

A Better Way To Use Fresh Vegetables

By
FRANCES MARTIN

each row. The corn, if young, may then be pressed from the cob with

FRUITS and vegetables were formerly under the ban of suspicion by very many people, and by such, in times of cholera, they were entirely ignored. It is now pretty generally conceded that injurious effects attend the use of these articles after they become stale only; when fresh they are considered, by many, much more healthful articles of diet than meat. Contrary to the opinion which still prevails to some extent, men are able to endure hard muscular labor on a purely vegetable diet. The same amount of care used to keep meat fresh should be applied to vegetables.

Housewives would do well to understand that it is quite as important to have green peas and green corn fresh from the fields as to have fish fresh from the water. They should know that the sooner all three commodities are cooked, after being taken from their abodes, the better and sweeter they will be. He who has not eaten peas and corn near the garden where they grew, or fish near the water, does not know the taste of these at their best. They who buy them in the market need to discriminate. In cities, certain days are known as market days—usually three days in the week—when the market gardener brings his product to the city. A supply of peas or corn should be procured, early in the morning of these days, to last until the following market day.

By making a study of the subject the buyer will be able to judge of their freshness. When peas remain in the market twenty-four hours, even though kept sprinkled, the pods are apt to become flabby, while those just brought in have a fresh, firm feeling, when handled. Corn husks generally reveal, to the eye, the condition of the corn. When it has been kept over, the edges of the husks usually look dry and withered. Until a little experience has taught the buyer, she should

the back of the knife, leaving the hull attached to the cob. Should the corn be too old, for this, shave off the upper part of the kernels with a sharp knife. This should be done after scoring then by scraping with the back of a knife, the kernels may be removed without the base of the hulls. If half of the kernel is cut off, too much of the hull will go with it. There are some who insist on eating the corn from the cob; believing that what is lost in elegance, is made up in taste—of the corn. In such case scoring will be found quite as advantageous as though the corn were to be removed with the aid of a knife.

Every housekeeper should take, at least, one lesson in vegetable physiology. This lesson should be on the "Office of Leaves." She who has not already taken it may give herself an object lesson. Take two young, woody shoots from the same tree; remove the leaves from one, only; and treat them, otherwise, alike. Look at them occasionally and it will be found that the shoot with the leaves will shrivel and dry much faster than the other. The reason is that the leaves perform the office of pumps. The water, taken up by the roots, is absorbed from the leaves by the air. When the land at the source of our rivers was wooded, the woods held the water—as a sponge does—and fed it out gradually during the summer, through the streams and rivers not only, but

It is just as necessary for us to have our vegetables fresh as it is to have fish fresh in order to get the most of their flavor.



depend upon the integrity of the dealer—throwing herself upon his honor.

The age of peas and corn has much to do with their excellence. If half or three-fourths filled, they will be found to please most tastes; they would be better younger than older.

With the present improved varieties in the market, more depends on freshness and size than on kinds. The old white marrowfat pea—or Irish marrowfat, as it was called by some—was the standard of excellence; and it has not been surpassed. It was long ago replaced, in the market, by the black-eye marrowfat, much more productive but of very inferior quality. Fortunately the latter has now given way to the telephone pea. This and kindred varieties has broad pods and usually finds its way to market before getting too old. Among the best varieties of corn is Stowell's evergreen. As this is a late sort, it continues in market after cool nights begin—at which time it is better able to preserve its sweetness, after being plucked.

Peas should be podded and corn husked as soon as they reach the house, whether to be cooked at once or not. It is a mistaken though prevalent notion that they keep better in the pod or husk. When thus prepared, they may be kept in the refrigerator until wanted for cooking. If they cannot be kept cold, it is much better to cook them at once. A good way is to put peas over the fire and bring them to a boil, when they may be set aside and the cooking finished when they are wanted. They will, unlike fish, be as palatable the second day as the first—providing they are fresh when first cooked. In shelling peas, if any very old pods are found, they should be rejected. Some people are of the opinion that corn will be found sweeter, if a few of the inner husks, or part of the ears, are permitted to remain until they are boiled. In cutting corn from the cob, the kernels should be scored—split in halves—by running a sharp knife blade through the centre of

through the leaves also. The water, thus pumped into the air, was returned to the earth in the form of rain and dew. The destruction of the forests is followed by floods in springtime and droughts in summer. One of the islands of the sea, after being deforested, became a sandy desert. The remedy for our floods and droughts is to have timber belts planted by the national government.

The roots of trees and plants are connected with the soil by means of minute rootlets which drink in the moisture from the earth. When the plant is removed from the soil, the minute rootlets are destroyed and the source of the full water supply is cut off; so that the leaves, if permitted to remain, soon exhaust the supply. Other parts of the plant also evaporate the moisture; but not as rapidly as do the leaves. Bouquets of cut flowers are preserved, for a time, by placing them in water; in this way the waste is in a measure supplied. The nurseryman, who digs trees early in the fall, first carefully removes the leaves.

When radishes, beets and other vegetables are taken from the ground, the tops should be immediately cut off. If market gardeners would remove the leaves and sell their vegetables by count or weight, the latter would reach the consumer in much better condition. The husks of green corn and the pods of green peas discharge, to a considerable extent, the office of leaves, and, unless removed, will absorb much of the sweetness of these vegetables. The husks and pods should be removed by the gardener. Instead, they gather these vegetables, consigning them, in the husk or pod, to large sacks where they remain over night and, in sultry weather, become so heated that the sweetness is gone before they reach the market. If they were to be brought to market in thin crates, permitting a circulation of air, the injury done by heating might, in a great measure, be obviated, and thus profit accrue to both buyer and seller.

Six on a Vacation for Three Dollars

By
SUE McNAMARA

past, the mind chasing round and round the same old way like a squirrel in a cage.

ONE of the most beneficial vacations I ever took was one in which I

completely closed the door on my usual life and stepped out into a new world—a world of insects, birds, fresh, damp smelling earth, waving green tree tops, and yes, even mud! I don't like bugs or mud, either, yet through some strange transformation the afternoon promenade of a yellow lady bug and a scramble after a pink lined clam shell became things of paramount importance to me.

Ever since I was a child I had wanted to go back to the old river where I had enjoyed so many care free, happy hours when my dresses yet reached my knees. "Impossible," said our friends. "You can't get back the spirit of childhood. Things which charmed you then would bore you now."

But nothing daunted, six of us, old time friends, rented a little rustic cabin which had been erected by an enterprising man on the banks of the old stream. Years had elapsed, years filled with work, joys and sorrows, trips to foreign lands, accomplishments, reward for endeavor, it is true. Yet my nerves were "frazzled." I longed to get away from the clang of the street car, the dress up parade, the shrill call of the newsboy, all the monotonous life of civilization. And in this little rustic cabin in a quiet country lane where scarcely one team a day passed I found my haven of rest.

It was a big one-room cabin with wide fireplace of cement, several beds which folded against the wall, and a lean-to kitchen. There were plenty of doors and windows with rough wooden shutters which could be closed in case of storm. Even at the oil cloth covered kitchen table, while beating up a cake, one could look out at the screen of waving green boughs, could take deep soul satisfying breaths of woody air. Back of the house was a little cement walled cave where we kept ice, butter and milk. The cabin was provided with good tight screens and there was a folding partition by which it could be divided into two parts if desired. In front was a rustic porch which extended beyond the cabin and was built completely around a great oak tree which afforded a good, substantial back for a rustic seat. This porch was our living room.

Then began our adventures. The first day was one of doubt and perplexity. The whole camp arose to meet emergency. It was not a time for dawdling about in hammocks. The whole bent of each mind was changed. It was as if Aladdin had rubbed the lamp and given each of us a new set of emotions. The lady who had lost her appetite suddenly prepared for supper with a speed that would have surprised her friends in town. The woman whose nerves had been "frazzled" by the writing game and didn't much care whether school kept or not, suddenly awoke to the fact that the water in the old well on the place wasn't fit to drink, and that it must in some way be carted from the tiny cross roads village a mile distant. "The cave committee" decided that she didn't like the looks of that damp smelling hole in the ground and was sure a snake would grab her when she went in to get the ice.

"Humph!" I hear some one say, "Don't call that much of a vacation." But it was! A vacation from old thoughts and habits which had been wearing grooves in the brain and carving wrinkles in the face. If there were to be grooves and wrinkles they would be in a new place at any rate. Always, before during my vacations, sitting on the deck of a steamer, or reclining in a chair on the hotel piazza gazing at the mountains the old set of thought, habits would not loose their hold, for a number of days at any rate. There was the same peering ahead into the future, the same thoughts of the

But here, close to the soil, down among the damp-smelling roots of things—a yellow lady bug and a pink clam shell saved the day!

Hurrying down the shady country lane carrying a huge tin pail I suddenly stopped and smiled at the energy I was devoting to that problem of getting water. We would get water somehow. Suppose we didn't. We could go back to town. But here I was, forgetting everything but the perplexity of getting that bright tin pail filled with cold, sparkling water. Vacating! Vacating the old habits, the old interests. That is the secret of a real rest, and to get it you must entirely change your mode of living. Fill your mind with new things, new perplexities even, but get a new outlook at all costs.

I grasped the handle of the pail. The old man tilted back against the store, his pipe between his teeth and looked on imperturbably. Arms unused to heavy lifting refused to work. I looked helplessly up at the sky, hoping a passing bird man might see my plight. There was none. But approaching from the East was a young man smeared from head to foot

with red paint. He had an engaging grin and a pair of brown, brawny arms.

"Can't I help you?" he volunteered, and I thankfully surrendered the pail. As we trudged up the shady lane I learned that he, too, had sought a vacation by entirely changing his mode of life, only his change was even more radical than mine. His usual occupation was chasing down Greek verbs. Now he was painting the bridge which spanned the river.

"I never painted before in my life," he confessed with his engaging grin. "But I wanted to get out in the open and find some work to do at the same time. When a man appeared in town

hunting a couple of painters my chum and myself hired out. We aren't doing a half bad job even if we do get more on ourselves than we do on the bridge."

In the still hours of the night, while we were asleep under the blankets a storm came tearing down over the hill tops, bending the trees like grasses. Through the open windows, by the vivid flashes of lightning, we could see their wildly tossing branches. The rain beat upon the shingle roof.

There was the exciting fear that the roof might leak, or the tree in the porch prove a lightning target. But everything remained intact. We lost sleep, it is true, but with morning came the sparkling foliage, the mists rising from the river, and the keenest appetite for the bacon, eggs and hot coffee.

The daily trip to the village for the mail which was left by the rural carrier at the country store was one of the pleasures we enjoyed. To be beneficial a vacation must have exercise in it. One morning we had an expedition over the hills after wild gooseberries. We got several pailsful and the Lady of the Pink Kimona made them into jam at the oil cloth covered table by the window where the screen of green leaves swayed. After a two mile tramp through the woods to the village and back it was restful to lie full length in a hammock and watch the busy crows circling overhead and listen to the soothing far-off tinkle of a cow-bell.

The whole outing of two weeks cost each of us less than three dollars apiece. The owner of the cabin refused to take a cent. Transportation cost \$6.00. Our bill for provisions was only a little over \$10.00. And when the honk of the auto horn at last rudely broke the stillness it was with real regret that I packed my bottle of pennyroyal oil (sure cure for mosquitoes), looked my last at the slowly circling crows, and stepped back across the threshold into the crowded room called Civilization with its artificial squirrel cage routine of thought and habit.

