

# Exceptional Gravy For A Flawless Holiday Gathering

(NAPSA)—Because the holidays are a time for food, festivities, family and friends, it can also be stressful for hosts striving to please their guests.

A traditional part of any holiday meal is gravy—a staple at family dinner tables year-round. Gravy is often associated with foods including turkey, biscuits, potatoes and pork. A delicious gravy will enhance the flavor of foods and now it can also be an integral part of hosting a flawless holiday gathering.

Many home cooks have difficulty preparing gravy that is both smooth and flavorful. A few techniques can save a lot of time for the harried holiday host. For example, when pairing gravy with holiday dishes such as mashed potatoes, a thickened gravy is best.

Here are a few tips from the experts who use Argo corn starch to help achieve gravy with the best consistency and flavor:

- Gradually stir corn starch into a small amount of cold liquid until completely smooth. Be sure to do this before adding it to a hot mixture in order to prevent lumping. Continue to stir gently during entire cooking period.

- When adding ingredients after cooking, remove the mixture from the heat and stir them in quickly and gently. Stirring too vigorously may cause the mixture to break down and thin out.

- Cook over medium-low to medium heat. Maintaining a medium heat prevents foods from sticking to your pots.

- Stirring constantly, bring mixture to medium heat for one minute. After heating one minute, the starch granules will swell, causing the mixture to thicken. Once thickened, remove from heat. Significantly overcooking thickened mixtures—such as puddings, pies and cake fillings—may cause mixtures to thin out as they cool.



**Corn starch can be an important part of a great gravy to use at holiday gatherings.**

With twice the thickening power of flour, corn starch is a preferred thickening agent because it is gluten-free, resulting in perfect gravy. To substitute corn starch for flour, use one tablespoon of corn starch for every two tablespoons of flour. Unlike flour, corn starch gives gravy a glossy, translucent appearance and a smooth, lump-free texture. Corn starch also blends more easily with liquids because it doesn't absorb the liquid until it's cooked.

Following is an easy gravy recipe for a multitude of holiday dishes:

## **Easy Argo Gravy**

*Prep Time: 5 minutes*

*Cook Time: 5 minutes*

*Yield: 2 cups*

**2 Tbsp. Argo or Kingsford's corn starch**

**2 Tbsp. fat drippings**

**2 cups broth or water**

**¼ cup cold water**

**Salt and pepper to taste**

**Stove Top: Remove all but 2 Tbsp. fat drippings from roasting pan. Add 2 cups broth or water. Cook over medium heat, stirring to loosen browned bits. Mix corn starch and ¼ cup cold water; stir into pan. Stirring constantly, simmer over medium heat for 1 minute. Season to taste.**

**Microwave: In a 2-quart**

**microwaveable bowl, thoroughly mix corn starch and ¼ cup cold water, then stir in 2 cups broth or water. Microwave on high (100%) for 3 minutes, remove and stir well. Microwave for 3 more minutes or until mixture thickens and boils for 1 minute. Remove from microwave, stir in fat drippings and season to taste.**

**Creamy Gravy: Prepare as directed above, but mix corn starch with ¼ cup cold milk instead of ¼ cup cold water.**

Home cooks can use any remaining corn starch as a thickener for other sauces, glazes, soups, stews and casseroles, or as a great coating for foods before frying them. An alternative to ingredients with fat, corn starch has a pure, natural flavor and aroma, making it versatile for both main dishes and desserts. Thus, it is a foolproof thickener in pies, puddings, custards and cake fillings.

In cakes, cookies and pastries, corn starch is often mixed with flour to produce more tender baked goods. It can be used in numerous recipes year-round by storing any leftover corn starch from your holiday cooking tightly sealed and in a dry place.

For additional, versatile recipes from delicious desserts and glazes to holiday side dishes and drinks, visit [www.argostarch.com](http://www.argostarch.com).