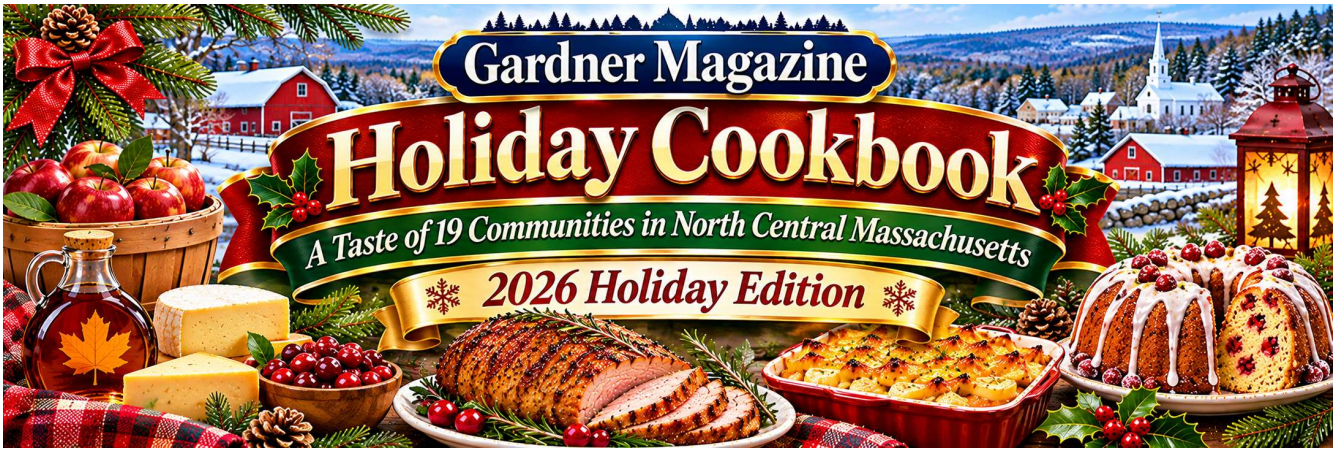


Gardner Magazine Holiday Cookbook

A Taste of 19 Communities in North Central Massachusetts

2026 Holiday Edition

The Gardner Magazine Holiday Cookbook celebrates the traditions, agricultural heritage, local ingredients, and family holiday tables of all 19 communities covered by GardnerMagazine.com.

The goal is to make this more than a conventional collection of Christmas recipes. The mission is to reflect the character of North Central Massachusetts, including New England farmhouse cooking, apple orchards, maple syrup, winter squash, cranberries, traditional holiday roasts, and recipes inspired by the region's history. Note: a reciple inspired by a community is not necessarily a documented historical recipe from that community.

Several communities have especially strong ingredient connections: Phillipston's Red Apple Farm, Barre's dairy farms, Hardwick's cheese and livestock producers, Rutland's Lilac Hedge Farm, Templeton's Pease Orchard, Warwick's Chase Hill Farm, and Winchendon's Smith's Country Cheese.

The Gardner Magazine 2026 Holiday Cookbook consists of the following for every community: A Main Entree, Side Dish, and Dessert. All recipes should be tested at your own table before using for a large gathering. And most importantly, enjoy!

1. Ashburnham — Lakeside Holiday Traditions



Main Entrée: Cranberry-Glazed Roast Turkey Breast

Ingredients: 2½–3 lb boneless turkey breast, 1 cup cranberry sauce, 2 tbsp maple syrup, 1 tbsp Dijon mustard, 1 tbsp olive oil, 1 tsp thyme, salt and pepper.

Preparation: Heat oven to 350°F. Rub turkey with oil, thyme, salt, and pepper. Combine cranberry sauce, syrup, and mustard. Roast turkey, brushing with glaze during the final 30 minutes, until its center reaches 165°F. Rest 15 minutes before slicing.

Side Dish: Rosemary-Roasted Winter Vegetables

Ingredients: 3 carrots, 2 parsnips, 2 potatoes, 1 red onion, 3 tbsp olive oil, 1 tbsp chopped rosemary, salt and pepper.

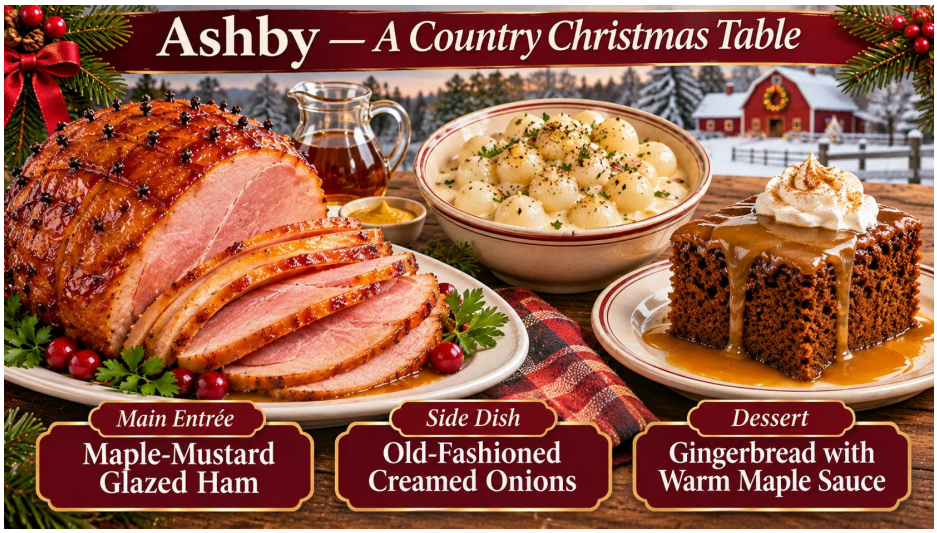
Preparation: Cut vegetables into similar-sized pieces. Toss with oil and seasonings. Roast at 425°F for 35–45 minutes, turning halfway through.

Dessert: Blueberry-Apple Holiday Crumble

Ingredients: 3 sliced apples, 2 cups blueberries, ⅓ cup sugar, 1 tbsp lemon juice, ¾ cup oats, ½ cup flour, ⅓ cup brown sugar, 5 tbsp butter.

Preparation: Combine fruit, sugar, and lemon juice in a baking dish. Mix oats, flour, brown sugar, and butter into crumbs. Sprinkle over fruit and bake at 350°F for 40–45 minutes.

2. Ashby — A Country Christmas Table



Main Entrée: Maple-Mustard Glazed Ham

Ingredients: 3 lb fully cooked ham, ½ cup maple syrup, 2 tbsp Dijon mustard, 2 tbsp brown sugar, ¼ tsp ground cloves.

Preparation: Heat oven to 325°F. Mix glaze ingredients. Place ham in a covered roasting pan and warm according to package instructions, brushing with glaze during the final 30 minutes. Heat to the package's specified internal temperature.

Side Dish: Old-Fashioned Creamed Onions

Ingredients: 1½ lb pearl onions, 2 tbsp butter, 2 tbsp flour, 1½ cups milk, ¼ tsp nutmeg, salt and pepper.

Preparation: Boil peeled onions until tender. Melt butter, whisk in flour, then gradually add milk. Simmer until thickened, season, and fold in onions.

Dessert: Gingerbread with Warm Maple Sauce

Ingredients: 2 cups flour, 1 tsp baking soda, 2 tsp ginger, 1 tsp cinnamon, ½ cup butter, ½ cup brown sugar, ½ cup molasses, 1 egg, ¾ cup hot water. Sauce: ½ cup maple syrup and 2 tbsp butter.

Preparation: Cream butter and sugar; add molasses and egg. Mix in dry ingredients alternately with water. Bake in a greased 8-inch square pan at 350°F for 30–35 minutes. Warm syrup and butter together and pour over slices.

3. Athol — Hearty North Quabbin Holiday Cooking



Main Entrée: Slow-Roasted Apple Cider Pork Loin

Ingredients: 3 lb pork loin, 1½ cups apple cider, 2 sliced apples, 1 onion, 2 tbsp mustard, 1 tsp sage, 2 tbsp olive oil.

Preparation: Brown pork in oil. Place in a roasting pan with apples, onion, cider, mustard, and sage. Roast at 350°F until the center reaches 145°F. Rest at least 3 minutes before slicing; reduce pan juices for sauce.

Side Dish: Cheddar and Potato Holiday Bake

Ingredients: 2 lb thinly sliced potatoes, 1½ cups shredded cheddar, 1 cup milk, ½ cup cream, 2 tbsp butter, 1 tsp thyme, salt and pepper.

Preparation: Layer potatoes and cheese in a buttered dish. Pour over seasoned milk and cream. Cover and bake at 375°F for 45 minutes; uncover and bake another 20–25 minutes until tender and browned.

Dessert: Apple Cider Doughnut Bread Pudding

Ingredients: 4 apple cider doughnuts, 3 eggs, 1½ cups milk, ½ cup apple cider, ⅓ cup brown sugar, 1 tsp cinnamon.

Preparation: Cube doughnuts into a buttered dish. Whisk remaining ingredients and pour over. Rest 15 minutes, then bake at 350°F for 35–40 minutes until set.

4. Barre — The Dairy Farm Holiday Table



Barre's dairy connection is well established through Carter & Stevens Farm and other local agricultural producers.

Main Entrée: Farmhouse Chicken and Biscuit Casserole

Ingredients: 3 cups cooked chicken, 2 cups mixed vegetables, 2 cups chicken broth, ½ cup cream, 3 tbsp butter, 3 tbsp flour, 1 tsp thyme, 6 refrigerated biscuits.

Preparation: Melt butter and stir in flour. Gradually whisk in broth and cream until thickened. Add chicken, vegetables, and thyme. Transfer to a baking dish, top with biscuits, and bake at 375°F for 25–30 minutes until the biscuits are cooked through.

Side Dish: Creamy Cheddar Mashed Potatoes

Ingredients: 2 lb potatoes, ¾ cup warm milk, 4 tbsp butter, 1 cup shredded sharp cheddar, salt and pepper.

Preparation: Boil peeled potatoes until tender. Drain, mash with milk and butter, then stir in cheese and seasonings.

Dessert: Old-Fashioned Eggnog Custard

Ingredients: 3 eggs, 2 cups milk, ½ cup cream, ⅓ cup sugar, 1 tsp vanilla, ¼ tsp nutmeg.

Preparation: Whisk all ingredients together. Pour into six ramekins in a hot-water bath. Bake at 325°F for 35–45 minutes until edges are set and centers gently wobble. Refrigerate before serving.

5. Gardner — The Chair City Holiday Feast



Main Entrée: Gardner Holiday Pot Roast

Ingredients: 3 lb beef chuck roast, 4 carrots, 4 potatoes, 2 onions, 2 cups beef broth, 2 tbsp tomato paste, 2 tbsp oil, 1 tsp thyme.

Preparation: Brown beef in oil in a Dutch oven. Add broth, tomato paste, onions, and thyme. Cover and braise at 325°F for 2 hours. Add carrots and potatoes and cook another 1–1½ hours until the beef is fork-tender.

Side Dish: New England Sausage and Apple Stuffing

Ingredients: 8 cups cubed stale bread, ½ lb sausage, 2 apples, 1 onion, 2 celery stalks, 2 cups chicken broth, 4 tbsp butter, 1 tsp sage.

Preparation: Brown sausage. Sauté apples, onion, and celery in butter. Combine with bread, broth, and sage. Bake in a buttered dish at 350°F for 35–40 minutes, until the center reaches 165°F.

Dessert: Gardner Holiday Cranberry-Orange Cake

Ingredients: 2 cups flour, ¾ cup sugar, 2 tsp baking powder, ½ cup butter, 2 eggs, ½ cup milk, 1 cup cranberries, zest of 1 orange.

Preparation: Cream butter and sugar. Beat in eggs, then alternate flour mixture and milk. Fold in cranberries and orange zest. Bake in a greased 9-inch round pan at 350°F for 35–45 minutes.

6. Hardwick — Farm-to-Table Christmas



Hardwick has a particularly strong agricultural identity, including livestock farms, maple producers, and artisan cheese operations.

Main Entrée: Herb-Roasted Farm Chicken

Ingredients: 1 whole 4–5 lb chicken, 4 tbsp butter, 1 lemon, 4 garlic cloves, 1 tsp rosemary, 1 tsp thyme, salt and pepper.

Preparation: Rub chicken with softened butter, herbs, and seasonings. Place lemon halves and garlic in the cavity. Roast at 375°F until the thickest breast and thigh areas reach 165°F, checking without touching bone. Rest before carving.

Side Dish: Maple-Glazed Butternut Squash

Ingredients: 1 large butternut squash, 3 tbsp maple syrup, 2 tbsp melted butter, ½ tsp cinnamon, salt.

Preparation: Peel and cube squash. Toss with remaining ingredients and roast at 400°F for 30–40 minutes until caramelized. This dish draws on the regional maple-and-squash pairing documented by the Massachusetts Maple Producers Association.

Dessert: Maple Cheesecake

Ingredients: 1½ cups graham cracker crumbs, 5 tbsp melted butter, 16 oz cream cheese, ½ cup maple syrup, 2 eggs, ½ cup sour cream.

Preparation: Press crumbs and butter into an 8-inch springform pan. Beat cream cheese and syrup, then mix in eggs and sour cream. Pour over crust and bake at 325°F for approximately 45–55 minutes until nearly set. Cool, then refrigerate at least 4 hours.

7. Hubbardston — Country Farmhouse Favorites



Main Entrée: Cider-Braised Chicken with Apples

Ingredients: 6 chicken thighs, 1½ cups apple cider, 2 apples, 1 onion, 2 tbsp butter, 1 tsp thyme, salt and pepper.

Preparation: Brown seasoned chicken in butter. Add sliced apples, onion, cider, and thyme. Cover and simmer gently for 30–40 minutes until chicken reaches 165°F. Reduce sauce before serving.

Side Dish: Maple Baked Beans

Ingredients: 3 cans navy beans, drained, ½ cup maple syrup, 1 onion, 2 tbsp molasses, 1 tbsp mustard, ½ cup water, ½ tsp salt.

Preparation: Combine ingredients in a covered casserole and bake at 325°F for 1½–2 hours, stirring occasionally. This is a simplified holiday version of traditional Massachusetts maple baked beans. Massachusetts Maple Producers Association

Dessert: Brown Sugar Apple Cobbler

Ingredients: 5 apples, ½ cup brown sugar, 1 tsp cinnamon, 1 cup flour, 1½ tsp baking powder, ½ cup milk, 4 tbsp butter.

Preparation: Toss sliced apples with half the sugar and cinnamon. Combine remaining sugar, flour, baking powder, milk, and melted butter into a batter. Spoon over apples and bake at 375°F for 35–40 minutes.

8. New Salem — A Quiet New England Christmas



Main Entrée: Traditional Herb-Roasted Turkey

Ingredients: 10–12 lb thawed turkey, ½ cup softened butter, 1 tbsp sage, 1 tbsp thyme, 1 tsp rosemary, salt and pepper, 1 onion.

Preparation: Rub turkey with herb butter and place quartered onion in cavity. Roast unstuffed at 325°F, allowing approximately 3–4 hours but using a thermometer rather than time alone. Confirm 165°F in the thickest breast and innermost thigh and wing.

Side Dish: Brown Butter Mashed Turnips

Ingredients: 2 lb turnips, 4 tbsp butter, ¼ cup cream, salt and pepper.

Preparation: Peel and cube turnips. Boil until tender, drain, and mash with cream. Brown butter gently in a skillet and stir into the turnips.

Dessert: Molasses Spice Cookies

Ingredients: 2¼ cups flour, 2 tsp baking soda, 1 tsp ginger, 1 tsp cinnamon, ¾ cup butter, 1 cup brown sugar, ¼ cup molasses, 1 egg.

Preparation: Cream butter and sugar. Add egg and molasses, then dry ingredients. Chill dough 30 minutes. Roll into balls and bake at 350°F for 9–11 minutes.

9. Oakham — A Traditional Country Holiday



Main Entrée: Maple-Roasted Pork Tenderloin

Ingredients: 2 pork tenderloins, approximately 1 lb each, ⅓ cup maple syrup, 2 tbsp Dijon mustard, 1 tbsp olive oil, 1 tsp rosemary.

Preparation: Combine syrup, mustard, oil, and rosemary. Brush over pork and roast at 400°F for approximately 20–30 minutes until the center reaches 145°F. Rest at least 3 minutes.

Side Dish: Honey-Butter Glazed Carrots

Ingredients: 2 lb carrots, 3 tbsp butter, 3 tbsp honey, ¼ tsp cinnamon, salt.

Preparation: Slice and steam carrots until just tender. Melt butter and honey together in a skillet, add carrots and seasonings, and cook until glazed.

Dessert: Old-Fashioned Indian Pudding

Ingredients: 4 cups milk, ½ cup yellow cornmeal, ½ cup molasses, 2 tbsp butter, ½ tsp ginger, ½ tsp cinnamon, ¼ tsp salt.

Preparation: Heat milk and gradually whisk in cornmeal. Cook until thickened. Add remaining ingredients and transfer to a buttered dish. Bake at 300°F for 1½–2 hours until softly set. Serve warm with vanilla ice cream.

10. Orange — Holiday Comfort Foods



Main Entrée: Cranberry-Apple Pork Chops

Ingredients: 6 pork chops, 1 cup cranberries, 2 sliced apples, ½ cup apple cider, 3 tbsp brown sugar, 1 tbsp oil, ½ tsp thyme.

Preparation: Brown pork chops in oil. Add remaining ingredients, cover, and simmer gently until pork reaches 145°F. Rest at least 3 minutes. This combination is also represented in the Massachusetts Cranberries main-meal collection.
Massachusetts Cranberries

Side Dish: Sweet Potato and Pecan Casserole

Ingredients: 3 lb sweet potatoes, ¼ cup butter, ¼ cup maple syrup, ½ tsp cinnamon, ½ cup chopped pecans, 2 tbsp brown sugar.

Preparation: Boil and mash sweet potatoes with butter, syrup, and cinnamon. Transfer to a casserole and top with pecans and brown sugar. Bake at 350°F for 25–30 minutes.

Dessert: Cranberry Walnut Holiday Bread

Ingredients: 2 cups flour, ¾ cup sugar, 1½ tsp baking powder, ½ tsp baking soda, 1 egg, ¾ cup orange juice, ¼ cup oil, 1 cup cranberries, ½ cup walnuts.

Preparation: Combine dry ingredients. Whisk egg, juice, and oil, then fold into dry ingredients with cranberries and walnuts. Bake in a greased loaf pan at 350°F for 50–60 minutes.

11. Petersham — Historic New England Holiday Dining



Main Entrée: Sunday Roast Beef with Herb Gravy

Ingredients: 3 lb beef sirloin roast, 2 tbsp olive oil, 1 tbsp rosemary, 1 tsp thyme, 3 garlic cloves, salt and pepper. Gravy: 1½ cups beef broth, 2 tbsp flour.

Preparation: Rub beef with oil, herbs, garlic, and seasonings. Roast at 325°F until the desired safe internal temperature is reached; USDA guidance recommends 145°F with a 3-minute rest. Remove beef, whisk flour into pan drippings, and gradually add broth. Simmer until thickened.

Side Dish: Roasted Acorn Squash with Maple Butter

Ingredients: 2 acorn squash, 4 tbsp butter, ¼ cup maple syrup, ½ tsp cinnamon, salt.

Preparation: Halve and seed squash. Place cut-side up on a baking sheet and fill cavities with butter, maple syrup, and seasonings. Bake at 375°F for 45–60 minutes until tender.

Dessert: Traditional New England Apple Pie

Ingredients: Double pie crust, 6 cups sliced apples, ¾ cup sugar, 2 tbsp flour, 1 tsp cinnamon, ¼ tsp nutmeg, 1 tbsp lemon juice, 2 tbsp butter.

Preparation: Toss apples with sugar, flour, spices, and lemon juice. Fill bottom crust, dot with butter, and cover with top crust. Cut vents. Bake at 425°F for 15 minutes, then reduce to 375°F and bake 35–45 minutes longer until filling bubbles.

12. Phillipston — Christmas at the Apple Orchard



Phillipston has one of the clearest culinary identities in the collection because of Red Apple Farm. Its apple varieties, cider, doughnuts, and apple desserts make it a natural inspiration for a holiday cookbook chapter.
FARMS & FARMING

Main Entrée: Apple Cider-Glazed Holiday Pork Roast

Ingredients: 3 lb pork loin, 1 cup apple cider, ¼ cup maple syrup, 2 tbsp mustard, 2 apples, 1 tsp rosemary, salt and pepper.

Preparation: Season pork and roast at 350°F. Simmer cider, syrup, and mustard until slightly reduced. Brush over pork during the final 20 minutes. Add sliced apples to the pan. Cook pork to 145°F and rest at least 3 minutes.

Side Dish: Apple and Sage Holiday Stuffing

Ingredients: 8 cups cubed bread, 3 apples, 1 onion, 2 celery stalks, ½ cup butter, 2 cups chicken broth, 1 tbsp chopped sage.

Preparation: Sauté apples, onion, and celery in butter. Combine with bread, broth, and sage. Transfer to a buttered casserole and bake at 350°F for 35–40 minutes until the center reaches 165°F.

Dessert: Apple Cider Doughnut Cake

Ingredients: 2 cups flour, ¾ cup sugar, 2 tsp baking powder, 1 tsp cinnamon, ½ cup butter, 2 eggs, ¾ cup reduced apple cider, ½ cup milk. Topping: 2 tbsp melted butter and ¼ cup cinnamon sugar.

Preparation: Simmer about 1½ cups cider until reduced to ¾ cup and cool. Cream butter and sugar, beat in eggs, then alternate dry ingredients with cider and milk. Bake in a greased Bundt pan at 350°F for 35–45 minutes. Brush with butter and sprinkle with cinnamon sugar.

Editorial note: These are original apple-themed recipes, not recipes attributed to Red Apple Farm.

13. Princeton — A Wachusett Mountain Christmas



Main Entrée: Rosemary and Garlic Roast Lamb

Ingredients: 3–4 lb boneless leg of lamb, 4 garlic cloves, 2 tbsp rosemary, 2 tbsp olive oil, 1 tbsp lemon juice, salt and pepper.

Preparation: Rub lamb with garlic, rosemary, oil, lemon juice, and seasonings. Roast at 350°F until the center reaches 145°F. Rest at least 3 minutes before slicing.

Side Dish: Maple-Roasted Brussels Sprouts

Ingredients: 2 lb Brussels sprouts, 3 tbsp olive oil, 3 tbsp maple syrup, 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar, salt and pepper.

Preparation: Halve sprouts and toss with oil and seasonings. Roast at 425°F for 20–25 minutes. Add maple syrup and vinegar during the final 5 minutes.

Dessert: Mountain Lodge Chocolate Bread Pudding

Ingredients: 6 cups cubed bread, 2 cups milk, ½ cup cream, 3 eggs, ½ cup sugar, ¾ cup chocolate chips, 1 tsp vanilla.

Preparation: Whisk milk, cream, eggs, sugar, and vanilla. Pour over bread and chocolate chips in a buttered baking dish. Rest 20 minutes, then bake at 350°F for 35–45 minutes until set.

14. Royalston — An Old-Fashioned Holiday Supper



Main Entrée: Slow-Cooked Beef and Root Vegetable Stew

Ingredients: 2 lb cubed beef chuck, 4 carrots, 3 potatoes, 2 parsnips, 1 onion, 3 cups beef broth, 2 tbsp tomato paste, 1 tsp thyme, 2 tbsp oil.

Preparation: Brown beef in oil. Add broth, tomato paste, onion, and thyme. Cover and simmer 1½ hours. Add vegetables and simmer another 45–60 minutes until beef is tender.

Side Dish: Traditional Cornbread Dressing

Ingredients: 6 cups crumbled cornbread, 1 onion, 2 celery stalks, ½ cup butter, 2 cups chicken broth, 1 tsp sage, 1 egg.

Preparation: Sauté onion and celery in butter. Mix with cornbread, broth, sage, and beaten egg. Bake in a greased dish at 350°F for 35–40 minutes until center reaches 165°F.

Dessert: Maple Walnut Cookies

Ingredients: 2 cups flour, ½ tsp baking soda, ½ cup butter, ½ cup brown sugar, ⅓ cup maple syrup, 1 egg, ¾ cup chopped walnuts.

Preparation: Cream butter and sugar, add syrup and egg, then flour, baking soda, and walnuts. Drop spoonfuls onto baking sheets and bake at 350°F for 10–12 minutes.

15. Rutland — A Farm-Fresh Holiday Feast



Rutland's Lilac Hedge Farm provides a strong connection to pasture-raised meats and locally produced foods.

Main Entrée: Holiday Herb-Crusted Beef Roast

Ingredients: 3 lb beef roast, 2 tbsp olive oil, 2 tbsp Dijon mustard, 1 tbsp rosemary, 1 tbsp thyme, 3 garlic cloves, salt and pepper.

Preparation: Combine mustard, oil, herbs, and minced garlic. Rub over beef and roast at 325°F until the center reaches 145°F. Rest at least 3 minutes before slicing.

Side Dish: Farmhouse Cheddar Scalloped Potatoes

Ingredients: 2 lb potatoes, 1½ cups milk, ½ cup cream, 1½ cups cheddar, 2 tbsp flour, 2 tbsp butter, salt and pepper.

Preparation: Make a sauce with butter, flour, milk, cream, and half the cheese. Layer with thinly sliced potatoes. Top with remaining cheese and bake covered at 375°F for 45 minutes, then uncovered for 20–30 minutes until tender.

Dessert: Maple Cream Pumpkin Pie

Ingredients: 1 pie crust, 1¾ cups pumpkin purée, ¾ cup cream, ½ cup maple syrup, 2 eggs, 1 tsp cinnamon, ½ tsp ginger, ¼ tsp nutmeg.

Preparation: Whisk filling ingredients and pour into crust. Bake at 425°F for 15 minutes, then reduce to 350°F and bake 35–45 minutes until set. Cool completely.

16. Templeton — Orchard and Village Holiday Favorites



Pease Orchard in Templeton provides a documented local connection to apple growing.

Main Entrée: Apple and Cranberry Stuffed Pork Loin

Ingredients: 3 lb butterflied pork loin, 2 apples, ½ cup dried cranberries, ½ cup breadcrumbs, 1 onion, 2 tbsp butter, 1 tsp sage.

Preparation: Sauté diced apples and onion in butter. Mix with cranberries, breadcrumbs, and sage. Spread over butterflied pork, roll tightly, and tie with kitchen twine. Roast at 350°F until pork and stuffing both reach 165°F. Rest before slicing.

Side Dish: Roasted Apple and Sweet Potato Medley

Ingredients: 3 sweet potatoes, 3 apples, 3 tbsp maple syrup, 2 tbsp olive oil, ½ tsp cinnamon, salt.

Preparation: Cube sweet potatoes and apples. Toss with remaining ingredients. Roast at 400°F for 30–40 minutes until tender, stirring halfway through.

Dessert: Orchard Apple Crisp

Ingredients: 6 apples, ½ cup sugar, 1 tsp cinnamon, ¾ cup oats, ½ cup flour, ½ cup brown sugar, 6 tbsp butter.

Preparation: Place sliced apples, sugar, and cinnamon in a buttered baking dish. Mix oats, flour, brown sugar, and butter into a crumb topping. Bake at 350°F for 40–45 minutes. Apple crisp also appears in the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources' seasonal recipe collection.

17. Warwick — A Hilltown Farm Christmas



Warwick's Chase Hill Farm is listed among Massachusetts dairy producers, giving this chapter a farm-and-dairy inspiration.

Main Entrée: Creamy Mushroom and Herb Chicken

Ingredients: 6 chicken breasts, 12 oz mushrooms, 1 cup chicken broth, ½ cup cream, 2 tbsp butter, 2 garlic cloves, 1 tsp thyme.

Preparation: Brown chicken in butter and set aside. Sauté mushrooms and garlic, add broth and thyme, then return chicken to pan. Simmer until chicken reaches 165°F. Add cream and warm gently.

Side Dish: Creamy Winter Vegetable Gratin

Ingredients: 2 potatoes, 2 parsnips, 2 carrots, 1 cup cream, ½ cup milk, 1 cup grated cheddar, 1 tsp thyme.

Preparation: Thinly slice vegetables and layer in a buttered dish. Pour over seasoned cream and milk, then add cheese. Cover and bake at 375°F for 45 minutes; uncover for another 20–25 minutes until vegetables are tender.

Dessert: Farmhouse Maple Bread Pudding

Ingredients: 6 cups cubed stale bread, 3 eggs, 2 cups milk, ½ cup maple syrup, 2 tbsp butter, 1 tsp cinnamon.

Preparation: Whisk eggs, milk, syrup, and cinnamon. Pour over bread in a buttered dish. Dot with butter and bake at 350°F for 35–45 minutes until set.

18. Westminster — A Classic Holiday Celebration



Main Entrée: Brown Sugar and Pineapple Holiday Ham

Ingredients: 3–4 lb fully cooked ham, ½ cup brown sugar, ¼ cup pineapple juice, 2 tbsp mustard, 6 pineapple rings.

Preparation: Mix sugar, juice, and mustard. Place ham in a roasting pan, arrange pineapple rings on top, and brush with glaze. Warm at 325°F according to package instructions, basting during the final 30 minutes.

Side Dish: Holiday Green Bean Casserole

Ingredients: 1½ lb green beans, 8 oz mushrooms, 1 cup milk, ½ cup cream, 2 tbsp flour, 2 tbsp butter, 1 cup crispy fried onions.

Preparation: Blanch green beans. Sauté mushrooms in butter, add flour, and whisk in milk and cream until thickened. Combine with beans and bake at 350°F for 20 minutes. Top with crispy onions and bake another 5–10 minutes.

Dessert: Cranberry-Orange Holiday Bundt Cake

Ingredients: 2½ cups flour, 1 cup sugar, 2 tsp baking powder, ¾ cup butter, 3 eggs, ¾ cup milk, 1½ cups cranberries, zest of 2 oranges.

Preparation: Cream butter and sugar, add eggs, then alternate flour mixture and milk. Fold in cranberries and zest. Bake in a greased Bundt pan at 350°F for 45–55 minutes.

19. Winchendon — A Dairy Country Holiday



Winchendon's Smith's Country Cheese is a documented local dairy producer, making cheese and cream-based dishes an appropriate inspiration.

Main Entrée: Roast Turkey with Creamy Herb Sauce

Ingredients: 3 lb boneless turkey breast, 2 tbsp butter, 1 tsp sage, 1 tsp thyme, 1 cup chicken broth, ½ cup cream, 1 tbsp flour.

Preparation: Rub turkey with butter and herbs. Roast at 350°F until the center reaches 165°F. Rest 15 minutes. Whisk flour into pan drippings, add broth and cream, and simmer until thickened.

Side Dish: Baked New England Macaroni and Cheese

Ingredients: 1 lb elbow macaroni, 3 cups shredded sharp cheddar, 3 cups milk, 4 tbsp butter, 4 tbsp flour, ½ cup breadcrumbs.

Preparation: Cook macaroni until just tender. Melt butter, whisk in flour, and gradually add milk. Stir in cheese until smooth. Combine with macaroni, top with breadcrumbs, and bake at 375°F for 25–30 minutes.

Dessert: Maple Cheesecake with Walnut Crust

Ingredients: 1 cup graham cracker crumbs, ½ cup finely chopped walnuts, 5 tbsp melted butter, 16 oz cream cheese, ½ cup maple syrup, 2 eggs, ½ cup sour cream.

Preparation: Combine crumbs, walnuts, and butter and press into an 8-inch springform pan. Beat cream cheese with maple syrup, then add eggs and sour cream. Bake at 325°F for 45–55 minutes until nearly set. Cool and refrigerate at least 4 hours.