

# COOKIE HAPPINESS

## Share Favorite Cookie Recipes With Friends: Host A Holiday Cookie Swap

(NAPSA)—Shopping, wrapping presents, baking, cooking, socializing. The holidays can be a busy time, indeed. To save time and money on holiday baking, consider hosting a cookie swap. It's a great way to spend time with family and friends, and come away with a wide array of holiday cookies to grace your holiday table.

### How It Works

Invite a group of family and friends to each bake 2-4 dozen of their favorite holiday cookie. As guests arrive, they arrange their cookies on a table with a card identifying each type of cookie. Guests then go around the table and pick a specific number of assorted cookies to take home with them. For ease, divide the number of guests by the total number of cookies to determine how many cookies each guest can select. Each guest should go home with the same number of cookies they brought—but in a varied assortment of tastes, shapes, styles and colors.

To make the swap more personal, each guest could be introduced and then share a favorite holiday memory, the history behind the recipe, or a holiday family tradition. These stories are great icebreakers, especially if you have a group of people who might not know each other well. And, it helps to reinforce the spirit of the holidays.

Another thought is to ask each person to make a few extra cookies. The extra cookies can be put into tins and delivered to friends and relatives who are too sick to cook or bake this year. Or, they can be delivered to local charities, fire or police departments.

### Cookie Swap Tips

- Avoid duplication by having

each guest provide the cookie name when they RSVP for the event

- Ask your family and friends to bring enough copies of their cookie recipe for each guest scheduled to attend, so you can swap recipes too

- To avoid munching on holiday cookies, offer a few appetizers and drinks to guests, or have them bake enough cookies that on-site sampling won't deplete the number of cookies available to take home

- If you are going to encourage cookie sampling during your cookie swap, have beverages such as tea, cider, coffee and milk on hand

A great holiday recipe to try for your cookie swap is shortbread cookies, which can be decorated to reflect any holiday or occasion.

### SHORTBREAD COOKIES

- 1½ cups Argo corn starch**
- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 4⅔ cups powdered sugar, sifted and divided**
- 2⅓ cups butter, divided**
- ½ teaspoon vanilla**
- 2½ teaspoons grated lemon peel, divided**
- ⅓ cup lemon juice**
- sprinkles, optional**

### Directions:

**1. Preheat oven to 350°F. In a medium bowl combine Argo corn starch, flour and 2/3 cup powdered sugar. Set aside.**

**2. In a large bowl, beat 2 cups of butter with a mixer at medium speed until softened and smooth. Add the corn starch mixture, vanilla and 1 1/2 teaspoons of lemon peel;**



**A SWEET SWAP**—Cookie sampling at a holiday cookie recipe swap takes the cake.

beat well. (If necessary, refrigerate dough 1 hour or until easy to handle.)

**3. Shape the dough into 1-inch balls and place them 1 1/2 inches apart on ungreased cookie sheets. Bake 10 to 12 minutes, or until edges are lightly browned. Cool completely on wire racks.**

**4. For icing, beat together in a medium bowl the remaining 1/3 cup of butter and the remaining teaspoon of lemon peel until the butter is softened. Add the remaining 4 cups of powdered sugar and lemon juice; beat until well combined. Add red food coloring, if desired. Decorate cookies with icing and sprinkles in fun designs such as stripes and polka dots. Store in a tightly covered container.**

**Makes 6 dozen cookies.**

Consumers can visit [www.argo starch.com](http://www.argo starch.com) or [www.karosyrup.com](http://www.karosyrup.com) for additional, versatile recipes from delicious desserts and glazes to holiday side dishes and drinks.