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Chicken Barbecue

Boyd J. Bonzer

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CHICKEN BARBECUE



by Boyd J. Bonzer
Extension Poultryman

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Splitting a Chicken -- 5 Basic Steps

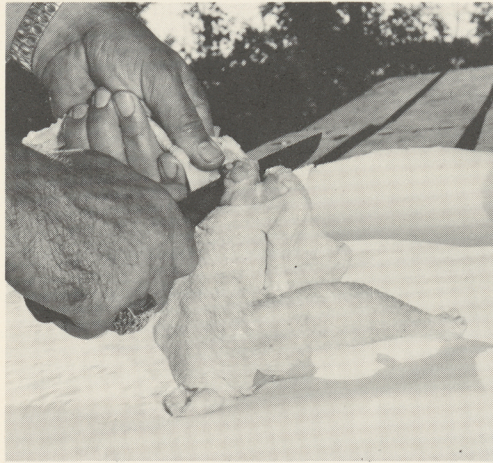


Figure 1. Grasp the bird by the left wing near the body and set it on its tail on a cutting board with the back toward you. Place the base of the blade of a sharp knife at the left side of the neck stub.

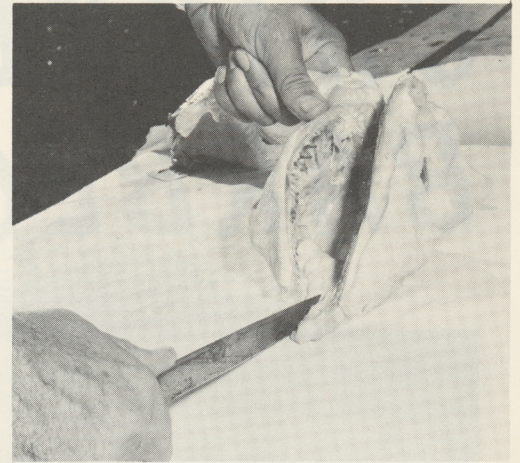


Figure 2. Press down on the blade and pull it toward you cutting down through the back with one firm, clean cut.



Figure 3. Reach through the cut and nick the lower part of the "V" of the wishbone with the knife and slit the neck skin in that area.

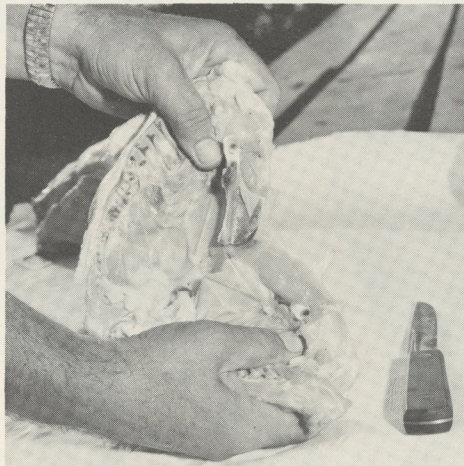


Figure 4. Lay the knife aside, pull the two halves apart from front to back . . .

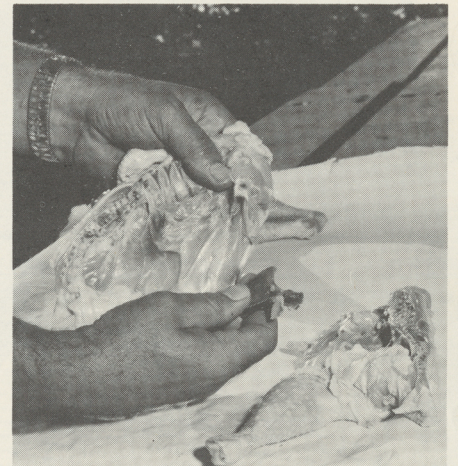


Figure 5. . . and peel off the exposed breast bone.

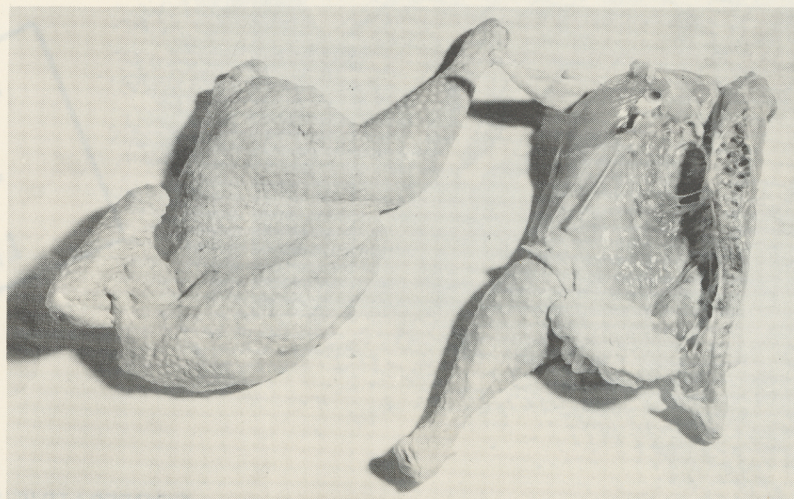


Figure 6. Two equal chicken halves.

By **Boyd J. Bonzer**, Extension poultryman

Whether you expect 5 or 500 guests, barbecued chicken fills the bill. It makes a family-sized outdoor meal for your backyard, or serves a crowd in a park or field for community enterprise, service club, church benefit, youth organization, or picnic. It whets that outdoor appetite.

Here are the things you need.

THE PIT

Permanent portable pits can be made from 55 gallon oil drums cut in half the long way. Each half of the drum will accommodate about 20 to 25 chicken halves. Allow about 4" x 7" of grill space per 1/2 chicken. Several portable pits can be placed side by side in a row for large barbecues. See figure 1 for construction of barbecue pits from oil drums.

A temporary pit can be constructed above ground with concrete blocks or sheet metal. Blocks can often be borrowed locally and returned. Stack the blocks on the ground three rows high as shown in figure 2. 2' x 8' sheets of metal wired to posts or iron stakes can be substituted for blocks. Heat will damage the metal so it is not returnable. The size of pit will be determined by the number of chickens to be barbecued, see table 4.

THE GRILL

1" x 2" welded wire can be brazed or fastened to 1/2 inch steel rod. See figure 1 for construction of grills and grill covers.

THE FIRE

Use charcoal briquettes. They give a slow even heat over a long period of time. Saturate the briquettes with a starter fluid and light the fire about 30 minutes before you plan to start cooking. Electric starters are handy for small family barbecues.

If the fire is spotted in starting, a little stirring with the shovel will help to get an even start. When the briquettes are mostly ash color, level them off so they are only about one briquette deep and you are ready to start cooking.

If the fire is too hot, the bed of coals can be sprinkled with water or some coal can be removed with a shovel.

Always remove the chicken from the fire when sprinkling with water to slow it down. There will be a certain amount of ash that comes off the bri-

quettes that will stick to the meat. If you want more heat, place a few more briquettes at the edge of the fire and move them over after they start burning. The amount of charcoal briquettes, etc. for both types of pits is shown in tables 3 and 4.

THE CHICKEN

You will want birds that weigh around 2 pounds oven ready. Halves should weigh about 1 pound each. The birds should be split in half to serve two people, with neck and breastbone removed. It is important to have the birds uniform in size so they will all be done with the same amount of cooking.

The neck, heart, liver, and gizzard are usually not used for barbecuing but have other salvage value.

Larger chickens, up to 4 or 5 pounds, can be used. Divide the birds into quarters and offer light or dark meat. Cooking time will be lengthened with the larger birds.

Cut the oven-ready birds in half in six steps:

1. Remove the giblets from the body cavity.
2. Grasp the bird by the left wing near the body and set it on its tail on a cutting board with the back toward you.
3. Place the base of the blade of a sharp knife at the left side of the neck stub.
4. Press down on the blade and pull it toward you cutting down through the back with one firm clean cut.
5. Reach through the cut and nick the lower part of the "V" of the wishbone with the knife and slit the neck skin in that area.
6. Lay the knife aside, pull the two halves apart from front to back and peel off the exposed breast bone.

THE BARBECUE SAUCE

A lot of different sauces are being used. The New England type sauce—equal parts of water, vinegar, cooking oil and salt to taste—is very good. See recipe in table 1. You can mix the sauce in small batches as it is used. It is not necessary to keep the sauce warm. You can spice the sauce up a little with a few drops of Tabasco sauce.

You may have some additional ideas that will give the sauce a personal touch. Go ahead and try

them but test them out before you try them on your guests.

COOKING PROCEDURE

When the fire is ready, fold the end of the wing over the back and place the half on the grill skin side up as close together as possible without overlapping. For large barbecues it will be necessary to place the halves on the grills in advance so they are ready when the fires are hot. Use an extra grill for turning or wire down grill covers on each grill.

Baste the halves with sauce when placed over the fire and start them skin side away from the fire.

Turn the chicken as often as necessary to keep the meat from burning and the skin from blistering. Watch closely when starting out and turn the birds as often as necessary. Timing the intervals between turning when you start will serve as a guide during the rest of the cooking time. Baste the chicken with sauce each time they are turned. Turn all the chicken each time so they will all be skin side up or skin side down.

A hot fire will require more frequent turning so watch carefully. If you have to turn birds sooner than every 3 or 4 minutes, you should probably remove some of the charcoal or sprinkle the fire with water.

If you can leave them more than 5 or 6 minutes, without turning, you need more heat. If the briquettes are gray and at maximum heat, add some

more briquettes at the edge of the fire and spread them around after they start to burn. If the briquettes are not gray, the fire is not up to maximum heat and you will have to wait a while to see how hot it is going to get.

COOKING TIME

Never serve chicken until it is well done even if it means serving a meal late.

Cooking time will depend on the size of bird and heat of fire. Pound halves should be well done in about 90 minutes. Heavier pieces will require more time. It may be safer to plan on serving 2 hours after you put the chicken on. It is easier to hold the chicken after it is done than to try to hurry it.

The meat will take on a glazed appearance and start to dry out when ready to serve.

Here is the final test that will tell you when the halves are ready:

Hold the thigh joint between the thumb and fore finger of one hand, take the end of the drumstick in the other hand and turn gently. When the drumstick bone turns loose in the joint with little effort, the bird is ready to serve. Do not remove the drumstick bone from the meat. Test the wing joint where the wing joins the breast the same way to be sure the white meat is well done.

Wear white cotton gloves to protect your hands from the heat when handling the birds.

SUGGESTED POULTRY BARBECUE MENUS

Table 1. Full Dinner Food Requirements

Item	Number to be Served			
	10	50	100	500
Spring Salad	1 qt.	5 qts.	10 qts.	50 qts.
Potato Salad	1½ qts.	8 qts.	15 qts.	75 qts.
Mixed Sweet Pickles	1 pt.	2 pts.	1 gal.	5 gals.
Stuffed Olives	½ pt.	1 qt.	½ gal.	2½ gals.
Rolls	1½ doz.	5 doz.	10 doz.	50 doz.
Butter	¼ lb.	1 lb.	2 lbs.	10 lbs.
Ice Cream	10	50	100	500
Coffee	3 qts.	3 gal.	6 gal.	30 gals.
Coffee Cream	¼ pt.	½ pt.	1 pt.	2 qts.
Sugar	½ lb.	1 lb.	1½ lbs.	7½ lbs.
Milk or Cold Drink	According to number of children			
Chicken 2 lbs. oven ready	5	25	50	250
Bar-B-Q sauce				
water	½ pt.	1 qt.	2 qts.	10 qts.
vinegar	½ pt.	1 qt.	2 qts.	10 qts.
cooking oil	½ pt.	1 qt.	2 qts.	10 qts.
salt (to taste)	1¾ T.	¼ lb.	½ lb.	2½ lbs.
Salt and Pepper Shakers	1 pr.	3 pr.	5 pr.	25 pr.

Table 1-A. Full Dinner Food Service Requirements

Item	Number to be Served			
	10	50	100	500
Sectional Paper Plates	12	60	125	600
Paper Coffee Cups (Hot drink type)	12	60	120	600
Spoons, Wood or Paper	20	100	200	1000
Forks, Wood or Paper	12	60	125	600
Straws for Milk	According to Milk			
Paper Napkins	20	100	200	1000
Cream and Sugar Dispensers	1 set	1 set	2 sets	5 sets
Large Spoons for Serving	2	2	2	5

Table 2. Picnic Menu Food Requirements

Item	Number to be Served			
	10	50	100	500
Pork and Beans (4 oz. servings)	#5 can	2 #10 cans	4 #10 cans	20 #10 cans
Potato Chips	¼ lb.	2 lbs.	4 lbs.	25 lbs.
Mixed Sweet Pickles	1 pt.	2 qts.	1 gal.	5 gals.
Stuffed Olives	½ pt.	1 pt.	½ gal.	2½ gals.
Rolls	1½ doz.	5 doz.	10 doz.	50 doz.
Butter	½ lb.	1 lb.	2 lbs.	10 lbs.
Coffee	3 qts.	3 gal.	6 gals.	30 gals.
Coffee Cream	¼ pt.	½ pt.	1 pt.	2 qts.
Sugar	¼ lb.	1 lb.	1½ lbs.	7½ lbs.
Ice Cream	10	50	100	500
Milk, ½ pints	According to number of children			
Chocolate Milk, ½ pints	According to number of children			
Chicken, 2 lbs. split	5	25	50	250
Bar-B-Q sauce				
water	½ pt.	1 qt.	2 qts.	10 qts.
vinegar	½ pt.	1 qt.	2 qts.	10 qts.
cooking oil	½ pt.	1 qt.	2 qts.	10 qts.
salt (to taste)	1 oz.	¼ lb.	½ lb.	2½ lbs.

Table 2-A. Picnic Menu Food Service Requirements

Item	Number to be Served			
	10	50	100	500
Sectional Plates, Paper	12	60	125	600
Coffee Cups, Paper (Hot drink type)	12	60	120	600
Spoons, Wood or Paper	20	100	200	1000
Forks, Wood or Paper	12	60	125	600
Straws	According to milk			
Paper Napkins	20	100	200	1000
Salt and Pepper Shakers	1 pr.	3 pr.	5 pr.	25 pr.

SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT AND PERSONNEL FOR BARBECUING

Table 3. Half Barrel Pits

Item	Number to be Served			
	10	50	100	500
Lighting Fluid	½ pt.	1½ pts.	2½ pts.	1½ gals.
Charcoal	10 lbs.	30 lbs.	50 lbs.	250 lbs.
Half Barrel Units	1	3	5	25
Grill Units for Top (Figure 20 to 25 halves per Grill Unit)	1 or 2	3	5	25
Grill Covers (or one extra grill per 200)		3	5	25
Light soft wire for grill covers		9 ft.	15 ft.	75 ft.
Pliers or Wire Cutters	1	1	1	2

Table 4. Cement Block Barbecue Pit

Item	10	Number to be Served		
		50	100	500
Pit—width, blocks (8x8x16 in.)		3½	3½	3½
(Figure about 1¼ half birds per 1" of pit length)				
Starter fluid		1 qt.	2 qts.	2 gals.
Charcoal Briquettes (20 lb. bags)		3	5	25
Grill Units for top		3-20"	5-20"	25-20"
Grill Covers or 1 extra grill per 200		3	5	25
Light soft wire for grill		9 ft.	15 ft.	75 ft.
Pliers or wire cutters		1	1	2

Table 5. Other Equipment

Item	10	Number to be Served		
		50	100	500
8 qt. pail for sauce	1	1	2	2
Brushes or sprayers for sauce	1	1	1	4 sprayers
Tongs to turn chicken	1	Use extra grill section or covers for grills		
Sprinkling can	1	1	1	1
White cotton gloves	1 pr.	2 pr.	3 pr.	12 pr.
Tables for serving	1	1	1	4 or more
Work tables near pit	1	1	1	1
Shovel, small	1	1	1	1

Table 6. Personnel

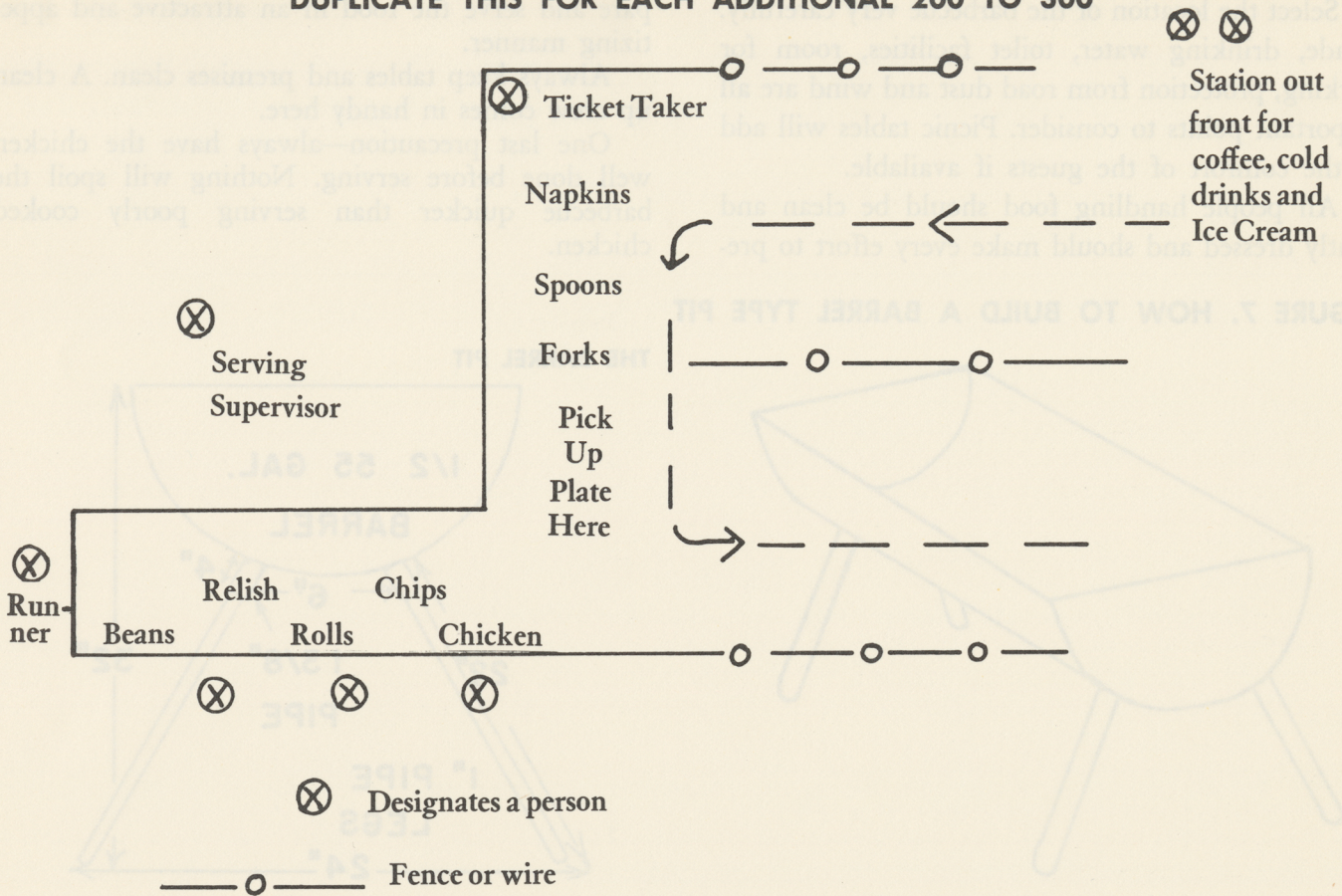
Title	10	Number to be Served		
		50	100	500
Pit Foreman				1
Fireman	1 Person	1 Person	1 Person	1
Chicken Turners	1 Person	1 Person	2 People	6
Sprayers	1	1	2	2
Ticket Takers	1	1	2	2 or 3
Serving Supervisor				1 (5 trays
Tray the Chicken	1 Person	1 Person	2 People	5 can be same
Coffee, milk, cold drinks				2 people who
Ice Cream	1 Person	1 Person	2 People	2 serve.)
Filling Plates	1	1	2	9
Clean-up (All Personnel)				

An Example Work Schedule for Cooking and Serving

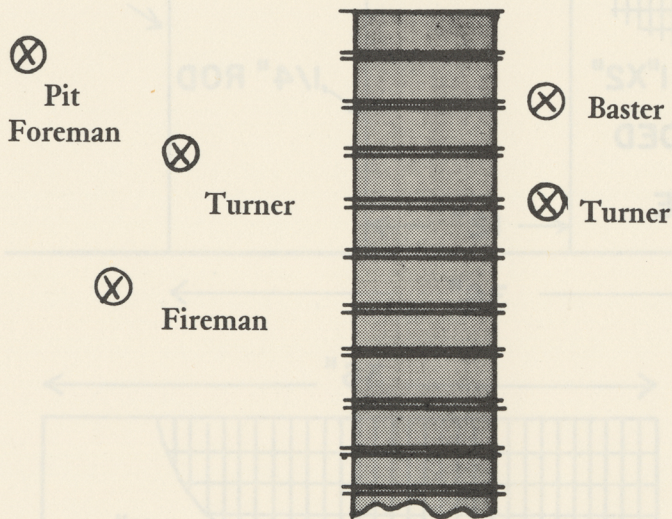
Serving Time Minus ½ day	Set up pits, place tables, clean grills and get organized.
Serving Time Minus 2½ hours	Tray the Chicken.
Serving Time Minus 2 hours	Start the fire.
Serving Time Minus 1¾ to 1½ hours	Put chicken on fire. Turn chicken often enough to keep it from burning and baste with sauce each time the chicken is turned.
Serving Time Minus 1 hour	Start to set the serving tables, etc.
Serving Time Minus 15 minutes	Put food out for serving and get organized.
Serving Time Minus 5 minutes	Ring the dinner bell. Bring chicken to the serving table, one grill at a time to keep it from getting cold. Test the pieces to be sure they are done and hold back any questionable pieces for more cooking. Move coals away from area where "done" pieces are being warmed. Just a few coals will be enough.

SERVING TABLE ARRANGEMENT FOR 200 TO 300 PEOPLE

DUPLICATE THIS FOR EACH ADDITIONAL 200 TO 300



PIT ORGANIZATION FOR 200 CHICKEN HALVES



Add 1 baster and 2 turners for each additional 200 halves to be placed on the pit at one time.

THINGS THAT ADD TO THE SUCCESS OF LARGE BARBECUES

Select the location of the barbecue very carefully. Shade, drinking water, toilet facilities, room for parking, protection from road dust and wind are all important points to consider. Picnic tables will add to the comfort of the guests if available.

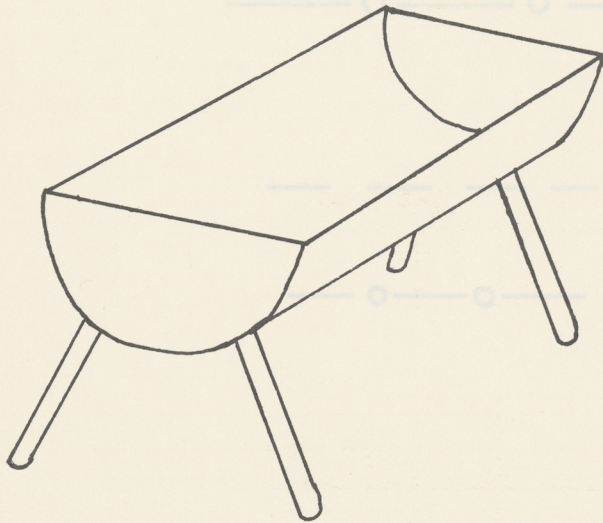
All people handling food should be clean and neatly dressed and should make every effort to pre-

pare and serve the food in an attractive and appetizing manner.

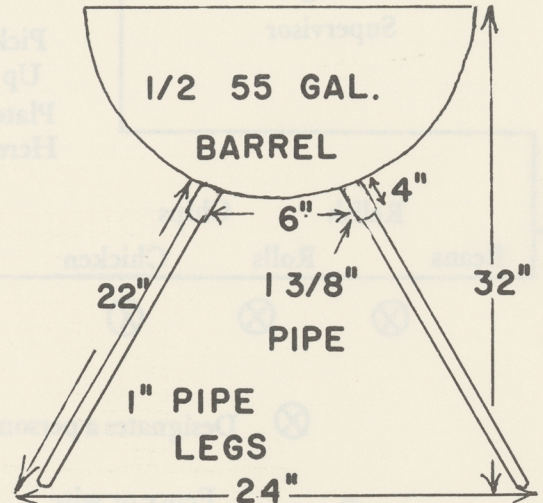
Always keep tables and premises clean. A clean up crew comes in handy here.

One last precaution—always have the chicken well done before serving. Nothing will spoil the barbecue quicker than serving poorly cooked chicken.

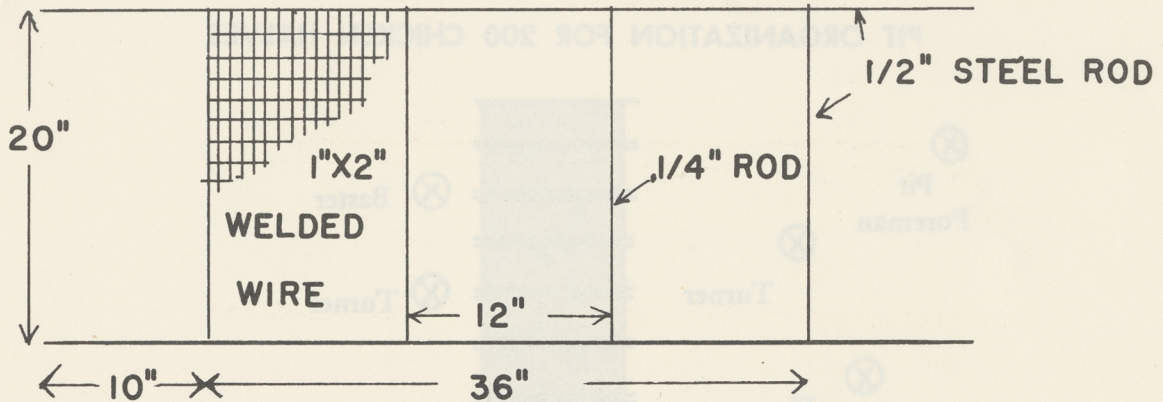
FIGURE 7. HOW TO BUILD A BARREL TYPE PIT



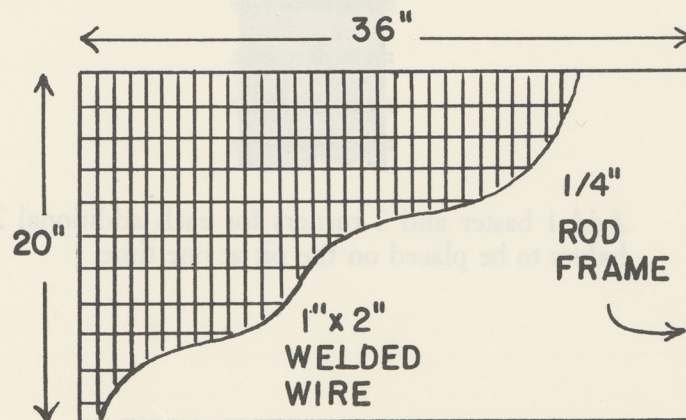
THE BARREL PIT

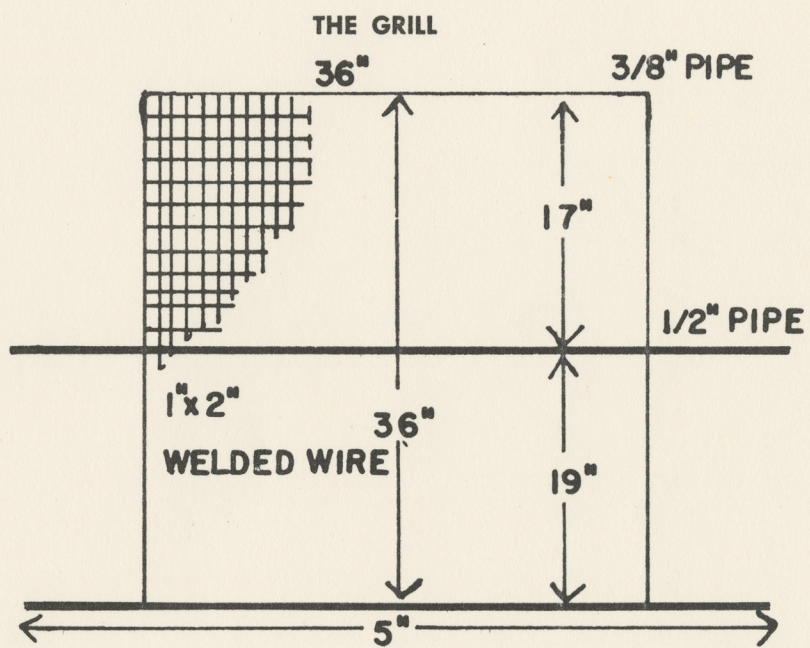


THE GRILL



THE GRILL COVER

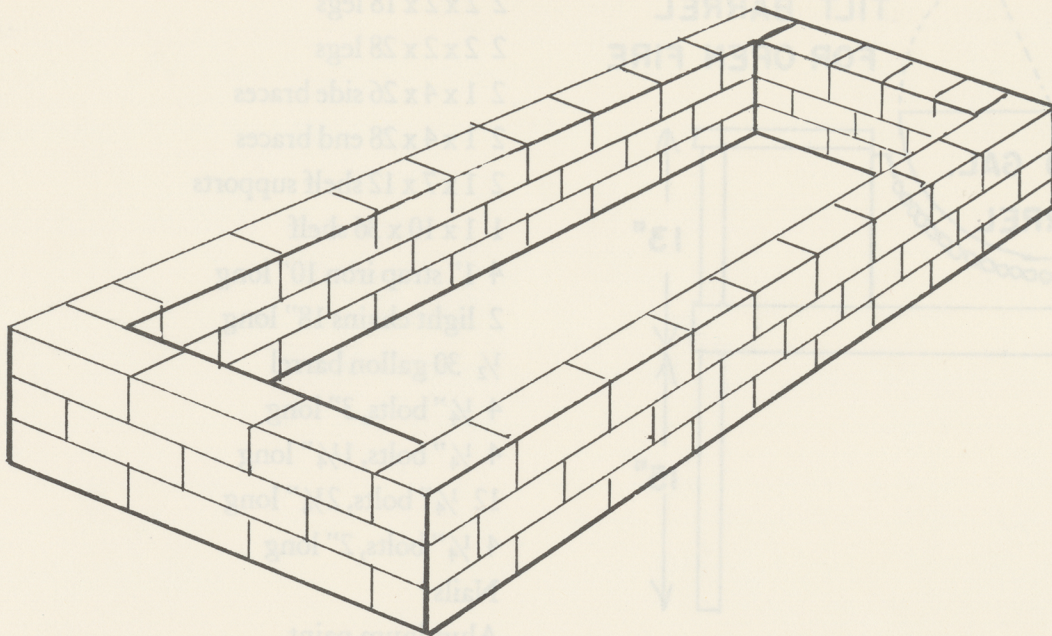




This plan replaces THE GRILL, page 9, EC 641, CHICKEN BARBECUE

FIGURE 8. HOW TO BUILD A CEMENT BLOCK PIT

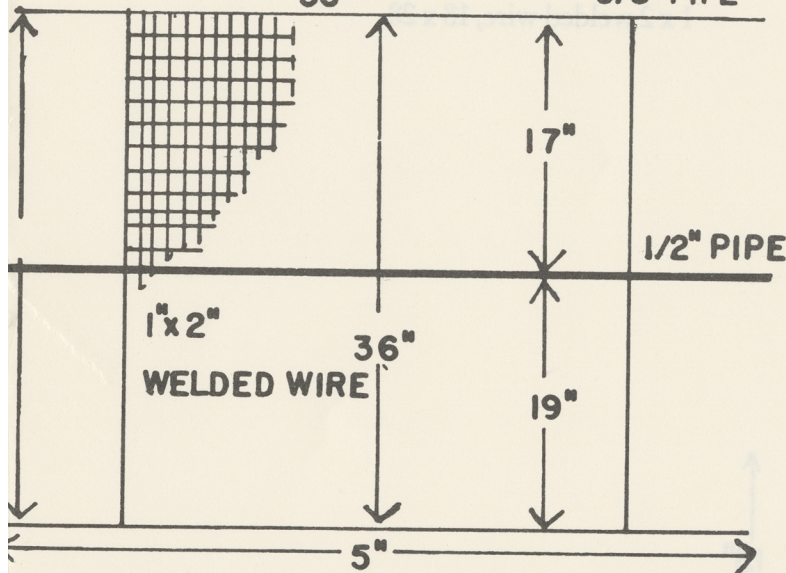
THE BLOCK PIT



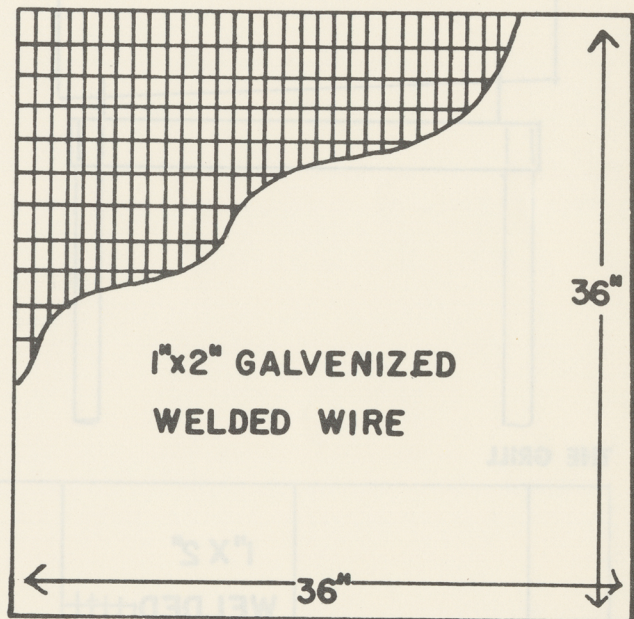
THE GRILL

36"

3/8" PIPE



THE GRILL COVER

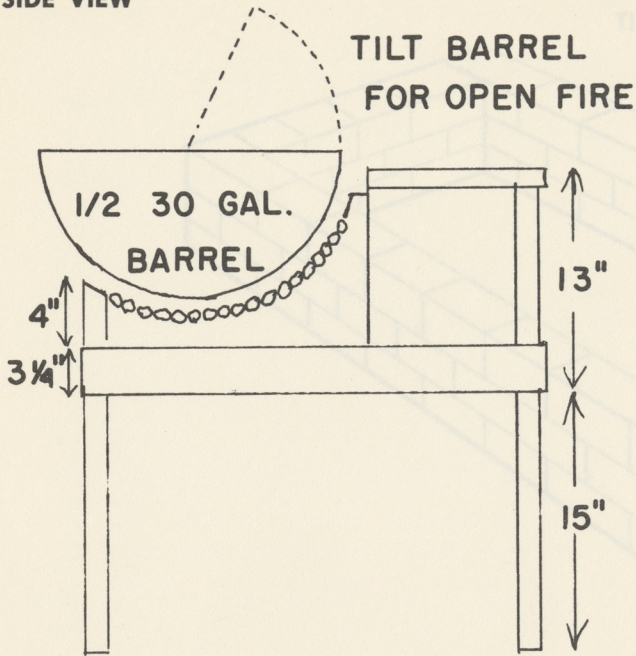


Construction

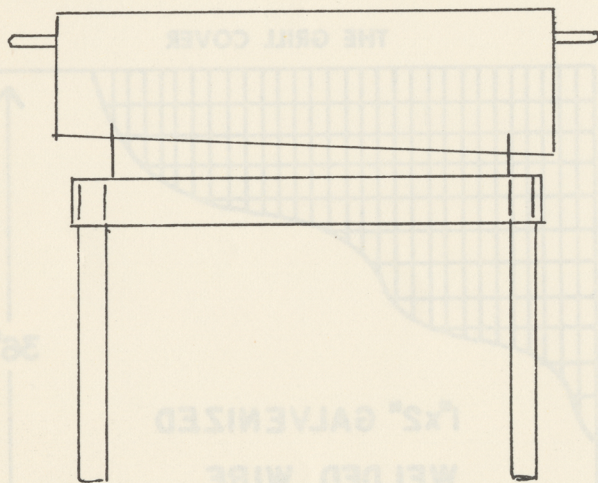
1. Use 8 x 8 x 16 inch cement blocks stacked on level ground.
2. Pit is 3½ blocks wide and as many blocks long as necessary, see table 4.
3. Use grill panels as shown in barrel type pit construction to hold and turn birds. A strip of 2 x 2 on the top edge of the blocks will raise the grill handles away from the blocks so they will be easier to handle.
4. 2 x 8 sheets of metal can be used for sides of pit in place of cement block. When metal is used it should be secured to a steel stake or pipe at 2½ to 3 foot intervals.
5. A small backyard size pit can be constructed from blocks in the same manner except it need only be two blocks high instead of three blocks high. See block requirements in table 4.

FIGURE 9. HOW TO BUILD A BACKYARD BARBECUE, FAMILY SIZE

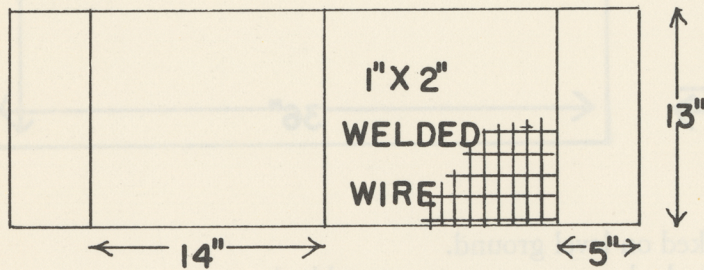
SIDE VIEW



END VIEW



THE GRILL



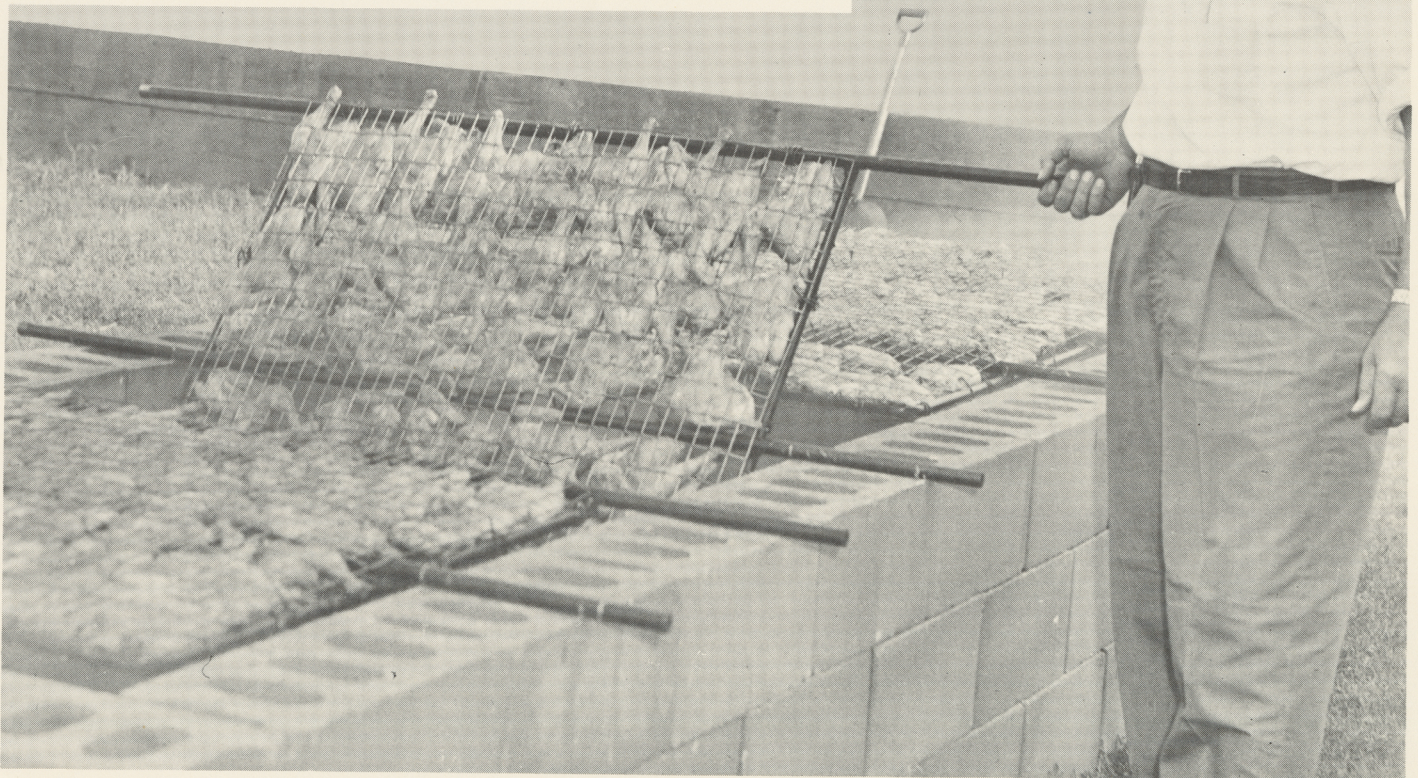
Materials

- 2 2 x 2 x 18 legs
- 2 2 x 2 x 28 legs
- 2 1 x 4 x 26 side braces
- 2 1 x 4 x 28 end braces
- 2 1 x 7 x 12 shelf supports
- 1 1 x 10 x 36 shelf
- 4 1" strap iron 10" long
- 2 light chains 18" long
- 1/2 30 gallon barrel
- 4 1/4" bolts, 3" long
- 4 1/4" bolts, 1 1/4" long
- 12 1/4" bolts, 2 3/4" long
- 4 1/4" bolts, 2" long
- Nails
- Aluminum paint
- 1/4" rod, 112" long (frame)
- 1/4" rod, 3 each, 18" long (wire supports)
- 1 x 2 welded wire, 18 x 28



Figure 10. Mix sauce in small batches as it is used. Baste chicken halves with sauce when placed over the fire, and repeat basting each time chickens are turned.

Figure 11. The temporary barbecue pit shown below is constructed on level ground of 8 x 8 x 16 inch blocks stacked three rows high. The grill panel holding the chicken pivots on its center bar for easier turning. (photo courtesy Winner Advocate)



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