

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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Administration
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Of all the Lone Star State's unique culinary dishes, perhaps none say "Texas" more sweetly than pecan pie. The pecan tree, which was officially designated as the State Tree in 1919, is indigenous to North America and native to 152 counties in Texas, where it grows in river valleys. The State Health Nut, the pecan is the state's only commercially grown nut, and Texas pecan growers account for more than 20 percent of all the pecans grown in the United States.

Though there are many ways to enjoy pecans, it is practically a given among Texans that they belong, first and foremost, in a pie. The earliest record of this distinctive dessert dates to the late 19th century. The weekly humor magazine *Texas Siftings* described it in February 1886 as being "not only delicious" but "capable of being made into a 'real state pie,'" and in March 1914, the *Christian Science Monitor* featured a recipe for "Texas Pecan Pie" with a custard filling that called for a cup of sweet milk, a cup of sugar, three well-beaten eggs, a tablespoon of flour, and half a cup of "finely chopped pecan meats."

It was around 1930 when the pie became the syrup-based creation it is today. The wife of an executive at the Karo Syrup company combined that product with pecans to make a pie, and it proved to be an irresistible mixture. The pie subsequently gained national recognition through advertisements forever linking the syrup with pecans in the public's mind. Recipes for pecan pie began appearing in such popular cookbooks as *The Joy of Cooking* and *The Fannie Farmer Cookbook* in the 1940s, and it became a staple in restaurants across the state and nation.

Pecan pie recipes are varied and numerous, with differences regarding the sugar-to-syrup ratio and the size and consistency of the nuts, and are a matter of debate, strong opinion, and deeply held family tradition; yet Texans generally agree on two things: Texas pecan pies are, hands down, the best, especially when made with Texas pecans by a Texan, and secondly, whether served hot or cold, with a scoop of ice cream or without, pecan pie is indeed the perfect ending to any meal.

RESOLVED

That the 83rd Legislature of the State of Texas hereby designate pecan pie as the official State Pie of Texas.