



MEDIA RELEASE

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
MARKET DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

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Peppered Cheddar Muffins a Savory Surprise for Holiday Tables

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The holiday season guarantees good food will show up at work and home gatherings – but often, it’s the same good food you’ve had for years. And years. With her latest recipe, Tammy Algood offers holiday cooks a dish that blends in on the typical party table but stands out when you take a bite.

“It’s hard to beat traditional fare, but even the most classic suit occasionally needs to be brightened up a bit with a new tie,” says Algood. “These Peppered Cheddar Muffins lend a welcome twist to office brunches and family events while managing to look like they belong on the table with your old favorites.”

Algood is spokesperson for the statewide Pick Tennessee Products campaign, the promotion developed by the Tennessee Department of Agriculture Market Development Division to help consumers identify and choose foods grown or processed in Tennessee. Algood creates recipes featuring foods grown or processed in Tennessee. Her recipes are available at www.PickTnProducts.org.

Toss out any ideas about everyday cornbread muffins, all hearty and grainy; these muffins are smooth and light, with just enough cornmeal to qualify them as corn muffins. Peppered Cheddar Muffins are decidedly on the festive and elegant side, with bits of red pimentos and green pepper providing holiday color. A generous amount of sharp cheddar cheese makes the flavor of the muffin big, and a stealthy dash of ground red pepper creates a surprise for the palate with just enough heat to get your attention at the end of a bite.

“There’s just enough sugar in the recipe to aid in the even browning of the muffins,” says Algood. “Their golden color is another reason these muffins are so pretty and tempting on a holiday table.

“In large families, and in office settings, it’s hard to gauge what you can provide that will be a hit across the board. You certainly don’t want to go to the effort of making something only to see it all still sitting there when the event is over. Corn muffins

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won't spook picky eaters by looking too 'different', and they're still a good match for all the great Southern foods you can count on being offered. The first bite will tell you, though, it's something special.

"You can dress them up or down, serve them hot or cooled," says Algood. "They're easy to make—just two bowls to clean—and you won't have to worry about what to do with leftovers. There won't be any."

For more recipes featuring Tennessee farm products, visit www.PickTnProducts.org.

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Please find a hi-res downloadable photograph of the attached recipe at www.PickTnProducts.org. Click on the featured recipe.

Peppered Cheddar Muffins

2-1/2 cups Martha White all-purpose flour
2 tablespoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup shredded Sweetwater Valley sharp cheddar cheese
1 (2-ounce) jar diced Moody Dunbar pimiento peppers, drained
1/4 cup Shenandoah Mills cornmeal
1/4 cup sugar
1/4 cup finely chopped onion
3 tablespoons finely chopped green bell pepper
1/4 teaspoon ground red pepper
2 eggs, beaten
1-1/2 cups Purity milk
1/4 cup Wesson vegetable oil

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Lightly grease muffin tins and set aside. Combine first 10 ingredients in a large mixing bowl. Make a well in the center. In a separate bowl, combine eggs, milk and oil. Add to dry ingredients, stirring just until combined. Spoon into prepared muffin cups, filling two-thirds full. Bake 20-25 minutes. Remove from pans immediately. Yield: 18 muffins. For mini muffins, cut baking time roughly in half. Yield: 54 muffins.

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