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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Saturday, October 5, 1935

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "NEWS NOTES FROM WASHINGTON." Items of interest to women, from the United States Department of Agriculture.

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Homemakers, our Washington correspondent has kept her word. She has sent us her recipe for sweetpotato pie, and I shall pass it on to you presently.

First though, the news items. I wonder -- Are there any school children in the audience today? Let's see whether you can answer this question: "What farm product has more than three hundred widely different uses?"

All right, boys and girls, what's the answer? You boys ought to know. It's a farm product used in the manufacture of automobile parts -- gear-shift knobs and engine distributor covers. It's used in sizing paper, too, and in water-proofing, and in the manufacture of paints and varnishes.

Still no answers? Girls, you'll have to help us out. This product furnishes a brown substance that gives a gloss to chocolate candy, and keeps gumdrops from getting hard. It furnishes a flour used in cakes, bread, and ice cream cones, and a dark brown salty sauce that is mighty good with chow mein and chop suey and sukiyaki. Now you've guess it! That's right -- the soybean.

Yes, sir, the soybean is the product with more than three hundred widely different uses. If any vegetable is entitled to put on airs it's this Oriental bean, the most important legume grown in Asiatic countries. The people in China, Japan, and Korea depend upon it for proteins, fats, and vitamins they can't get in any other way. Thousands of little Chinese and Japanese babies are brought up on soybean milk.

But let's read what our correspondent has found out from the Bureau of Plant Industry about this important vegetable.

"In less than thirty years," she writes, "the soybean acreage in the United States has increased 100 times, from fifty thousand acres in 1907 to more than five million acres in 1935. Twenty-seven States grow soybeans. The Department of Agriculture is continuing experiments to find out which varieties are most suitable for varying climate and soil conditions.

"You'd be surprised," she continues, "at the long list of uses for the soybean. Here are just a few of them -- flour, paint, automobile parts, varnish, soap, linoleum and oilcloth, printing inks, compounds and vegetable shortenings. Lecithin (less-i-thin), a brown substance extracted from the soybean, gives chocolate candy a gloss. Gumdrops makers put a drop of lecithin in their product to prevent hardening in storage.

"The milk of the soybean furnishes casein, used in sizing paper, textile dressing, waterproofing, and the manufacture of paints. Food uses of the soybean are really 'too numerous to mention.' The flour is used in making bread, cakes, ice cream cones, ice cream powder, macaroni products, and wafers. The oil is used in salad and cooking oils. And the sauce -- but then you know all about soy sauce, if you've ever eaten Oriental dishes.

"The Bureau of Home Economics," (I'm still quoting) "and the Bureau of Plant Industry are conducting experiments to find out which varieties of soybeans are best for ordinary cooking purposes. Some varieties, as you know, are very good, served as you would Lima beans. The soybeans are easy to shell, after you boil the pods about three minutes."

Yes, friends -- but remember that point about boiling the pods for three minutes! Otherwise, the soybeans are not easy to shell. I learned that from bitter experience. They laughed when I sat down to shell soybeans -- without boiling the pods first. . . .

Well, our correspondent says she will keep us informed about the soybean experiments, and send us any new recipes developed in the Bureau of Home Economics.

Our next news item is a suggestion from Miss Miriam Birdseye of the Extension Service -- a suggestion for all good cooks who grow dill in their old-fashioned herb gardens. Use the tender spicy young leaves of the plant before it goes to seed, says Miss Birdseye. In creamed chicken or creamed shrimp, use enough chopped leaves of dill to flavor the sauce and color it bright green. You can add bits of the dill leaves to salads, too, and to omelets, scrambled eggs, or even to soups. And if you want to add a delicious flavor to broiled lamb chops, fried fish, veal cutlet, or steak, just sprinkle over them a generous pinch of chopped dill leaves, and then pour over the meat or fish a little very hot butter or fat, to bring out the flavor. . . . An orchid to Miss Birdseye, for all her good suggestions, relayed by our Washington correspondent.

And now, our recipe for sweetpotato pie. You'll like this -- or I miss my guess. Seven ingredients, for the sweetpotato filling. Ready? First, sweetpotatoes, one and one-half cups of boiled, mashed sweetpotatoes. Then, milk, two cups; sugar, one-fourth cup; ginger, one-half teaspoon; salt, one-half teaspoon; eggs, two eggs; and butter, two tablespoons. . . . I'll repeat the seven ingredients, so you can check the list: (PLEASE REPEAT)

Now let's make our pie. First, heat the mashed sweetpotatoes, the milk, sugar, ginger and salt. Heat them in a double boiler. Beat the two eggs, and pour some of the hot mixture into the beaten eggs. Mix all together, and add the butter. Pour the hot filling into a deep baked pastry shell, and bake in a moderate oven for about thirty minutes, or until the filling sets. And that's the recipe for sweetpotato pie, from our correspondent with the Department of Agriculture.

We'll hear from her again next Saturday, and I'll be with you again on Monday, as usual.

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