

CHAPTER 19

RICE, PASTA PRODUCTS, AND DRESSINGS

RICE

Rice is served with dishes such as chili con carne, chop suey, and creole beef balls. It may also be added to some soups. Rice can be substituted for potatoes or added to the menu as an alternative starch for diners. To preserve valuable vitamins and minerals, do not blanch, wash, or rinse rice after it is cooked. To prevent gumminess, never uncover the rice cooking pot or pan during the simmering period. There are several ways to prepare and cook rice. The most common is steaming it. Other ways to prepare rice are the oven method and use of the pressure cooker. These methods are covered in TM 10-412.

PASTA PRODUCTS

Macaroni, noodles, and spaghetti are popular pasta products. They are not substituted for potatoes as often as rice, but they can be used in many different ways. Because pasta products have a bland flavor, they require seasonings or sauces. Macaroni is used in dishes such as chili and macaroni, macaroni and cheese, or macaroni salad. Noodles are used in beef noodles, chow mein, noodles Jefferson, and lasagna. Spaghetti and meat balls or meat sauce are a standard, yet dishes such as Yakisobo provide a highly acceptable alternative. Some rules for cooking and serving pasta products are as follows:

- Cook as close to serving time as possible.
- Slowly add the macaroni, noodles, or spaghetti to rapidly boiling water to which salt and salad oil have already been added. Stir constantly until the water begins to boil again.

- Stir the product occasionally.
- Cook the product only until tender. Do not overcook. (Overcooking makes the texture soft and unappetizing.)
 - Test frequently for doneness. To test, press a piece against the side of the pot, using a fork or spoon. The piece will break evenly and clearly when done.
 - Rinse the macaroni or spaghetti in cold water. Rinsing is not necessary if you serve the macaroni or spaghetti immediately with a sauce or butter.
 - To reheat the pasta before serving, place the desired quantity in a wire basket. Lower the basket into boiling water for two to three minutes. Drain well. Place in a greased steam table insert.

DRESSINGS

Serve dressings as an accompaniment to poultry, meats, and fish. Bake dressing in a roasting pan in a moderate oven. Do not stuff the cavity of poultry. Dressing should be moist but never soggy. *NOTE: To prevent sogginess, never use hot stock.*

Poultry stuffings (dressings), stuffed meats, and stuffings containing meat must be cooked immediately after preparation to heat all parts of the food to at least 165°F (74°C) with no interruption of the cooking process. All such products should be cooked separately.

The two basic types of dressings prepared in Army dining facilities are corn bread dressing and savory bread dressing. Guidance on how to prepare these products is provided in TM 10-412, Section O.