

# Food for Thought

People • Products • Purpose

December 2021

“If all the world increasingly becomes chattel, then all of the world is a mine rather than a source of hope...The realities of industrialization are all around us. What we must think about, therefore, is an agriculture with a human face.” — Wes Jackson, founder of the The Land Institute

## Following a calling

*A quest for humanely raised meat led her to visit RFD*

**L**ike many, Genny McGregor found herself re-evaluating her life's work and purpose in the wake of the pandemic. Last month the Boulder pastry chef and chocolatier toured Callicrate Cattle Company, Ranch Foods Direct and Drifters Hamburgers in Colorado Springs to research and collect ideas for a new venture: the launch of a fast food restaurant chain that will support local farmers, ranchers and communities while creating business ownership opportunities for employees. She hopes to have her first location open by September of next year.



**DESCRIBE YOUR IMPRESSIONS OF RFD AND DRIFTERS. WHAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU LEARNED FROM YOUR VISIT?** My biggest takeaway from RFD was the friendly people — honestly, when I go into a business, I'm not just looking at the products but at whether the people seem happy and are a cohesive team. I thought the selection of products was awesome. And it didn't feel like a hippie farm stand, it felt professional. It was everything you expect when you walk into an upscale grocery store, except that the meats and other products were all local. Drifters is a fantastic operation. It's your basic high-end hamburger, but with a real sense of community to it. Owner Richard (Beaven) was very gracious with me. Again, it was the quality of the people that impressed me the most. And it's a model customers appreciate. Mike Callicrate really drilled it home to me that if I want to do a burger chain, I need to source everything locally. And that's what I plan to do! *CONTINUES PG 2.*



### UPSIDE DOWN APPLE PIE

*This recipe results in something Genny compares to a giant sticky bun... Who could resist that? It's easy to put together, the presentation looks great, and the fall flavors are very rich and satisfying!*

**Double pie crust (use your own or the recipe on page 2)**  
6 tablespoons butter, melted, divided  
1/2 cup packed brown sugar  
1/2 cup chopped pecans  
8 cups thinly sliced peeled tart apples (about 1/8 inch thick)  
1 cup sugar  
1/3 cup all-purpose flour  
3/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg  
1/2 cup powdered sugar  
2 to 3 teaspoons orange juice

**Line a 9-in. deep-dish pie plate with heavy-duty foil, leaving 1-1/2 in. beyond edge; butter the foil. Combine 4 tablespoons butter, brown sugar and pecans; spoon into prepared pie plate. In a large bowl, combine the apples, sugar, flour, cinnamon, nutmeg and remaining butter; toss gently. Now you're ready to begin assembling the pie. (Instructions continue page 2)**

### TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND AND HOW YOU GOT INTO FOOD:

My mother's a fantastic home baker, and I've always loved baking. It gets back to what author Ray Bradbury said: "do what you love and love what you do." So I decided to become a pastry chef and bake for a living. For 20-plus years now I've been in food service, or, as I like to say, commercial kitchen and team management. For me, it isn't just about producing high quality pastries and chocolate. It's about managing and developing the leadership skills of my team.

## UPSIDE DOWN APPLE PIE

*Recipe continued from page 1*

When ready to assemble, roll out (or unfold) pastry to fit pie plate. Place pastry over nut mixture, pressing firmly against mixture and sides of plate; trim to 1 in. beyond plate edge. Fill with apple mixture. Roll out remaining pastry to fit top of pie; place over filling. Trim to 1/4 in. beyond plate edge. Fold bottom pastry over top pastry; seal and flute edges. Cut four 1-in. slits in top pastry. Bake at 375° for 50-55 minutes or until apples are tender and crust is golden brown (cover edges with foil during the last 20 minutes to prevent overbrowning if necessary). Cool for 15 minutes on a wire rack. Invert onto a serving platter; carefully remove foil. Make a glaze by combining the powdered sugar and orange juice and drizzle it over the pie.

### MAKE YOUR OWN PIE CRUST

2 cups all-purpose flour  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
6 tablespoons lard/rendered pork fat  
2 tablespoons cold butter  
5 to 7 tablespoons orange juice

In a large bowl, combine flour and salt; cut in lard and butter until crumbly. Gradually add orange juice, tossing with a fork until dough forms a ball. Divide dough into two balls. Wrap in plastic; refrigerate for at least 30 minutes before rolling out and baking.

**DID YOU KNOW?** *Rendered pork fat is the best natural source of vitamin D on earth, second only to cod liver oil. Pigs raised outdoors soak up the sun all day, which is converted to Vitamin D that gets stored in their fat. Lard was the original version of shortening prior to the invention of harmful hydrogenation.*



### GENNY, WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR FAVORITE FOODS AND FLAVORS AT THE HOLIDAYS?

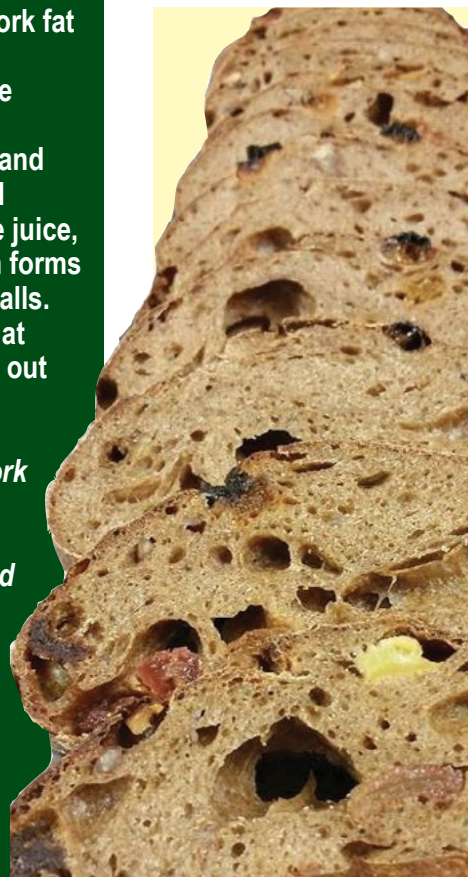
I usually have a turkey dinner every Thanksgiving, as long as I know the turkey is humanely raised. Corn pudding and braised brussels sprouts are also favorites. This year it will be my mom and her partner and me. We stay pretty traditional. We don't even put chestnuts in our stuffing; we stick with the sage and sausage. And my mom always makes giblet gravy, where you simmer the neck meat and giblets all day. It's delicious!

### OBVIOUSLY YOU'LL WANT TO DO SOME BAKING. WHAT WILL A PRO LIKE YOU BE MAKING?

I baked all day every day for 20 years and I loved it. But at this point in my career I feel like my talents need to be devoted to something that has a bigger purpose than an éclair. Still, my mom will want me to do some baking for the holidays, so I will. I'll probably make a homemade Yule log; it's a sponge cake that you roll up with whipped cream in the middle.

### AS AN EXPERT IN MAKING CANDIES AND DESSERTS, CAN YOU SHARE A FEW TIPS FOR OUR CUSTOMERS WHO WANT TO MAKE TASTY TREATS FOR THE HOLIDAYS?

Keep it simple. If you're in Colorado Springs, try to find a high-altitude recipe variation, especially if you're doing a cake. Practice it a couple of weeks beforehand, and do as many components as you can a few days ahead, so you're not exhausted and hitting the wine bottles early.



## Bread line-up

**S**hawn Saunders, owner of Sourdough Boulangerie, keeps RFD stocked with artisan sourdough bread made from stone-ground Colorado flours. Keep in mind, selection varies from week to week and sometimes even day to day, so grab your favorites when you can! (He also operates his own retail store inside his bakery at 6453 Omaha Blvd/719-233-6599 with a wider selection.)



**ANY SPECIAL ITEMS YOU'LL BE DOING FOR THE HOLIDAYS?** We'll be doing our chocolate almond cherry sourdough again, Christmas stollen, chocolate cinnamon babka and lots of Christmas cookies. We'll also be doing pumpkin pie made with local pumpkins grown by Musso Farms of Pueblo as well as pecan pie.

**WHAT'S YOUR PERSONAL FAVORITE WHEN IT COMES TO HOLIDAY SIDE DISHES?** Stuffing made with Italian sausage and mushrooms

**PERSONAL FAVORITE HOLIDAY PIE FLAVOR?** Pumpkin or sweet potato

**PERSONAL FAVORITE HOLIDAY COOKIES TO MAKE?** The official New Mexico state cookie, biscochitos

# Jingle bell rockin'

*Katie Belle Miller founded the SOCO Virtual Farmers Market in the midst of the 2020 pandemic and watched it blossom with the support of top hand Mariah and many dedicated volunteers. SOCO provides Ranch Foods Direct customers with outreach to dozens of unique vendors beyond the brick-and-mortar store. (SocoVirtualFarmersMarket.com.)*

**HOLIDAY ORDERING OPEN:** Contact-free online ordering with curbside pick-up every Saturday at the Peak to Plains Food Hub. "We take two weeks off from Christmas through New Year's and resume in January," Katie says.

**CELEBRATE LOCAL:** "It's really fun to do the local food challenge for the holidays. You can get everything you could ever need for a nice meal and have it all be local and know you're supporting local farmers and ranchers."

**GIFT LOCAL:** "The market is full of great stocking stuffers and unique local gift items and greeting cards. Last year a lot of people bought beef in bulk to give as gifts for family and friends. We also have gift certificates for sale on the market. And we now offer subscription market boxes" (a weekly grab-bag of assorted items similar to a CSA.)

**FAVORITE PRODUCTS:** "I love RFD's applewood smoked bacon for breakfast and also in many other dishes. Beef tallow is an amazing natural moisturizer in bath bombs, soaps, balms and lotions: it's nice to keep our bodies hydrated using ingredients we can actually pronounce! Parker's Pies sells a baked pie shell on our market that freezes well, and I love to have a few of those on hand for when I want to make a filling with SOCO's winter squash, apples or frozen pie cherries. With two small kids, ordering through SOCO is so much easier than fighting the crowds at a large grocery store!"



**DID YOU KNOW?** ... Mountain Pie Co savory meat pies featuring Callicrate meats can be purchased online in bulk quantities for curbside pick-up at Peak to Plains Food Hub! (Mountain pies can also be shipped anywhere in the country through Bytable, Ranch Foods Direct's first class in-house order fulfillment partner.) Find info and order forms at [MountainPieCo.com](http://MountainPieCo.com).



*SoCo's Katie and Mariah at the Peak to Plains Food Hub in June. Katie's son Beauden is now 7 mos old!*

## CLASSIC BISCOCHITOS

3 cups flour  
1 1/2 tsp. baking powder  
1/2 tsp. salt  
3/4 cup sugar  
1 tsp. cinnamon  
1 cup rendered pork fat (aka lard)  
1 1/4 tsp. anise seeds  
1 egg

Preheat oven to 400°. Sift together flour, baking powder, and salt into a medium bowl and set aside. Combine 1/4 cup of the sugar with cinnamon in a small bowl and set aside. Put lard and the remaining 1/2 cup of sugar into the bowl of a standing mixer and beat on medium speed until fluffy, about 1 minute. Add anise seeds and egg and beat, stopping mixer once or twice to scrape down sides of bowl with a rubber spatula, until well mixed, about 1 minute. Reduce speed to low, then gradually add flour mixture, scraping sides of bowl as needed, and beat until dough begins to gather into a ball and comes cleanly away from sides of bowl, about 2 minutes. Transfer dough to a lightly floured surface and divide in half, then shape each half into a smooth ball. Cover with a clean dish towel and set aside to rest for 15–20 minutes. Roll out half of the dough on a lightly floured surface to a thickness of about an eighth of an inch. Cut into desired shapes with a cookie cutter and arrange 1-inch apart on ungreased cookie sheets. Bake until golden, about 10 minutes. Transfer cookies to a wire rack and sprinkle with reserved cinnamon-sugar mixture while still warm. Repeat process with remaining dough.

*Wishing you a very special holiday season and a happy New Year*

*For that someone who has everything...*



*Give the gift of Wagyu*

**HOUSE-MADE HOLIDAY  
CONDIMENTS:**

Sugar-free cranberry  
sauce, habanero  
cranberry sauce and  
prepared horseradish

Serve it with Callibrate  
smoked ham, beef tenderloin  
or prime rib!

**Sign up in-store to preorder holiday hams, turkeys and prime rib! Shop online 24/7.**

FOOD FOR THOUGHT is printed and distributed by:



**Natural Meat Market**

**Two convenient locations in Colorado Springs!**

1228 E. Fillmore, 719-623-2980

4635 Town Center Drive, 719-559-0873

Retail Hours Mon - Fri 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Saturdays 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

CLOSED Dec. 25 and Jan. 1 for the holidays

Shop online: [www.ranchfoodsdirect.com](http://www.ranchfoodsdirect.com)