



The Home Department

Recipes.

Take a word or two of kindness,
Season well with some good deed,
Add of charity a plenty,
And of hope a generous meed;
And if you mold them rightly,
Which may be no easy thing,
You will find you have a dainty
Fit to serve to any king.

Take a brimming pint of patience,
And of faith an equal share,
Stir them thoroughly together
In the crystal bowl of prayer;
Mix with these a cup of wisdom,
And a dash of self-control,
And 'tis yours to quench the craving
Of a famished human soul.

Take of happiness full measure,
From the Granary above,
Knead the whole with inspiration,
Leaven with abiding love;
And some day you may be able
To supply, with gentle art,
All that the bread that is required
By one hunger-stricken heart.

—Ralph Methven Thomson in the
Humanitarian.

Drying Fruits and Vegetables

[The drying of fruits and vegetables, while not new to many of the older generation, is nevertheless an interesting subject to housewives generally. Because of the newer developments, also, there is much information in the following article by Mabel L. Harlan, of the department of agricultural extension of Purdue university, Indiana, that will prove helpful to readers of this department. —Ed.]

Before the war it was estimated that in this country fully two-thirds of our fruit and tons and tons of vegetables went to waste every year. Now it is imperative that every ounce be saved.

Since the developments of other methods of food preservation, drying has not been as much used as in the early days; however, in order to supply the great amount of food necessary to feed the people at home, our soldiers and our allies, we are resorting more and more to this old-time method as it offers a simple, convenient and economical means of preserving food materials and permits the carrying over of the surplus into periods when fresh fruits and vegetables are expensive or unobtainable.

Drying is based on the fact that when a certain amount of moisture is removed from the material, organisms are not able to grow and multiply in it. This principle is known as evaporation or dehydration.

"Drying has the very great advantages that the product has a weight of only one-fourth to one-ninth that of fresh material; that there is a very considerable reduction in bulk due to actual shrinkage and to the fact that all portions not actually fit for food are removed and that the dry material may be stored almost indefinitely without danger of deterioration and without the use of expensive and special containers," says Joseph S. Caldwell, plant physiologist of the United States department of agriculture.

Artificial Heat Best.

There are several methods of home drying; drying in the sun, in the oven and by means of a drier placed

either over hot water or over the top of a stove, and especially constructed evaporators. Perhaps the oldest method used by the housewife is that of drying in the sun. Wherever climatic conditions make it possible, sun drying is the least expensive method of preserving foodstuffs. This method demands that a rainless season of bright sunshine and high temperature coincide with the period at which the crops to be dried are maturing. Wire screen or mosquito netting must always be used to protect the material from flies and other insects.

The use of artificial heat in drying has the advantage that the work is done independent of weather conditions and that it is possible to dry a considerable number of foodstuffs which ordinarily can not be dried in the sun. A simple, satisfactory drier for home use may consist of a series of trays with wire mesh bottoms. These trays should fit together closely so that when heat is applied beneath the warm air will pass upward through the wire bottom and carry with it moisture from the product. This arrangement enables one to dry various products at the same time or a quantity of the same product. This drier may be constructed from old boxes or scraps of lumber at very little cost.

In the Days of Old.

An old lady who relates her experience in drying says: "I must go back about thirty years to the date of my first kiln for drying fruit. On a hillside I dug two shallow trenches, then built a stone wall, then a support in the center, leaving a space on each side for fire. Over the top of these walls we placed a large, flat rock. At the end of the trenches we built a chimney of stone and mortar, plastered the kiln and sides of the walls with a mortar made of clay. When the top was smoothed over we spread papers and started the fire.

"As soon as the papers were dry it was ready for use and we began spreading the fruit (it was peaches) with the cut side up. It was fun to see them begin to wilt. The fire was closely watched to keep from burning. As the fruit began to wither, the pieces were moved closer together and more fruit added. About two days finished the process.

"That was the way I managed in the long-ago days, but the fruit evaporators were invented and the drying process hastened and many other fruits and vegetables were saved. Pumpkin and winter squashes may be dried. Peel and slice them one-eighth of an inch thick and string with a darning needle and twine and hang them in the sun or dry in an evaporator. The flavor is retained and these make delicious pies. Needs to be soaked several hours before cooking."

Care Should Be Taken.

Care should be taken in the selection and preparation of vegetables and fruits for drying. Only tender young vegetables and fresh fruit should be used and they should be prepared and dried very soon after gathering. Blanching and cold dipping are desirable for vegetables. This gives a more thorough cleansing, removes objectionable odors and flavors, gives a better color and softens and loosens the fiber, allowing quicker and more uniform evaporation of moisture. After blanching

and cold-dipping, remove the moisture by shaking in a sieve or colander and placing the vegetables on towels. The time for blanching and cold-dipping of vegetables for drying is approximately the same as for canning. Fruits are not blanched or cold dipped.

The following are a few of the vegetables and fruits which may be successfully dried at home:

String Beans—String the beans, break into pieces and blanch from five to ten minutes, in water which has had added to it two tablespoonfuls of ordinary baking soda to each gallon of water. Spread about one inch deep on trays to dry.

Sweet Corn—Select young, tender corn. Cook in boiling water from five to eight minutes or until the milk is "set." Cut the kernels from the cob with a sharp knife, taking care not to cut too close to the cob. Scrape out the portion of the kernel remaining. Spread in thin layers on trays to dry.

Tomatoes—Blanch to remove the skin, cold dip, slip the skin, slice to thickness of one-quarter inch. Spread on trays and dry. A good product.

Rhubarb—Chose tender, fresh stalks. Wash carefully and cut in small pieces (about one inch in length). Spread out to dry until leathery and there is no sign of moisture. Condition and store as peas.

Soup Mixture—This has proved a boon to the busy housewife. Instead of preparing vegetables each time for her soup, it is only necessary to add a spoonful of the dried mixture to the stock or stew. The vegetables used in this mixture are carrots, turnips, beans, celery, cabbage and onions. These should be carefully washed and cut in small dice or shredded. They should be dried separately as some vegetables dry more quickly than others. When dry they are mixed together and left to condition four or five days before storing, then store in jars, tins, boxes, etc., and keep in a dry place. Small pieces of left over raw vegetables may be dried at any time and stored, thus building the soup mixture gradually.

Ways to Save Sugar

There is a greater shortage of both the sugar-cane and sugar-beet crops than was expected in the early part of the season. At no time since the beginning of the war has there been a normal output of sugar because of the devastation of foreign sugar-beet fields. There has been a serious loss of sugar at sea due to the submarine warfare. The government requires a generous supply to meet the needs of the men in the service.

Instead of letting the sugar shortage bother her, the resourceful housewife is bending all efforts to learn the best ways of using less sugar in her cooking and preserving and of canning without it or with sugar substitutes. She is drying many of the fruits; she is learning to put up fruits and juices and butters and to make sirups at home from sugar beets, quinces and apples. She is substituting corn sirup, molasses, maple sirup, and honey for sugar in her canning and general cooking, and she is making sugarless candies, fruit pastes and confections. Bulletins telling how to carry out these methods may be had free on

application to the United States department of agriculture.

Sugar-saving not only means cutting down on consumption, but it also means preventing waste. Americans have allowed their fondness for sugar to increase to the point where it has passed extravagance and become actual waste. Over-sweetening of tea and coffee is one of our great faults. More than this, too often a good part of the sugar is not dissolved and is left in the bottom of the cup to be thrown away. Every housewife should enforce the rule of "one teaspoonful to the cupful or none at all." The children as well as the grownups must be willing to do without some of the sweet things they want and everyone must be satisfied with much smaller amounts of sweetening in general cooking.

Serve fresh fruits without sugar instead of sweet puddings; have salads often in place of desserts; use sweet dried fruits like dates, raisins or figs with the breakfast cereals, or a little sirup in place of sugar. Use cake sparingly and make it from recipes that call for molasses or sirups—instead of frosting spread it with a little jam, fruit butter, or paste.

Contributed Recipes

Potato Pudding—This recipe makes a rich, moist pudding at small expense. Sift one pint whole wheat flour, half teaspoon salt and one of baking soda, and one heaping teaspoon mixed spices. Add half cup each of finely chopped beef suet, dark molasses, sour milk and creamy mashed potatoes, and one cup (mixed) seeded raisins, shredded citron and currants. Mix all well, turn into greased mold, steam two and one-half hours.—J. M. O.

Economy Dish—Take one-half pound ground meat, one-half pound macaroni, one small tin tomato soup (about ten or twelve ounces). One small onion, pepper, salt and bread crumbs. Cover the macaroni with water and boil for twenty minutes; strain, mix in the soup, then add ground meat, salt and pepper, and pour into a dish. Cover the top with bread crumbs and bake in a fairly hot oven one and one-half hours.—C. H. T.

Indian Pudding—One quart milk, one-half cup corn meal, one-half cup molasses, one teaspoon salt, one teaspoon cinnamon, one cup cold milk. Heat milk. Stir meal in slowly until it thickens. Take from stove, add molasses, salt and spice. Put mixture into a buttered earthen dish and add cold milk. Bake two hours; serve with milk or cream.—Mrs. H. T. D.

Rice Popovers—Two level cups cold boiled rice, two level cups flour, two teaspoons baking powder, two tablespoons sugar, two eggs separated, two cups milk, one level teaspoon salt. Mash rice until smooth. Sift flour, baking powder, sugar and salt twice. Beat yolks of eggs, add whites beaten stiff and stir them into rice. Then add milk and flour alternately and beat till smooth. Fill gem pans two-thirds full and bake in hot oven about fifteen minutes. Grease pans well.—Miss T. R.

Excellent Pie Crust—(Saving wheat flour)—One teacup cornstarch, one heaping teaspoon baking powder, salt to taste; one heaping tablespoon shortening (may use lard compound) cut into the flour or work in with the finger tips enough cold water to wet the same as when only wheat flour is used.—C. T. R.

Smothered Sausage—Fresh sausage meat should be molded into small flat cakes and placed in the bottom of a greased baking pan. Add a layer of seasoned mashed po-