

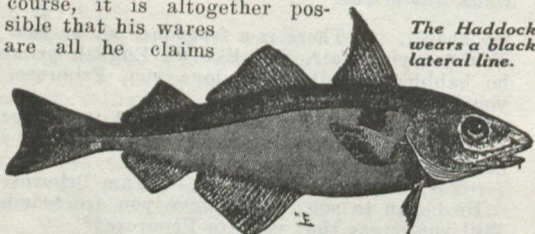


EVERYWOMAN'S HOUSEHOLD DEPARTMENT

Food and Housekeeping Efficiency
Edited by Katherine M. Caldwell B.A.

Our Marketers' Guide The Fishes We Buy in September

FRESH fish! Fresh fish! All caught to-day!" So cries the itinerant fish monger, as he pushes his hand-cart, with its bed of ice and piles of scaly merchandise up and down the streets of many a town. And he may never meet a single serious challenge of his sweeping statement, though he sell halibut, cod or flounder from the Atlantic coast, and frozen salmon that has travelled from the Pacific, with equal assurances and guaranties. Of course, it is altogether possible that his wares are all he claims



The Haddock wears a black lateral line.

for them in the matter of perfect freshness, for they are speeded on their way in refrigerator cars, and when properly merchandised, pass from receiver to consumer with the least possible delay. She is a wise buyer, however, who knows just how much "fisherman's license" to allow the "all caught to-day" slogan, and who also knows the varieties obtainable just when they are at their best, and the prices they should fairly command. It is easy to fall into "fish rub"—fish may almost mean "whitefish" or "halibut steaks" or "ciscoes" in each of three households, so little is the great variety of fishes considered and appreciated.

September gives us a wide choice, including fishes of vastly different flavours and prices, to suit all tastes and all purses. Add to this the breadth of choice, the many ways in which each may be prepared, and the scope is truly tremendous. There need be no such thing as becoming "tired of fish."

The average locality will find the following fishes obtainable in the early fall:

Fresh lake fish: Trout, pike, perch, eels, whitefish, pickerel, catfish, herring.

Fresh sea fish: Halibut, salmon, herrings, hake, flounders, haddock and pollack.

Smoked fish: Finnan haddie, kippers, bloaters, haddie fillets and ciscoes.

Of these, the cheaper varieties, averaging below 25c a pound in most places include herrings, pollack, hake, cod, flounders and whitefish. Trout is usually a step up; halibut is higher priced; and sea-salmon ranks as a delicacy among the fishes, and is, for the most part, priced accordingly. These larger fishes are cut in steaks, or in chosen-sized pieces for boiling or baking.

The selection of fresh fish is very important, and a fair knowledge of the outward and visible signs of the desirable fish may be easily and quickly attained. The flesh should be firm to the point of rigidity—never soft and flabby.

If the gills are red, and the eyes bright and protruding, the evidence is in favour of freshness. Beware of the fish with a dull and sunken eye!

The scales merit a little examination. If they are scarce, it is quite in order to suspect that the fish is stale, or that it has been damaged and the scales knocked off, in which case it will not keep. In flat-fish, look for a smooth, moist skin that adheres tightly to the flesh, and is without blisters.

When salmon, cod, and most of the other large fish are cut, the flesh should show a bronze tint. It is preferable to buy from a fish that is not the largest of its kind. Size usually means age and toughness, with a consequent coarsening of the tissues and a falling off in flavour. In buying a fish steak, or a boiling piece, therefore, a thick piece from a small fish is preferable to a thin cut from a large one.

Fat and Lean Fishes

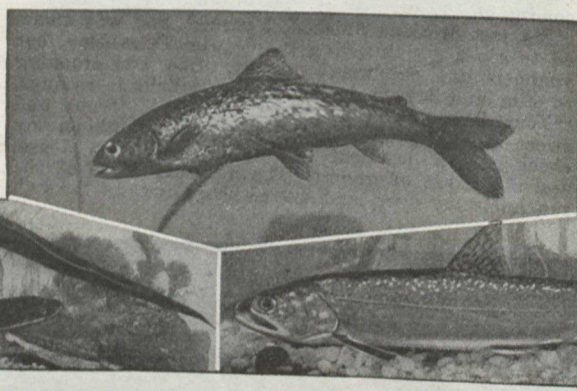
"I CANNOT eat fish—it's too rich for me," is not an unusual statement, although it might readily be thought absurd by those who translate fish into terms of the easily digested, white-fleshed fish, such as whiting haddock, hake, cod, and so

forth. In these varieties, most of the fat is confined to the liver, leaving the flesh lean and light, and consequently most suitable for invalids or people with weak digestions.

Inquiry will usually show that the fish that is considered rich is one of the fatter varieties, such as herring, sprats, piechards, eels and mackerel. These species have more or less white flesh, but considerable fat in the tissues. Unless for delicate persons, with whom they may disagree, these are very popular varieties, however, because they are so well flavoured, more nourishing and therefore more satisfying than lighter varieties, and in most cases, cheaper. Herring is often called the most nourishing, best flavoured and cheapest of all the fish foods.

Some of the red-fleshed fish are almost as nutritious as butcher's meat. Salmon, so valued for this and other reasons, could not be eaten as often as either meat or the less strong fish.

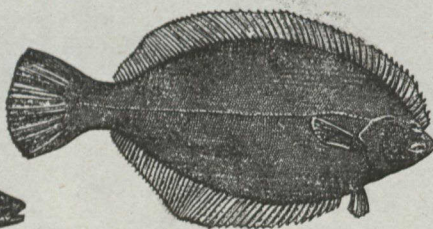
The nutritive value of fish, compared to that of meat, is much lower—the explanation of the "unsatisfied" feeling some people complain of after eating a fish dinner. This may be largely corrected by serving the right things with fish. If a lean fish is used, let it be accompanied by a rich sauce, or with strips of fat bacon. For active persons, who feel that fish does not last, that they are hungry too soon after eating it, beans as an accompanying vegetable will make the matter right. Beans are rich in protein, and with the fish will quite equal the protein value of a meat dinner. Cheese, either in the sauce served with the fish or vegetables, or in another course, will



We buy but a piece of the kingly Sea-salmon. The Eel deserves more appreciation than he receives. The Trout is a general favorite.

do the same, and fat and "filling" merit will both be found in a suet pudding or a fruit or a good pie.

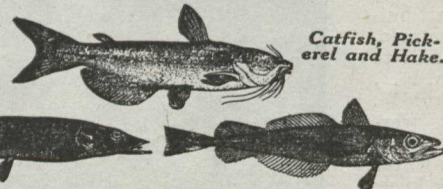
The economy of using any but the very expensive fish, in place of meat, is an established fact, but one cannot call the difference between the cost of a pound of meat and a pound of fish clear saving. It is necessary first to estimate the waste part carefully, and to remember that the edible portion of fish is, pound for pound, less nutritious than that of meat, and will do less body-building and repairing of worn tissues.



The Flounder is readily recognizable.



Perch, Whitefish and Herring.



Catfish, Pickerel and Hake.

The average waste in fish—head, fins, scales, inedible skin and bones, averages 40 per cent. (leaving out, of course, fillets, ready prepared, boned and shredded codfish, fish pastes, etc.), while the average waste of meat is about 25 per cent. This shows that to get equal value for the edible portion (leaving out the difference in food value) fish must be bought for about one-fifth less than meat.

But because of the lower food value of fish (more of it must be eaten, or more of something that accompanies it), it has been found that to get really equal value, one should buy fish for one-third less per pound than one pays for meat. Thus, if the average cost of your meat per pound is 30 cents, you should not pay more than 20

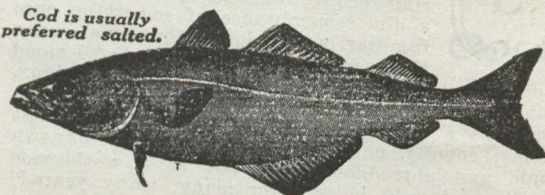
cents a pound for fish, to get equal value for your money.

Taking all this into consideration, however, most housekeepers will find that they can do better than get equal value when they buy at least some of the excellent fishes on our market. Excellent fish has been procurable at 12 cents a pound this year—but where, oh where, has there been meat obtainable at 18 cents?

Preparation of Fish

THERE is no great difficulty about preparing fish for cooking if it is done in the simple

Cod is usually preferred salted.



right way. Frozen fish is treated just like fresh fish, except that it is first thawed in cold water.

The strong odour of fish will quickly affect other foods if it is kept uncovered near them in ice-box or pantry. Be sure, therefore, that it is tightly covered.

To scale fish: Hold by the tail, keeping the fish under water, and scale from you, with a dull knife (an old silver table knife is suitable, and will never cut the skin).

To clean fish: With a sharp knife, make a clean cut from anus to the point between the gills. Cut only flesh deep, so as to avoid piercing the gall sack.

To remove fins: The kitchen scissors will do this, or a sharp knife.

Head and tail may be cut off with sharp knife, or, if fish is to be served whole, they may be left on.

Wash fish quickly, and wipe dry with a cloth. Too much washing will destroy the flavour.

To skin a fish: With a very sharp knife cut off a strip of skin the entire length of the back. Loosen the skin on either side, following it very closely with the knife.

To bone fish: Clean and skin the fish. Beginning at the tail, run a knife under the flesh close to the backbone, first on one side, then on the other.

To keep fish: For future use, fish may be potted, or pickled or salted and hung up. If fresh fish is required for use next day, fry it, and it may later be re-heated in boiling fat, or made into fish cakes or stew. Codfish or haddock may be kept a day or two in cool weather if washed and rubbed with a little salt. The flavour of fresh-water fish is sometimes improved by soaking in strong salt and water after it has been cleaned.

The common methods of cooking fish are, baking, broiling, steaming, boiling, deep-frying and sautéing.

Baking: A three to four-pound fish is a good size for baking. Scale, clean, etc., and stuff fish with a dressing made with 1 cup bread crumbs, season with salt, pepper and a tablespoonful of chopped parsley, a tablespoonful of melted butter and 1 egg to moisten it; if too dry, add a little milk or water.

When fish is stuffed to shape sew or tie it and place in pan with plenty of dripping or fat, to keep it well basted. If there is a tendency to stick

or burn, place a greased paper in bottom of pan first. Sprinkle the fish with a little flour and put into hot oven, reducing heat when it begins to cook. Baste frequently, and if it browns too fast cover with a greased paper. Allow 15 minutes to the pound for baking. Serve with parsley or egg sauce, and garnish with parsley and lemon.

Broiling: Clean, wash and wipe quite dry with a soft cloth. If whole, skin and bone the fish; have steaks about 1 inch thick. Season with salt and pepper, and flour each piece. Lay on a clean gridiron, which has first been heated and rubbed with a piece of suet or other fat, to prevent the fish from sticking. Broil over a clear fire—smoke will spoil the flavour—

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