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Strawberry Breakfast a Sweet Start to Valentine's Day

KANNAPOLIS, NC – Just six weeks after many people begin the [most popular New Year's resolution](#) – losing weight – nearly half of U.S. consumers will exchange candy for Valentine's Day, about \$1 billion worth of sweets, according to the National Retail Federation. Roughly three-fourths of the consumer candy budget for Valentine's Day went to chocolate in 2010, a food often high in calories, carbs and fat. As an alternative to many unhealthy sweet treats, Johnson & Wales University (JWU) student, Emily Towner, created a muffin that uses puréed strawberries versus oil and cuts the sugar by using honey.

Towner created the "strawberry blonde muffin" as part of the [N.C. Strawberry Project](#). The partnership between N.C. State University's Plants for Human Health Institute and JWU aims to breed a better strawberry for the state by bringing together the agricultural and culinary industries, including students – the "chefs of tomorrow" – like Towner. More strawberry recipes created by JWU chefs and students are online at www.ncmarketready.org.

Strawberry Blonde MuffinIngredients

- 1¼ – 1½ cups fresh strawberries (divided)
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 egg
- 2 tbsp. honey
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 1/3 cup brown sugar
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 2 cups all-purpose flour

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.
2. Using a food processor or blender, purée enough strawberries to make 1/4 cup (about 1/4 – 1/2 cup cut strawberries). Chop remaining strawberries (enough for 1 cup).
3. In a small bowl, combine strawberry purée, milk, egg, honey and vanilla; lightly beat. In a large bowl, sift salt, baking powder, brown sugar, cinnamon and flour. Lightly toss the remaining cup of chopped strawberries in the flour mixture. Pour the milk mixture into the dry mixture, stir until just moistened.
4. Fill muffin cups 3/4 of the way. Bake at 375 degrees F for 18 to 23 minutes (or until an inserted toothpick comes out clean). Let muffins cool for 5 to 10 minutes in pan. Yields 10 muffins.

The N.C. Strawberry Project received supported from the Golden LEAF Foundation. The N.C. State University **Plants for Human Health Institute** (PHHI) is located on the N.C. Research Campus in Kannapolis. N.C. MarketReady, a program of N.C. Cooperative Extension, is the outreach arm of PHHI. www.ncsu.edu/phhi