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Homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

Tuesday, January 4, 1944.

QUESTION BOX

Re-cut suit when making over?
Peanut butter in soup?
How Braise Meat?
Ration Workers Paid?

ANSWERS from food and clothing specialists of U. S. Department of Agriculture, and Office of Price Administration.

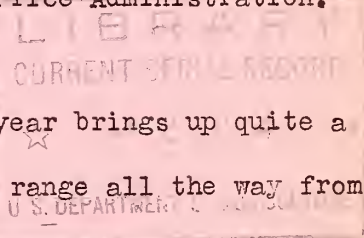
This first question-and-answer session for the new year brings up quite a variety of questions from busy homemakers. The questions range all the way from making over a suit to a query about ration boards, and the answers come from food and clothing specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and from the Office of Price Administration.

From the top of the letter-pile comes this inquiry from a homemaker who's doing her bit toward the saving of clothing. "I want to make over one of my husband's old suits into a suit for myself. The back of the coat seems to fit quite well just as it is. I'd like to know if it would be all right to go ahead and use it without ripping and re-cutting the back."

The clothing specialists say you probably will get a better fit to your suit if you rip the old suit entirely, even though the back appears to fit fairly well. If you don't rip the back, and re-cut it, you may have to do quite a bit of adjusting in order to fit the collar and sleeves right.

Another advantage to ripping is that often the material will look better if you turn it inside out--though of course this will depend on the weave. Some materials have a definite right and wrong side, and can't be reversed. However, sometimes even when there is a definite right and wrong side, if you don't see both sides together, the wrong side looks very well when it's turned out.

You can still get a free copy of the leaflet called "Make-Overs from Men's Suits," if you'll write to the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C. This leaflet tells how to plan make-overs from suits--how to prepare the



1917

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY
CHICAGO, ILL.

RECEIVED
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DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY
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Dear Sir,
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th inst. and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Yours truly,
[Signature]

Very truly yours,
[Signature]

Enclosed for you are the following documents:
1. A copy of the report of the committee on the subject of the proposed change in the curriculum of the Department of Chemistry.
2. A copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Department of Chemistry held on the 10th inst. at which the above report was discussed.

material and how to lay the pattern pieces for the new garment on the ripped pieces of the old suit. I'll repeat the name of the leaflet: it's called "Take-Overs from Men's Suits."

That takes care of our first letter. Now let's take up a couple of questions about food. One housewife writes, "I've noticed that recipes often call for 'braising' meat. I'm not quite sure what this means. Can you tell me how to braise meat?"

Braising is a cooking process that combines browning with steaming and stewing in a tightly covered pan. You can braise meat either on top of the stove or in the oven, whichever method fits better into the plan of your meal. Braising brings out the rich flavor of meat, and it's an excellent way to cook all the less tender cuts. It's fine, too, for the tender cuts of beef, lamb, and veal that are too lean for broiling or roasting in an open pan.

To braise meat, brown it in a little fat on top of the stove, then cover and finish cooking either on the stove or in the oven. It may be necessary in some cases to add liquid-- either water, or canned or sliced tomatoes, as you prefer.

Here's a nice variation of swiss steak that you may like to try. It's called Spanish steak. To make Spanish steak to serve six, get one and a half pounds of beef, either round, rump, or chuck, or a slice of veal cut fairly thick. Season it with salt and pepper, and sprinkle with flour. Pounding will help make the meat tender. Cut the meat into individual portions, and brown in suet or other fat, in a heavy frying pan or kettle. Then add a quart of canned tomatoes, cover the kettle partly with a lid, and simmer for about two hours, or until the meat's tender. Meanwhile cook half a pound of macaroni in boiling salted water until tender, then drain. Brown a large chopped green pepper and a half cup chopped onion in fat. Add the macaroni, pepper, and onion to the tomato gravy, and serve it over the meat.

This recipe, and others to suit the needs of wartime cooks, are in the

bulletin called "Meat for Thrifty Meals." You can get a free copy by writing to the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C. The name of the bulletin, again: "Meat for Thrifty Meals."

Here's our next cooking question: "I've heard of putting peanut butter in soup. What kind of soup can I put it in, and how much would I use?"

Most people are familiar with cream of peanut butter soup-- a cream soup flavored with a dash of onion, with a half cup of peanut butter blended in for each quart of soup. But here's another soup that may not be so familiar. It uses tomatoes-- perhaps home-canned tomatoes from your victory garden. Use four cups of tomatoes, and simmer them five minutes, then press through a sieve to remove the seeds. Mix some of the hot tomato juice with a half cup of peanut butter and blend until smooth. Now blend a tablespoon flour, one-fourth cup water, and half a teaspoon salt. Add the flour mixture and the peanut butter mixture to the hot tomato juice. Boil gently for about two minutes, stirring constantly.

Many people like peanut butter in bean soup. Use about half a cup to a quart of soup, varying the amount according to your own preference. Blend the peanut butter with a little of the hot soup, then add this mixture to the soup. Adding peanut butter to soup means adding good food value: protein, fat, some phosphorous and iron, and three of the important B vitamins. And since we have a lot of peanuts this year, it's a good time to give your family the benefit of their nutrients by using them in as many ways as you can.

Now for the last letter in the mail today: This homemaker says, "I'd like to inquire if people who work on the war price and rationing boards are paid a salary." According to the Office of Price Administration, the seventy-six thousand board members are all volunteers, serving without pay. Two hundred thirty-four thousand people work with the boards, and of these, two hundred thousand are also unpaid volunteers. Most of these volunteer workers are homemakers, and business and professional men and women, and it's their contribution of millions of hours of work that has made a success of rationing, which is the biggest cooperative enterprise ever undertaken in this country. Tomorrow is the second anniversary of the war price and rationing boards. During the week, volunteers who have served one hundred hours or more will receive a War Service Award, a certificate presented in appreciation of service to their community and country.

