This is the first in a series of articles designed to bring you one-of-a-kind recipes for some of the world's most popular foods. And what better place to start than with Chocolate Fudge Cake! This beautiful dessert inspired some mouth-watering research that ended with the recipe that you see here. Try it. We think you'll agree that it's the Best of the Best. By JANE O'KEEFE

Good ingredients are the key to our Chocolate Fudge Cake. But correct measurements, the proper amount of mixing and good timing also contribute to creating the cake's moist, light texture. Here are some points to keep in mind when preparing the cake: Baking soda, important in achieving lightness, is a fast-acting ingredient. It's best, therefore, to work quickly once you add the soda. Working fast will also prevent overmixing, which tends to dry out a cake. Also, be sure to preheat the oven so there's no delay between mixing and baking. Other basic tips in the recipe will guarantee delicious results.

Chocolate Fudge Cake

CHOCOLATE FUDGE CAKE

Bake at 350° for 35 minutes.
Makes 12 servings.

3   squares unsweetened chocolate
2½ cups sifted cake flour
2   teaspoons baking soda
½   teaspoon salt
½   cup (1 stick) butter or margarine
2¼ cups firmly packed light brown
      sugar
3   eggs
1½ teaspoons vanilla
1   cup dairy sour cream
1   cup boiling water
      Chocolate Fudge Frosting
      (recipe follows)

1. Melt chocolate in a small bowl over hot, not boiling, water; cool.
2. Grease and flour two 9x1½-inch layer cake pans; tap out excess flour.
3. Sift flour, baking soda and salt onto wax paper.
4. Beat butter until soft in large bowl. Add brown sugar and eggs; beat with mixer at high speed until light and fluffy, 5 minutes. Beat in vanilla and cooled melted chocolate.
5. Stir in dry ingredients alternately with sour cream, beating well with a wooden spoon after each addition until batter is smooth. Stir in boiling water. (Batter will be thin.) Pour at once into prepared pans.
6. Bake in moderate oven (350°) 35 minutes, or until centers spring back when lightly pressed with fingertip.
7. Cool layers in pans on wire rack, 10 minutes; loosen around edges with a small knife or spatula; turn out onto wire racks; cool completely.
8. Make CHOCOLATE FUDGE FROSTING. Put one cake layer on a serving plate; spread with about one fourth of frosting; add second layer; spread remainder on side and top of cake, making swirls with spatula.

CHOCOLATE FUDGE FROSTING

Makes enough to fill and frost two 9-inch layers.

4   squares unsweetened chocolate
½   cup (1 stick) butter or
      margarine
1   package (1 pound) 10X
      (confectioners') sugar
½   cup milk
2   teaspoons vanilla

1. Combine chocolate and butter in small heavy saucepan. Place over low heat, just until melted. Remove from heat.
2. Combine 10X sugar, milk and vanilla in medium-size bowl; stir until smooth; add chocolate mixture. Set bowl in pan of ice and water; beat with wooden spoon until frosting is thick enough to spread and hold its shape.