

## **Brown Sugar Pecan Sticky Bars**

1 cup old-fashioned rolled oats  
1 1/4 cups packed light brown sugar  
3/4 cup (1 1/2 sticks) unsalted butter, slightly softened  
1/8 teaspoon salt  
1 large egg  
1 1/4 teaspoons vanilla extract  
1 1/3 cups all-purpose white flour  
1 cup (about 4 ounces) chopped pecans  
3/4 cup (about 2 ounces) shredded or flaked sweetened coconut

### **Topping**

3/4 cup (3 ounces) chopped pecans  
1/4 cup (1/2 stick) unsalted butter, cut into chunks  
2/3 cup packed light brown sugar  
Pinch of salt  
1/4 cup heavy (whipping) cream  
2 1/2 tablespoons light corn syrup  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat the oven to 350 °F. Generously grease a 9-by-13-inch baking pan or coat with nonstick spray.

In a small bowl, thoroughly stir together the oats and ¼ cup hot water; set aside. In a large bowl, with an electric mixer on medium speed, beat together the brown sugar, butter, and salt until well blended and fluffy. Add the egg and vanilla and beat until evenly incorporated. Beat or stir in the flour and the oat mixture until well blended. Fold in the pecans and coconut. Turn out the mixture into the baking pan, spreading to the edges.

Bake in the upper third of the oven for 25 to 30 minutes, or until the top is nicely browned and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Transfer the pan to a wire rack and let stand until cooled to warm, about 5 minutes.

### **The Topping:**

Meanwhile, while the crust is cooling, in a 2-quart heavy saucepan, combine the pecans and butter. Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat and cook, stirring constantly, for 3 to 4 minutes, or until the butter is lightly browned; be careful not to burn. Using a long-handled wooden spoon to avoid any splattering, stir in the brown sugar, salt, cream, and corn syrup until evenly incorporated. Return to a boil, and boil briskly, stirring constantly, for exactly 2 minutes. Remove from the heat. Stir in the vanilla. Immediately spread the topping evenly over the still-warm crust. Let stand until completely cooled.

Using a large, sharp knife cut the slab into 24 bars. Before each cut, dip the knife in hot water and dry off. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 week or freeze for up to 1 month. If freezing, leave the slab whole, then cut into bars when partially thawed.

**Notes:** From *The All-American Cookie Book* by Nancy Baggett, Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, 2001.