

# Grandpa Sawey's Sage Cornbread Dressing

*This is a Texas favorite. Grandpa Sawey was known for his spicy cornbread dressing. He taught Mom how to make this before she left San Antonio and returned to Fairbanks to attend University of Alaska.*

Bake cornbread following instructions on box. Bake enough to fill a 9x13 pan to stuff about a 19-20 pound turkey. For extra dressing, increase amount of cornbread. When cornbread is cooled, cut it into pieces in a large mixing bowl. With both hands, crumble cornbread until all large lumps are gone.

In a big pot, filled  $\frac{3}{4}$  full of water, create a broth by boiling the neck and tail from the turkey. Boil broth for about 45 minutes. Salt broth well. If you run out of broth, a substitute can be made from chicken bouillon cubes.

From the inside of the turkey, remove gizzard, heart, and liver. Cut ingredients into small pieces. Cut a 12-16 ounce package of bacon into small pieces, frying together with gizzard, heart, and liver until well done (Grandfather said you can use any kind of meat, even hamburger, but Mom has only used bacon). Drain fat and add cooked meat with crumbled cornbread.

Chop into small pieces 2 large onions and about 6-8 stalks of celery. Combine and saute in shortening. Cook until soft; add to cornbread mixture.

Add 2 raw eggs to cornbread mixture and pour enough broth into mixture until damp and will stick together when stirred.

Spices: Mom never measures any of the seasonings she's uses, but the main ones are **sage**, **poultry seasoning**, **dry mustard** (gives body and kick), **salt**, and **pepper**. You can also add small measures of chili powder (if you like it spicy), garlic salt, and paprika (Grandpa used every spice in the cupboard, but Mom isn't that adventurous.) If it doesn't taste quite right, add more of the first three.

Right before you cook the turkey (not the evening before), stuff cavities with stuffing.

Baking in turkey will enhance flavor of stuffing. Make a tent of tin foil and bake at 350°F. Extra stuffing can be heated in oven during last 45 minutes of baking turkey. Have fun and don't be afraid to be creative with those spices.

If you don't have the turkey parts, chicken broth can be used exclusively and the gizzard, heart, and liver can be left out.