

'Tis The Season To Be Baking: Check Your Ingredients



Replace baking ingredients at the start of the baking season to ensure success.

(NAPSA)—Get ready. Get set. Begin baking. But before creating those memorable morsels, check to see that you have all the fresh ingredients you need.

Choose a fall day as your annual day to replace older baking ingredients. Mark the day on your calendar so you'll remember and make a list of the basics. Your list will probably include:

- Baking powder. This recipe powerhouse may be the least expensive ingredient ounce for ounce in many recipes but if it doesn't work, your recipe may fail.

Even if the expiration date on the can hasn't passed, an open can should probably be replaced.

- Baking soda (one for baking, one for cleaning)

- Cornstarch
- Spices such as cinnamon, nutmeg, mace and ginger

- Nuts such as almonds, pecans and walnuts

- Flours, including cake flour, whole wheat and all-purpose

- Baking chocolate
- Canned fruits, pumpkin, milks

- Dried fruits such as raisins, cranberries and apricots

Remember to always mark the purchase date on the bottom of new ingredients, so you know whether they need to be replaced before the baking season starts.

You needn't replace each item in your pantry every year, but marking dates will help you decide what to throw out.

Once you're sure you have everything you need, this delicious recipe can help start your baking season with a smile.

Pecan Chocolate Chip Cookies

½ cup butter, softened

½ cup shortening

½ cup sugar

1 cup brown sugar, packed

2 eggs

1 teaspoon vanilla

1½ cups all-purpose flour

2 teaspoons baking powder

1 cup chocolate chips

1 cup white chocolate chips

1 cup pecans, chopped

In a large bowl, cream butter, shortening, sugars, eggs and vanilla; set aside. In a separate bowl, sift together flour and baking powder. Stir flour mixture into creamed mixture until combined. Add chocolate chips, white chocolate chips and pecans. Mix thoroughly.

Drop by tablespoonfuls onto greased cookie sheet. Bake at 375° F for 8 to 10 minutes. Cool on wire rack. Makes about 2½ dozen cookies.

For more recipes and baking tips, visit www.homebaking.org.