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FOOD EDITORS RELEASE

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Holiday Parties Gone Wild

Nothing taps into treasured holiday memories like the laughter and cheer at your annual holiday parties. You'll spend a lot of time digging for that worn out recipe your guests are expecting you to prepare, yet again.

But why not start off this holiday season with something 'wild' that will keep your guests coming back for more. Truth be told, these appetizers are actually simple to prepare.

Let your guests experience paradise with *Hawaiian Chicken Meatballs*, or take a dive with some *Wild Walleye Cakes*. Need to replace your overused meat and cheese tray or the tired old chips and salsa? *Hot Cheesy Spinach Rice Spread* or *Wild Rice North Woods Nachos* are sure to be a hit.

So if you are looking to add a 'wild' side to your Christmas or New Year's party menu this year, read on! There's a lot more to holiday cooking than just turkeys and cranberries, like wild rice for example.

Hawaiian Chicken Meatballs

Add a tropical feel to your holiday spread with *Hawaiian Chicken Meatballs*. This savory snack is the perfect starter to satisfy your guests until the main events – combining ground chicken with wild rice, teriyaki sauce, and pineapple for a Polynesian flair to your otherwise traditional feast.

Wild Walleye Cakes

For an appetizer that rivals crab cakes for taste and tenderness, be sure to try one of our favorites – *Wild Walleye Cakes*. This north country favorite blends wild rice with red pepper, green onion, Dijon mustard, and fresh, pan-fried walleye for an appetizer that will leave your guests wanting more.

Hot Cheesy Spinach Rice Spread

Try *Hot Cheesy Spinach Rice Spread* for a new twist to your holiday party appetizers. This newcomer is a quick and easy starter to whet your guests' appetites prior to the holiday turkey. It combines cream cheese, garlic, nutmeg, and spinach with wild rice and sharp cheddar cheese for a creamy, pre-meal snack your guests will be talking about 'til next year.

Wild Rice North Woods Nachos

Turn up the heat with *Wild Rice North Woods Nachos*. This new variation on a party favorite features lean ground chicken topped with bacon, salsa, wild rice, sour cream, and jalapenos for a deliciously spicy start to your holiday spread.

HAWAIIAN CHICKEN MEATBALLS

- 1 pkg (16 oz) Gold'n Plump® Recipe Ready™ Ground Chicken
- 2½ cups cooked wild rice
- 1 large egg, whisked
- ¼ cup applesauce
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 tsp pepper
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ⅛ tsp ground ginger
- 2 tsp dried onion flakes
- 1 tbsp soy sauce

Sauce (whisk together):

- 1 tsp cornstarch
- ½ cup butter, melted
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- 1 cup teriyaki sauce
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 can (20 oz) pineapple tidbits, with juice
- ¼ cup water
- ½ cup chicken broth
- ⅛ tsp ground ginger

Preheat oven to 350°F. In large bowl, combine all ingredients, except sauce. Form into 1½" balls; place in 2 greased 9"x13" pans. Pour sauce over meatballs. Cover with foil; bake 30 minutes. Turn meatballs. Cover; bake 30 minutes. Remove foil; bake 15 minutes.

Serve over bed of wild rice for entrée. 30-40 appetizers.

WILD WALLEYE CAKES

- 1 lb walleye fillets, pan fried, flaked
- 1 cup well-cooked wild rice
- ¾ cup Italian-style bread crumbs
- 4 green onions, white part only, finely chopped
- ½ cup finely diced red pepper
- 3 tbsp mayonnaise
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard
- ¼ tsp hot pepper sauce
- ¼ tsp kosher salt
- ¼ tsp pepper
- 1 tbsp butter

In large bowl, gently combine all ingredients except butter. Shape into nine cakes. In large skillet, brown cakes in butter. 8 servings.

HOT CHEESY SPINACH RICE SPREAD

- 12 oz cream cheese, softened
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ⅛ tsp ground nutmeg
- 1 box (9 oz) frozen Green Giant® Steamers Chopped Spinach, thawed and squeezed to remove moisture
- 1½ cups cooked wild rice
- canola cooking spray
- ½ cup Sargento® Artisan Blends® Shredded Wisconsin Sharp White Cheddar Cheese
- Hearty crackers or pita chips

In medium bowl, beat together cream cheese, garlic, and nutmeg until light and fluffy. Stir in spinach and wild rice. Lightly spray shallow microwave safe dish and spread rice mixture evenly; top with cheese. Microwave on medium-high 4 minutes until cheese is bubbly. Serve hot with Melba toast or hearty crackers. 6-8 servings.

WILD RICE NORTH WOODS NACHOS

- 1 pkg (16 oz) Gold'n Plump® Ground Chicken
- 1 tbsp canola oil
- 1 pkg (1 oz) taco seasoning mix
- 2/3 cup mild salsa
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup frozen Green Giant® Steamers Honey Roasted Sweet Corn
- 1 1/2 cups cooked wild rice
- 3/4 cup chopped, cooked bacon, divided
- 6 oz tortilla chips
- 3 cups Sargento® Off the Block Fine Cut Shredded Cheddar Jack Cheese, divided
- 2/3 cup finely chopped seeded tomato
- 1/3 cup chopped green onion tops
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1 medium jalapeno pepper, seeded and thinly sliced

In large skillet, brown chicken in oil. Stir in taco seasoning, salsa, water, corn, and wild rice; bring to boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 5 minutes, stirring once. Uncover; cook and stir until excess liquid evaporates. Stir in half the bacon. Place tortilla chips on serving platter. Layer with 1 1/2 cups cheese and wild rice. Top with remaining cheese, tomato, bacon, green onion, sour cream, and jalapeno. 6 Servings.

Preparation option: assemble nachos in individual tortilla scoops.

Notes to Editor:

For an electronic copy of the photos call or email our office. If emailing, please specify your preferred photo format.

Due to limited funds, we are unable to utilize a clipping service. Run our release and send us a copy — we'll return the favor by sending you a 1/2 pound of wild rice. If you cannot accept the wild rice, we'd still appreciate a clipping to show our growers — **thanks!**

Hawaiian Chicken Meatballs

Credit: Minnesota Cultivated Wild Rice Council



Wild Walleye Cakes

Credit: Minnesota Cultivated Wild Rice Council



Hot Cheesy Spinach Rice Spread

Credit: Minnesota Cultivated Wild Rice Council



Wild Rice North Woods Nachos

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