean by storing it in game bags or clean containers. This will protect the meat from insects, dirt, leaves, hair, and feathers.

For more information about wild game in Kentucky, hunting seasons, and required licenses, visit the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife website at fw.ky.gov.



A mature white-tailed buck (*Odocoileus virginianus*). Male white-tailed deer grow and shed new antlers every year.



A male turkey (*Meleagris gallopavo*) in strut. During the mating season the male's strut to show off their feathers in a courtship display. A male's head is distinct with blue and red colors and lacks feathers.



The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources regularly stocks catfish as well as other fish species in 44 lakes across Kentucky as a part of the Fishing In Neighborhoods (FINs) program.

Venison Stew

Servings: 6

Ingredients

- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 tablespoons flour
- 1 pound venison, cubed
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 3 cups water
- 1 onion, chopped
- 4 potatoes, cubed
- 3 carrots, sliced
- 3 stalks celery, chopped
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tablespoon dried parsley

Directions

Combine pepper, salt, garlic powder, and flour in a plastic bag or large bowl. Add cubed venison and shake bag or toss to coat meat. Brown meat in hot oil, in a large, heavy saucepan. Stir in water. Add remaining ingredients and cook on high until it begins to boil. Reduce heat and simmer for approximately 1 hour. To thicken, in a small mixing bowl, stir ½ cup warm water into 2 tablespoons of flour. Add mixture into stew. Stir until thickened and bubbly. Cook an additional 30 minutes or until vegetables and meat are tender.

Alternative to stove-top cooking:

Use slow cooker set on low for 8 hours.

Nutrition facts per serving: 270 calories; 4.5g total fat; 1g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 65mg cholesterol; 490mg sodium; 36g carbohydrate; 5g fiber; 5g sugars; 22g protein; 0% daily value of Vitamin D; 6% daily value of calcium; 20% daily value of iron; 25% daily value of potassium.

Adapted from Venison Recipe Collection, Compiled by Becky Nash, Extension Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences.

Wild Turkey and Broccoli Casserole

Servings: 8

Ingredients

- 2 packages (10 ounces each) frozen broccoli, or 2 bunches fresh broccoli, washed and cut into pieces
- 4 cups wild turkey meat
- 1 cup light mayonnaise
- 2 cans (10.5 ounces each) low-sodium cream of chicken soup
- 1 teaspoon curry powder or 1 tablespoon prepared mustard
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1/2 cup grated cheddar cheese
- 1/2 cup panko breadcrumbs
- 1 tablespoon melted butter

Directions

To cook turkey breast, preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Add vegetable oil to a roasting pan. Place turkey breast in roasting pan. Season meat lightly with garlic powder and black pepper. Cover with lid or aluminum foil. Cook until internal temperature is 165 degrees, about 1 ½ to 3 ½ hours for 4 to 8 pounds of meat. Let cool in pan for 15 minutes; cut into cubes. Steam broccoli until tender. Drain. Grease a 2-quart casserole dish or 9-by-13-inch pan. Place turkey on the bottom, and arrange the broccoli over the turkey. Combine mayonnaise, cream of chicken soup, curry powder or mustard, and lemon juice. Pour over broccoli. Combine cheese, breadcrumbs, and butter. Sprinkle over casserole. Bake at 350 degrees F for 30 minutes.

Nutrition facts per serving: 270 calories, 12g total fat, 3g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 65mg cholesterol, 660mg sodium, 17g total carbohydrate, 0g dietary fiber, 2g total sugars, 23g protein, 0% DV of Vitamin D, 6% DV of calcium, 6% DV of iron, 8% DV of potassium.

Adapted from "Fish & Game Cookbook" (2013) by Bonnie Scott.

Oven Fried Fish Fillets

Servings: 4

Serving Size: 4 ounces

Ingredients

- 1 pound fish fillets
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- ¼ cup shredded parmesan cheese
- ¼ teaspoon dill weed
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 2 cups cornflake-type cereal, crushed

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Grease a 13x9 baking dish. Cut fillets into serving pieces, if necessary. In a small bowl, combine lemon juice and vegetable oil. In a separate small bowl, mix Parmesan cheese, dill weed, salt, and pepper. Dip each fillet into lemon juice mixture. Lay in baking dish, sprinkle with cheese mixture, and coat with crushed cereal. Bake uncovered for 20 to 30 minutes or until fish flakes easily.

Nutrition facts per serving: 200 calories; 6g total fat; 1g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 80mg cholesterol; 330mg sodium; 12g carbohydrate; 0g fiber; 1g sugars; 24g protein; 6% DV of Vitamin D; 8% DV of calcium; 35% DV of iron; 10% DV of potassium.

Adapted from "Fish & Game Cookbook" (2013) by Bonnie Scott.

Duck and Potatoes

Servings: 6

Serving Size: 3 ounces meat, one potato, 1/2 cup vegetable

Ingredients

- 1 wild duck, cleaned
- 1 unpeeled apple, cut in half
- 3 to 4 cups water
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 4 large potatoes, diced
- 3 carrots, peeled and sliced
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2 teaspoons ground sage

Directions

Place whole duck and apple in a 5-quart kettle with 3 to 4 cups of water. Cover. Boil for 30 minutes. Place duck in 15×10 baking dish, add 2 cups liquid from boiled duck. Season with salt and pepper. Cover. Bake at 350 degrees Fahrenheit for 45 minutes. Add potatoes, carrots, onion, and sage. Bake 45 minutes to 1 hour longer or until duck and potatoes are tender. (The internal temperature of the duck should reach 165 degrees Fahrenheit at the leg joint.) If necessary, add water to keep liquid on duck and potatoes.

Nutrition facts per serving:

600 calories; 29g total fat; 10g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 150mg cholesterol; 190mg sodium; 46g carbohydrate; 6g fiber; 7g sugar; 38g protein; 0% DV of Vitamin D; 4% DV of calcium; 60% DV of iron; 30% DV of potassium.

Kentucky Baked Dove Breast

Servings: 6

Serving Size: 2 dove breasts

Ingredients

- 12 dove breasts, cleaned
- 2 cups buttermilk
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper
- 1½ teaspoons smoked paprika
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 2 medium apples, diced
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2 celery stalks, sliced
- 1 cup orange juice

Directions

In a covered container, soak the dove breasts in buttermilk overnight in the refrigerator. Remove breasts and discard buttermilk. Pat breasts dry with a paper towel. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Combine salt, pepper, and smoked paprika and stir. Rub mixture into breasts. Place breasts in a shallow greased baking dish and brush with oil. Add diced apples, onions, and celery. Add a half cup of water to the pan and cover tightly. Bake for one hour and 15 minutes. After 45 minutes, pour the orange juice over breasts and baste.

Nutrition facts per serving:

320 calories; 17g total fat; 4.5g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 130mg cholesterol; 370mg sodium; 15g carbohydrate; 2g fiber; 11g sugars; 28g protein; 0% DV of Vitamin D; 4% DV of calcium; 40% DV of iron; 10% DV of potassium.

Santa Fe Rabbit Soup

Servings: 10

Serving Size: 1½ cups

Ingredients

- 1 (3 pound) rabbit, cut up
- 1 (7 ounces) can chopped green chilies, drained
- 1.5 cups frozen or canned corn, drained
- 1 (28 ounces) can no-salt added diced tomatoes
- 1 (15 ounces) can low-sodium black beans, rinsed
- 1 (14 ounces) can low sodium vegetable broth
- 1 (32 ounces) box low sodium chicken broth
- 3 tablespoons reduced-sodium chili seasoning mix

Directions

Place all ingredients in slow cooker. Simmer on low 6 to 8 hours. Remove rabbit and remove meat from bones. (Be careful, rabbit will be hot so use a utensil to help.) Return rabbit meat to soup. Stir to combine and serve. Freeze leftovers in freezer bags or freezer container.

Nutrition facts per serving: 260 calories; 3.5g total fat; 1g saturated fat; 0g trans fat; 110mg cholesterol; 320mg sodium; 19g carbohydrate; 4g fiber; 4g sugars; 35g protein; 0% DV of Vitamin D; 4% DV of calcium; 35% DV of iron; 15% DV of potassium.

Adapted from 2015 Food and Nutrition Calendar Kentucky Favorites

Sautéed Frog Legs

Servings: 4

Serving Size: 4 ounces

Ingredients

- 1 pound cleaned frog legs
- Buttermilk, to cover
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- Up to ¼ cup olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- Black pepper, to taste
- ½ teaspoon no-salt seafood seasoning
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon fresh parsley, if desired

Directions

In a covered container, soak frog legs in buttermilk for 3 hours or overnight in the refrigerator. Remove frog legs from buttermilk and dredge in flour. Sauté in oil over a low heat. As they cook, sprinkle frog legs with salt, pepper, and Old Bay seasoning. Cook frog legs about 12 to 14 minutes, browning each side, until a meat thermometer reaches 165 degrees Fahrenheit when inserted into the meatiest part of the leg. Remove frog legs to a platter, and sprinkle with lemon juice and parsley, if desired.

Nutrition facts per serving: 260 calories, 14 g total fat, 2 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat, 55 mg cholesterol, 260 mg sodium, 12 g total carbohydrate, 0 g dietary fiber, 0 g total sugars, 20 g protein, 2% DV calcium, 15% DV iron, 8% DV potassium.

Fireside Turtle Pocket

Servings: 6

Ingredients

- 4 large turtle legs, about 2 1/2 pounds
- 2 tablespoons dried minced onion
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- Water to cover
- 4 tablespoons butter
- 4 large potatoes, peeled and diced
- 4 carrots, peeled and cut into 1-inch lengths
- 1 onion, chopped
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder

Directions

Place turtle legs, dried onion, and black pepper in a slow cooker. Add enough water to cover. Cook on high for 1 hour, reduce heat to low, and cook an additional 8 hours until meat is tender and falls off the bones. Pick out the meat and discard the bones and cartilage.

Place a long sheet of heavy-duty foil on a large cookie sheet. The ends of the foil will hang off the pan. Slice butter into pats onto the foil. Place potatoes, carrots, and onion in center of foil. Place turtle meat on top of vegetables, and sprinkle with salt, pepper and garlic powder. Bring ends of foil to center and fold to seal in juices. Bake at 450 degrees F for 40 minutes or until potatoes are tender.

Nutrition facts per serving: 360 calories, 2g total fat, 0.5g saturated fat, 0g trans fat, 95mg cholesterol, 490mg sodium, 42g total carbohydrate, 7g dietary fiber, 7g total sugars, 42g protein, 20% DV calcium, 20% DV iron, 30% DV potassium.

Adapted from Clinton Hardy's Sorgho Creek Turtle recipe.

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