***RICK’S MEAT LOAF***

 **“Blue Plate Special”**

1 lb. ground chuck (80/20)

1 lb. ground breakfast sausage, hot or regular\*

1/2 C. bell pepper (yellow, green, red mixed), diced

1/2 C. yellow onion, diced (1 small onion)

1/2 C. celery, diced

1/2 C. carrots, grated fine

2 Tbs. olive oil

2 slices of loaf bread or a hamburger bun top and bottom

1/2 C. buttermilk

2 large eggs

1/4 C. BBQ sauce

3 Tbs. of your favorite rub

Glaze:

1 C. ketchup

1/4 C. packed brown sugar

2½ Tbs. cider vinegar

1/2 tsp. hot sauce

Take two slices of loaf bread or the top and bottom half of a hamburger bun and tear it into small pieces. Put the pieces in a bowl and pour the buttermilk over the bread. Once the milk is soaked in, crack a couple of large eggs onto the bread mixture. Stir gently to combine; set aside.

Grate a carrot on the fine teeth of a box grater. Dice bell peppers, onion and celery so that you end up with about 1/2 C. of each. Pour 2-3 Tbs. of olive oil into a skillet over medium heat. Once the pan is hot enough, pour in the onions, peppers and celery and stir to mix with the oil. Sauté for about 10 minutes or until the vegetables start to get slightly soft. Once the veggies are finished cooking, remove them from the pan and into a plate or bowl to cool. Add 1/4 C. of BBQ sauce and 3 Tbs. of rub to the sautéed vegetables. Stir to combine.

Preheat oven to 350oF.

Place the 1 lb. of ground chuck and 1 lb. of ground sausage into a large mixing bowl. Add the bread, buttermilk and egg mixture, vegetables, BBQ sauce and rub mixture to the meat. Add 1 tsp. of salt and gently mix the ingredients together until just combined. Do not overmix!

Spray a 1½ lb. bread loaf pan with cooking spray. Scoop the mixture into the pan and gently press into a loaf with your hands. Set a wire rack into a rimmed baking sheet and turn out the meat loaf onto the wire rack.

Bake at 350oF. for about an hour until the internal temperature of the loaf is 155oF. Meanwhile, mix the glaze ingredients.

When the loaf has reached an internal temperature of 155oF., spread the glaze over the loaf (or use more BBQ sauce) and return the loaf to the oven. Continue cooking the loaf until the internal temperature of the loaf reaches 160oF; remove and set aside to rest, loosely covered with foil for 10-15 minutes.

Bake at 325 for 35 min. if using mini muffin tins.

**Serves 4-6**

**\* Jimmy Dean REGULAR is best!**