



## History Cooks® Food and History Lesson

# Oregon Trail Cooking†

### Objectives

After completing this lesson, the student should be able to:

- Compare differences between cooked and fresh greens.
- Realize how simplicity of recipe makes for easy travel on the Oregon Trail.

### Introduction

Students take turns reading paragraphs from page 20 of *Oregon Trail Cooking*.

### COOKED GREENS WITH BACON AND VINEGAR‡

#### Ingredients

- 10 cups fresh greens (spinach, mustard greens, Swiss chard)
- 5 slices bacon
- 1 tablespoon raspberry or cider vinegar

#### Equipment

- dry-ingredient measuring cups
- large bowl
- cutting board
- sharp knife
- Dutch oven or large saucepan
- spatula
- paper towel
- clean coffee can
- measuring spoons

### Methods

1. Wash greens. Remove any tough stems.
2. Tear greens into medium-sized pieces. Toss together in bowl.
3. Cut bacon into 1-inch pieces.
4. In Dutch oven or saucepan, cook bacon until crisp. Place bacon on paper towel to cool.
5. Pour bacon fat into coffee can. Spoon 2 tablespoons of bacon fat into Dutch oven or saucepan.
6. Add greens to Dutch oven or saucepan. Cook over medium heat 6 to 8 minutes or until the greens have wilted and are tender.
7. Sprinkle with bacon pieces and 1 tablespoon vinegar. Serve immediately.

### Demonstration

#### Option 1: Hands-On Student Cooking

Students divide into groups of 2-3. Instructor briefly demonstrates equipment use, discusses methods and introduces ingredients. Instructor assigns Cooked Greens recipe to each group OR assigns each group separate *Oregon Trail Cooking* recipes in addition to Cooked Greens recipe.

#### Option 2: Instructional Cooking

Instructor prepares recipe with students' assistance. Instructor demonstrates equipment use, discusses methods, and introduces ingredients as recipe is prepared. Students actively participate in equipment use, ingredient measurement, and preparation methods.

### Class Discussion Questions

**Hint:** Remember to discuss questions through the perspectives of Oregon Trail members and modern individuals.

- Greens were eaten as a good source of vitamin C to prevent scurvy. What are some other advantages of eating greens if you were traveling on the Oregon Trail? (availability of greens, little to no transport required)
- What other alternatives for bacon would the wagon train members have to add to their greens?
- Why do you think the greens were cooked? Do you think the trail members ate raw greens, too?
- When and where would greens be plentiful? Scarce?

† Order direct from History Cooks®, SRP \$22.95. Special History Cooks Price: \$14.95 plus shipping.

‡ Recipe reprinted from *Oregon Trail Cooking* by Mary Gunderson and used by permission from Capstone Press, Blue Earth Books, 2000. ISBN 0-7368-0355-6



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