

# THE GOOD HOUSEKEEPER

## Keeping Pace With the High Cost of Everything

### Practical Hints on the Question of Food

By DORIS HEMMING

**D**EAREST MARGUERITE:  
You funny little witch!  
Your tale of housekeeping  
disasters is twice as amusing  
as it is tragic! Honey, did you  
really think you could be a  
successful cook and caterer  
without ever learning how?

You really must understand the first principles of food values, the use of proteins, carbohydrates, fats, and mineral matter, if you would be a successful caterer and cook.

Proteins, water, and mineral matter, build up and repair the tissues of the body, while carbohydrates, fats, and proteins, create energy. Proteins are found in meat, fish, milk, cheese, eggs, bread, and other articles made of wheat, oats, and corn, and also in legumes, by which I mean pod-bearing plants such as peas and beans. A sufficient amount of protein is especially necessary for growing children who are adding to their tissue as well as repairing it, and also for those engaged in severe brain work or any activity that requires more than a normal amount of effort. Protein is found in larger quantities in some foods than in others, and the diet must be varied so that the required quantity is consumed each day. Under normal conditions, there is enough protein for an adult in one helping of meat a day, in addition to ordinary amounts of milk, eggs, or cheese, and puddings and other dishes containing eggs and milk.

Fish is cheaper than meat and should be used more freely. A quart of milk thickened with flour and served with half a pound of dried codfish or finnan haddie contains as much protein as a pound and a half of sirloin steak—and costs much less. If two hard boiled eggs are added, the protein is increased still more, and you have a dish of high protein value that will serve a number of people. But don't use too much protein; too much is as bad as too little.

Next to protein comes water. We require 4½ pints of water daily, but as a great deal is already contained in our food, five tumblers should be sufficient. Water keeps the skin and other parts of the body moist, and assists in maintaining a normal temperature.

Mineral matter, or "ash" as it is technically known, forms the bones, hair, nails, and teeth, and is, therefore, especially necessary for growing children. It is contained in small quantities in ordinary food, and, to a greater extent, in fruits and vegetables. Salt is the only food that is entirely composed of mineral matter. A diet that supplies protein, fats, and carbohydrates, in sufficient quantities, supplies all the mineral substances needed by the body, with the exception of salt.

The "fuel foods" are carbohydrates and fats; carbohydrates, is only long for starches and sugars. The fuel foods supply heat and energy, and we require greater quantities in cold weather when the low temperature of the air tends to reduce the heat of our bodies. Protein furnishes heat, also, but the idea is to supply sufficient carbohydrates to create energy in order to conserve the protein for the more important work of keeping the tissues in repair. Starches include potatoes, bread, cakes, rice, oatmeal, and other cereals. Watch the market closely and try substituting rice or hominy for potatoes when potatoes are dear. Sugar plays a prominent part in the heating proposition. Have plenty of jams and jellies on the table. Honey and syrups are also wholesome and cheap foods. Your well balanced menu must have a certain proportion of this class of food.

**F**ATS and oils perform the same function as carbohydrates, and here again you can do some substituting. Try serving toast with bacon or eggs for breakfast, and less butter is required.

Milk is a very valuable food, particularly for children and invalids; its food value is high in comparison with other foods. Milk is 87 per cent. water, the remaining 13 per cent. is protein, carbohydrate, and fat, in perfect proportions. Since it needs no preparation the cost of fuel and labour is saved, and there is no waste. This is important, when we remember the percentage of waste in the preparation of fruits, vegetables, and meats. Worked out on a basis of

to-day's prices, 11 cents expended on a quart of milk will buy the same amount of nourishment as 30 cents spent on animal foods.

Now that we have become familiar with the values of different foods, the next step is to study the combining of various articles to form a healthful diet. A diet should be composed of one-fifth protein, one-fifth fat, and three-fifths carbohydrates, to furnish the body with the nourishment required. Bread is a fairly complete food, lacking only in fat and water. Therefore, we butter our bread and eat it when drinking our tea.

Why do you suppose peas are usually served with lamb, and pork with apple sauce and "greens" of some sort? Simply because the percentage of protein in lamb is low and requires some supplement from the accompanying vegetables; therefore peas are chosen rather than a watery vegetable like tomatoes. In the pork, on the other hand, the excess of fat contained must be offset by the excess of water in the greens and the mineral qualities they contain. Thus it follows that when we have lamb, veal, poultry, or fish, we should serve a substantial vegetable such as macaroni, lima beans, parsnips, or sweet potatoes, or an especially nourishing dessert, such as a boiled pudding. When we have beef, mutton, or pork, we should combine them with watery vegetables, spinach, cabbage, vegetable marrow, lettuce, or tomatoes, and the dessert should be a jelly or fruit—something light and cool. If the meal we plan contains a superabundance of one food value, we should balance it with the other meals during the day. In cold weather serve a fairly large percentage of fat for the lower temperature will help to balance the excessive heat production.

**N**OW, let us turn our attention to the care of foods. There is more in this than you probably think. I cannot tell you how many times I have spent good money on food I have never used, having allowed it to spoil. Suitable cupboard space plays a prominent part in keeping food in condition. Cereals should be kept in a cool, dry place; spices and condiments, sugar and salt, tea and coffee, should all be in air-tight tins; canned and preserved goods stowed away in the dark.

Fresh fruits, such as oranges, lemons, peaches, tomatoes, etc., should be left in their original individual wrappings until ready to use; otherwise they are liable to bruise each other. Cut onions should never be left exposed to the air, for they attract all the germs that are flying about. If you have ordered berries, pick out the mouldy ones as soon as they arrive, rather than allow them to stand in the box until supper time. A mouldy berry will soon contaminate half-a-dozen others and you will find that, instead of having a dozen to throw away, you will lose quite a handful. Lettuce is particularly difficult to keep satisfactorily over night. The best way in summer is to lay it right on the ice. If this is not possible, the stalks can be put in a jar of water and covered with a heavy paper bag to keep the warm air away, taking care that the water is not allowed to rot the leaves.

Root vegetables, such as turnips, parsnips, etc., are better if some of the tops are left on, and a little earth is allowed to remain, in this way they do not dry up so quickly. Beets require very careful handling. They should never be cut until they are cooked, for otherwise the mineral matter will be extracted into the cooking water and the flavour and colour will be lost. When large potatoes are peeled for cooking they should never be cut up until ready to put on the stove to boil. If cut potatoes stand in water for awhile, enough starch will come out to form a sediment in the bottom of the vessel. Prove this yourself by straining off the top water and boiling down the residue.

If meat is to be kept raw over night in hot weather, a good plan is to sear the surface to make a thin outer coating to hold in the juices. Little pieces of cooked meat can be kept fresh if wrapped in waxed paper. Meat should never be washed in

water when it comes from the butcher's. This is mistaken cleanliness. The water will draw out the juices of the meat and they are lost when the water is thrown away. A better way is to wipe the meat with a cloth dipped in salty water.

Milk requires a great deal of care, and should be kept closely covered. Don't pour out more than enough for a meal at a time, as a little milk that has stood about in a warm room will soon infect a whole bottle full of pure milk. Keep milk as cold as possible, and never leave it in the sun or on the back of the stove. Scald any milk that is left over at night and it is quite good enough for cooking next day. Sour milk can be used in many ways; with soda for gingerbread or pancakes, or to make a cottage cheese.

I have a few little wrinkles to keep the dinner warm when my perverse family insists on being unpunctual. This is really a very difficult problem if one is depending on a gas stove; many a good dinner has been dried to a chip by waiting half an hour on a low gas. Put a stopper in the sink and run it half full of hot water. Into this set the saucepans, adding more hot water as it cools. If only one member of the family is late, I serve a plate, cover it and place it over a saucepan of water to steam. This is an excellent plan, as the steam keeps the food both moist and warm.

Under the care of foods comes preserving. Of course, delicious canned fruits and vegetables can be bought at the grocer's, but most housekeepers still find that it is good policy to lay in a stock of home-made preserves, for with careful buying and still more careful bottling, a considerable saving is effected.

Very few realize what wonderful possibilities there are in bottling vegetables. Canned corn, peas, beans, and tomatoes, are turned out in such huge quantities by our canneries that it probably will not pay to preserve much of these varieties. But how about little carrots or whole chunks of rhubarb, or beets and onions when they are at their most delicate stage? They can all be preserved, bottled in cold water, salted or sweetened to taste. When the tops of the gem jars have been screwed on tight they should be placed in a cauldron of cold water, brought to a boil and kept simmering for an hour and then allowed to cool. In this way the original fresh flavour is preserved with very little cost or trouble.

The same method may be applied to meat. Sometimes I have bought a whole fore-quarter at a very low cost. The meat is cut up into roasts and stews and cooked in different ways, then bottled in gem jars, using gravy instead of water to fill the jars. These bottled meats are very handy if you haven't time to cook meat for dinner, for, as in the case of canned vegetables, all you have to do is to warm up and serve.

**D**O you know it is wonderful how much you can save by pickling eggs! When my neighbours are paying 45 cents a dozen in December and January for storage eggs that taste of every brand of sawdust, we are using eggs that I put away last April at about 20 or 25 cents a dozen. One satisfactory method is to preserve the eggs in water glass; in this way they can be kept for a whole year fresh enough for boiling. The amount of water glass necessary for your year's supply will amount to something like 25 cents which is trifling compared with the actual money saved. Try it next year. Another way of preserving eggs is in paraffin wax. Place the eggs—small ends down and fitting into the spaces between the wires—in a wire basket having a handle. Have the wax boiling and dip the basket with the eggs, into it, allowing it to remain not more than ten seconds. The eggs are coated evenly with the wax on the outside, and the heat cooks a thin layer of the albumen on the inside. Eggs treated in this way may be kept indefinitely. Wrap each egg carefully in soft parchment tissue paper, taking care not to scratch the wax surface.

Once you have mastered the first principles of cooking, without which a girl's education is not complete, you must turn your attention to using all the left-overs. A stock pot

is a splendid way of disposing of little pieces of vegetables and meat, and even the water the vegetables are boiled in can be used. A plateful of meat left from dinner may be combined with cream sauce and baked in individual dishes for supper. Cold meat minced and stewed can be made to go much further if placed on buttered toast.

**L**ITTLE pieces of cheese can be grated over cauliflower, which greatly improves its flavour and makes a nice change. The oil in a tin of salmon or sardines is very useful for frying fish. I save all my fats and drippings, and keep each kind separate in labelled jars. I always have a jug of fine bread crumbs handy for croquettes or scallops and, in this way, use up the ends of the loaves and the dry outside slices of bread. Rusks for soup are another good way of eliminating waste. Dry cake can be doctored up with custard and jelly into a most delicious dessert. Tops of vegetables or wilted lettuce can be used as greens in summer and very appetising they are, too, with a hard boiled egg sliced on top!

Oh, I could go on for another hour telling you all the inner secrets of my household economy—but it is late.

We'll down that High Cost of Living spectre yet, though it may tax our ingenuity to the utmost! Good-night and good luck!

#### Some Food Values

| FOOD            | Per cent. of Water | Per cent. of Protein | Per cent. of Fat | Per cent. of Carbo-hydrates | Per cent. of Ash |
|-----------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Potatoes...     | 78.3               | 2.2                  | .1               | 18.4                        | 1.0              |
| Cabbage...      | 91.5               | 1.6                  | .3               | 5.6                         | 1.0              |
| Tomatoes...     | 94.3               | .9                   | .4               | 3.9                         | .5               |
| Roll'd Oats...  | 7.7                | 16.7                 | 7.3              | 66.2                        | 2.1              |
| Wheat Foods...  | 9.6                | 12.1                 | 1.8              | 75.2                        | 1.3              |
| Flour...        | 12.3               | 11.7                 | 1.1              | 74.5                        | .4               |
| Lean Beef...    | 70.0               | 21.3                 | 7.6              | ...                         | 1.1              |
| Dried Beef...   | 54.3               | 30.0                 | 6.2              | .4                          | 9.1              |
| Milk...         | 87.0               | 3.3                  | 4.0              | 5.0                         | .7               |
| Cheese...       | 34.2               | 25.9                 | 33.7             | 2.4                         | 3.8              |
| Butter...       | 11.0               | 1.0                  | 85.0             | ...                         | 3.0              |
| Eggs...         | 73.7               | 14.8                 | 10.5             | ...                         | 1.0              |
| Beans...        | 89.2               | 2.3                  | 0.3              | 7.4                         | 0.8              |
| Shelled Peas... | 74.6               | 7.0                  | .5               | 16.9                        | 1.0              |
| Lentils...      | 8.4                | 25.7                 | 1.0              | 59.2                        | 5.7              |
| Dried Peas...   | 10.5               | 24.5                 | .1               | 62.0                        | 2.9              |

#### Two Good Salad Recipes

##### Stuffed Beef Salad

Have ready, tender, cooked beets, from which the skin has been slipped. Cut a slice from the top of each beet that it may stand level; with a small round cutter score the root end and remove the centre at the scoring to form thin shelled cups or cases. Let these stand in French dressing half an hour or longer. For eight beets, chop fine from one to two cucumbers, add a scraping of onion, about four tablespoons olive oil, two of vinegar, and one-fourth teaspoon each of salt and paprika; mix thoroughly and fill the beets; set figures, cut from the beet removed, above the cucumbers. Garnish with lettuce. Shredded cabbage, endive, cress, or celery may be used in place of cucumber.

##### A Luncheon Salad

Cut two pieces from a grape fruit to leave a basket shape with handle. With a grape-fruit knife (these knives are particularly good for peeling potatoes) remove the grape fruit pulp in neat sections. Save all the juice with the pulp for the salad. With the knife and scissors remove all membrane from the grape-fruit basket and set it aside to become chilled. Peel three choice bananas, scrape off all threads, then cut in shreds (not too thin) about an inch and a half long. As fast as these are cut, pour over them a little grape fruit or lemon juice, or a little of both. Peel three ripe tomatoes, cut them in slices a generous half-inch thick, and each slice in three or four strips. When ready to serve, fill the basket with mayonnaise dressing and set it in the centre of a serving dish; around it dispose the prepared tomato, banana, and grape fruit (at least half of a second grape fruit will be needed). Garnish the edge of the dish with heart-leaves of lettuce.