

Tar Heel Pork Loin Challenge
Sponsored by the North Carolina Pork Council
Wednesday, October 18, 2017

Second Place: Melaine Gayle Braley, Apex

Stuffed Pork Loin with Apples and Cranberries

2 ½ pound pork loin
¼ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
¼ teaspoon thyme
1 cup apple cider

Stuffing

4 tablespoons melted butter
1½ cup chopped apples
1/3 cup dried cranberries or raisins
½ cup chopped onions
½ cup cider
1 tsp sugar cinnamon
1 tablespoon brown sugar

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. To make the stuffing, in a large frying pan melt butter. Next, add the apples and onions and saute for 5 minutes. Add remaining stuffing ingredients and cook another 4-5 minutes. Cut pork loin from one side through the middle horizontally to within ½ inch of the other side. Open the two sides and spread them out like a book. Salt, pepper and sprinkle thyme on pork. Place in greased roasting pan. Spread the stuffing mixture into the pork loin. Close the pork loin around the stuffing and secure with twine or tooth picks. Pour the apple cider into the pan. Bake in preheated oven until pork is no longer pink, about 1 hour and 15 minutes. The thermometer insert should read 145 degrees. Cover meat with layers of aluminum foil and allow it to rest in a warm area for 10 minutes. Slice and serve with gravy.

Apple Cider Gravy

2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons flour or cornstarch
3 cups apple cider
1 tablespoon brown sugar
½ teaspoon cinnamon sugar
¼ teaspoon salt

Melt butter in saucepan sprinkle in flour, whisk together to make roux. Stir until lightly brown. Whisk in apple cider, and continue to stir until gravy is thick. Add remaining ingredients. Serve over pork.