

**North Carolina Cattlemen's Beef Council**  
**Beef Appetizer Recipe Contest**  
**Friday, October 21, 2016**

First Place: Jackie Boegel, Raleigh

**Mini Beef Empanadas in a Cup**

1 lb. Food Lion lean beef bites  
1/3 cup Craisins  
¼ cup pineapple juice  
2 Tbsp. coconut oil  
1 medium onion, chopped  
¾ tsp. lemon pepper  
¾ tsp. salt  
½ tsp. garlic powder  
¾ tsp. onion powder  
½ tsp. oregano  
1 Tbsp. soy sauce  
2 tsp. jalapeno pepper sauce  
2 Tbsp. chia seed  
1 ½ cups extra sharp cheddar cheese  
1 pkg. refrigerated pie crust  
½ cup mozzarella cheese

In small bowl, combine Craisins and pineapple juice, microwave on high for 30 seconds and set aside. In large skillet melt coconut oil, sauté onions for 3 minutes, add beef and sprinkle with lemon pepper, salt, garlic powder, onion powder and oregano. Cook over medium heat about 6 minutes. Add reserved Craisin mixture, soy sauce and jalapeno pepper sauce, mix well. Pull meat to one side of the pan and add chia seed to the liquid, stir and let sit about 5 min to absorb liquid. Stir, cool slightly. Stir in cheese.

Pre-heat the oven to 400 degrees. Roll each pie crust from a 10 inch circle to 12 inches in diameter and cut out 2 ½ - inch circles. Then press circles into ungreased mini muffin cups. Spoon meat mixture into muffin cups.

Bake 15 minutes, sprinkle with mozzarella cheese and bake 3 more minutes. Allow Empanadas to cool in muffin pans for 5 minutes before removing to platter. Makes 3 – 4 dozen