



More to it Than MEATS the Eye

by *Barbara LaBarbara*



California CattleWomen (CCW) welcomed 64 National Beef Cook-Off contestants, visiting press corps, and representatives of the beef industry to Sacramento with the flair of the Academy Awards.

There is much more to the Cook-Off than cooking. For the contestants, it is the excitement of competition. For the beef industry, it is "the" media event of the year. For the CattleWomen it is orchestrating a dynamic event.

Preliminary events included a welcome reception on Thursday with more than 800 beef enthusiasts enjoying an outdoor dinner of California cuisine.

Friday evening, contestants and beef industry people were hosted to a barbecue at Mapes Ranch in Modesto. The event was so well organized two cows calved on cue as the buses arrived at the ranch.

There were pack mule, horseshoeing and working cattle dog demonstrations. Richard A. Myers, well-known western artist, exhibited his bronze sculptures. Pens of cattle were on display with Rancho Casino Black Angus Ranch, Medeiros & Dal Porto, representing the Angus breed. A Medi-Flight helicopter and crew were on site for inspection. California wines were easily accessible. The weather was warm with just enough breeze to carry the aroma of steaks being barbecued.

Four buffet lines accommodated 674 people with steaks, corn-on-the-cob, salads and sourdough bread in just 19 minutes.

On Saturday, winners of U.S. Beef Cook-offs in Japan, Taiwan and Hong Kong demonstrated the preparation of their winning dishes and talked about their country's cuisine.

The actual Cook-Off on Saturday required a serious amount of planning for the dishes to be delivered to the sequestered judges periodically. Times were announced for contestants as each deadline drew near. When the one-minute warning came, media people swarmed each finalist with cameras clicking. Quickly, the dish was whisked into the judges' chambers.

What's at Steak?

How about \$35,000 in prize money plus a top-of-the-line Tappan range and microwave oven, deluxe grilling equipment and a year's supply of charcoal from Kingsford.

John Hund was named "Best of Beef" winner and won \$15,000 in prize money. This San Franciscan was one of only 12 male contestants. He was awarded the top prize for his "Margarita Beef with Orange Salsa."

"The bottom line was the taste," said Peter Kump, head judge and founder of one of the country's leading culinary schools. "It was obvious from the first bite this was a winner." Kump was assisted by nine other judges.

Comments from the judges indicated recipe trends continue toward leaner ingredients as well as leaner beef cuts. Less salt and more herbs and spices were used in the dishes. Fresh garlic was used in 59 percent of the recipes; 25 percent of the recipes included jalapenos and chili peppers. Thirty recipes included citrus.

The 1993 National Beef Cook-Off will mark the 20th anniversary of the event. Slated for September 11-13 in Wyoming, the competition will have a completely different format with only 15 national finalists.

The contest is open to only non-beef producers. To request a set of rules and an entry form for the 1993 contest, send a stamped, self-addressed, business-size envelope to 1993 National Beef Cook-Off, 444 North Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60611-9909, or call 1-800-621-7011. Entries must be postmarked by December 31.

The National Beef Cook-Off sponsored by the American National CattleWomen Inc., in cooperation with the Beef Industry Council and the Cattlemen's Beef Board.



Alma Madanick prepares her Mid-Atlantic BBQ recipe.



A member of the California Cattle Women markets wares of CCW country store in the Hyatt Hotel.



Colleen Smith, vice chairwomen of the 1992 NBCO; Brent Langman, Beef Industry Council; Peg Douglas, chairwomen 1992 NCBO can be proud of the 1993 National Beef Cook-Off.



The BBQ's were smokin' and full of steak.



Media people aim for just the right angle.



Cook-Off Chefs are Creative

Fresh ingredients including tantalizing citrus, assertive chilies, and assorted cuts of beef distinguished the top prize winning recipes at the National Beef Cookoff.

Margarita Beef With Orange Salsa
Best of beef and First in Barbecue
John W. Hund

- 1 1/2 lb well-trimmed boneless beef top round steak, cut 1 inch thick
- 2/3 C frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed
- 1/2 C tequila
- 1/3 C fresh lime juice
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 Tbsp chopped fresh ginger
- 2 medium cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 tsp each salt and dried oregano leaves, crushed
- 1/4 tsp ground red pepper
- Cilantro sprigs
- Lime wedges
- Orange Salsa:**
- 2 oranges, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 small red or white onion, chopped
- 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and finely chopped
- 1/4 C chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 to 3 Tbsp fresh lime juice
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1/2 tsp each salt and dried oregano leaves, crushed

For beef: Combine orange juice concentrate, tequila, lime juice, oil, ginger, garlic, salt, oregano and pepper. Place steak in plastic bag; add marinade, turning to coat. Close bag securely and marinate in refrigerator 4 hours or overnight, as desired. Prepare Orange Salsa. Remove steak from marinade; discard marinade. Place steak on grid over medium coals (test about 4 inches above coals for medium with 4-second hand count). Grill 22 to 26 minutes for medium rare (150 degrees) to medium (160 degrees), turning once. Remove steak to carving board; let stand 10 minutes. Carve steak crosswise into thin slices; arrange on serving platter. Garnish with cilantro sprigs and lime wedges. Serve with Orange Salsa. 5 to 6 servings.

Orange Salsa: Combine all ingredients in non-metallic bowl and refrigerate at least one hour. Yield: 1 1/2 cups.

Preparation time: 30 minutes; Marinating time: 4 hours or overnight if desired; Cooking time: 22 to 26 minutes.

- Tenderloin Steaks with Pepper Jelly Sauce**
First, Indoor Conventional
Frances C. Andrews
- 4 well-trimmed beef tenderloin steaks, cut 1 inch thick (approx. 4 ounces each)
 - 3/4 tsp each garlic salt and chili powder
 - 1/2 tsp coarse grind black pepper
 - 1/4 tsp each ground cumin and dried oregano leaves, crushed
 - 1 Tbsp vegetable oil
 - 1/2 C ready-to-serve beef broth
 - 1/4 C balsamic or red wine vinegar
 - 2 Tbs red jalapeno pepper jelly
 - Parsley sprigs
 - Red and green chili peppers

Combine garlic salt, chili powder, pepper, cumin and oregano. Rub over both sides of steaks. Heat oil in heavy large skillet over medium-high heat 3 minutes. Add steaks. Cook 6 to 8 minutes for rare to medium rare, turning over once. Transfer steaks to serving platter; keep warm. Pour off and discard drippings. Add broth, vinegar and jelly to skillet; cook 5 minutes or until slightly thickened, stirring occasionally. Spoon sauce over steaks; garnish with parsley and chili peppers. 4 servings.

Preparation time: 15 minutes; Cooking time: 15 minutes.

Curried Beef, Black Bean and Corn Salad
First, Microwave
Joyce L. Bowman

- 1 1/2 lb well-trimmed boneless beef top sirloin steak, cut 1/4 inch thick.
- Boston lettuce leaves
- 1 can (15 or 16 ounces) black beans, drained
- 1 can (11 ounces) whole kernel corn 1 drained
- 1 small green bell pepper, cut into thin 1-inch strips
- 1 small onion, thinly sliced and separated into rings
- 1 plum tomato, seeded and diced
- 1 large ripe avocado, cut into 12 slices
- Lemon juice
- Cilantro sprigs
- Curry vinaigrette:**
- 1/2 C olive oil
- 2 Tbsp each white wine vinegar and orange juice
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1/2 tsp each salt, curry powder and crushed red pepper pods



John W. Hund

Partially freeze steak to firm. Cut steak crosswise into 1/8 inch slices; cut each slice in half and place in plastic bag. Prepare Curry Vinaigrette. Pour 1/4 cup of the vinaigrette over steak slices; close bag securely and marinate in refrigerator 3 hours, turning occasionally. Drain steak slices; discard marinade. Place in 11 x 7-inch microwave-safe baking dish. Cover with vented plastic wrap. Microwave at Medium or 50 percent power (350 watts) 8 to 10 minutes or until steak slices are only slightly pink, stirring twice and moving rarer pieces to the outer edges. Arrange drained steak slices in center of 6 lettuce-lined serving plates. Meanwhile combine beans, corn, pepper strips, onion and tomato with half of remaining vinaigrette. Spoon bean mixture around steak slices. Brush avocado slices with lemon juice; arrange 2 slices on each plate. Drizzle remaining vinaigrette over salads. Garnish with cilantro sprigs. 6 servings.

Curry Vinaigrette: Combine oil, vinegar, orange juice, garlic, salt, curry powder and pepper pods; mix well. Yield: about 2/3 cup. Preparation time: 30 minutes; Marinating time: 3 hours; Microwave cooking time: 10 minutes.

Note: Recipe was tested in a 700-watt oven. If your oven has a different wattage, adjust time accordingly.