



NEWS RELEASE

Defense Commissary Agency

Corporate Communication

1300 E Avenue □ Fort Lee, VA 23801-1800

Tel: (804) 734-8000, Ext. 4-8524 DSN: 687-8000, Ext. 4-8524

FAX: (804) 734-8248 DSN: 687-8248

www.commissaries.com

Release Number: 117-10
Date: December 6, 2010
Contact: Kay Blakley, DeCA home economist
Tel.: (804) 734-8000, Ext. 8-6243
E-mail: kay.blakley@deca.mil

Your commissary cookie exchange

*By Kay Blakley,
DeCA home economist*

FORT LEE, Va. – Whoever thought up the idea of a cookie exchange was one smart cook. What a great way to amass an assortment of holiday treats by baking only one of the treats yourself! The idea, of course, is to host an informal gathering of friends, each of whom brings a specified number of cookies, say a dozen or even a half dozen of a single kind of cookies for each person attending.

You'll need to apply a bit of math so the numbers turn out correctly. For example, if you have eight people participating, each person will contribute eight dozen cookies. That may sound like a lot, but most cookie recipes make at least three dozen cookies, so you'll only be baking a few batches. If that still sounds like too much, make it a contribution of a half-dozen cookies each. Everybody will still go home with a total of 48 cookies made up of eight different varieties.

Who could be disappointed with that?

Whatever the amount requested, you want your contribution to be the highlight of the event, don't you? So, here are a few baking basics to ensure your success:

- Measure carefully. Fluff the flour in your bag or canister with a spoon, then spoon loosely into a dry measuring cup. Level off with a spatula or the straight edge of a knife. Use the same leveling technique with other dry ingredients such as baking soda, baking powder and spices. Use a liquid measuring cup for liquids. Set the cup on a flat surface, such as the counter, and check for accuracy at eye level.

- Unless your recipe directs otherwise, use unsalted fat both in the recipe and to grease the baking sheets, if called for.
- Try to make all cookies in the batch the same size to ensure more uniform baking.
- If baking just one cookie sheet at a time, use the center rack of the oven. If baking two sheets at a time, place the oven racks so the oven is divided into thirds.
- Use a baking sheet that is smaller than your oven rack. Allowing 2 inches of space on all sides of the baking sheet will allow heat to circulate evenly and cookies to brown correctly.
- If you only have one baking sheet, let it cool before filling with cookie dough for the next round in the oven. Placing the dough on a warm sheet will cause it to spread too quickly and result in uneven baking.
- Check cookies at the minimum baking time – try not to over bake. Unless your recipes direct otherwise, remove the cookies from the baking sheet immediately. They will continue to cook if left on the baking sheet.
- To prevent cookies from becoming tough and soggy, always cool completely on a wire rack before storing.
- Take care when transporting your contribution to the cookie exchange. You don't want to arrive with a plate of broken pieces and bunches of crumbs.

You'll be a real smart cookie if you bake from scratch – these will cost you about 3 to 5 cents per cookie, on average. Those made from refrigerated cookie dough run about 12 cents or more per cookie.

You'll be the smartest cookie of the entire batch if you purchase all your ingredients from the commissary. We have just what you need, all at a savings of 30 percent or more.

To check out a great collection of classic holiday cookie recipes, come to Kay's Kitchen at <http://www.commissaries.com>.

-DeCA-

About DeCA: *The Defense Commissary Agency operates a worldwide chain of commissaries providing groceries to military personnel, retirees and their families in a safe and secure shopping environment. Authorized patrons purchase items at cost plus a 5-percent surcharge, which covers the costs of building new commissaries and modernizing existing ones. Shoppers save an average of more than 30 percent on their purchases compared to commercial prices – savings worth more than \$4,400 annually for a family of four. A core military family*

support element, and a valued part of military pay and benefits, commissaries contribute to family readiness, enhance the quality of life for America's military and their families, and help recruit and retain the best and brightest men and women to serve their country.