

## Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28, 1939

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

SUBJECT: "NEWS NOTES." Information from the Office of Experiment Stations, U.S. D.A.

--oo0oo--

News today comes from several States--from the agricultural experiment stations in these different States where workers have been discovering ways to help you with your homemaking job.

First, some news about cooking meat. Here's an item for the listener who likes juicy steaks and roasts. Meat cooked "rare" is juicier than meat cooked "well-done." That's what Alice Child found when she was making tests at the Minnesota Station. She found 11 percent more juice in beef roasted rare than in beef roasted to the well-done stage. She reported that well-done meats may lose as much as 45 percent of their juice, but that cooking in a slow oven helps save juice.

Now here's a little news in the cause of better boiled ham. Beg pardon. Beg pardon for using that phrase "boiled ham." I know good cooks don't boil ham anymore. No, no. They cook it in water below the boiling point--that is, they simmer it. Then, when the meat is tender, they lift the kettle of ham and water off the stove and set it aside to cool. Very often they leave the ham standing in the broth overnight to cool gradually.

But Alice Child found that it pays to chill the ham and broth rapidly. Get it right down near the freezing point as fast as possible. The ham loses less weight if it soaks in very cold broth. In fact, at this temperature the meat may not shrink at all--may even weigh more when it comes out of the water.

Now maybe you've wondered how to keep a supply of chipped dried beef on hand without having it dry out and taste too salty. Here's a suggestion from Iowa. Put the sliced dried beef in a covered glass jar in your refrigerator. It will keep nicely that way for 3 or 4 weeks anyway. Louise Peet at the Iowa Station tried out various methods of keeping dried beef and found this the best one. She also tried keeping the meat wrapped in parchment and waxed paper. But in a couple of weeks, the sliced beef dried out and crystals of salt began to form along the edge of the slices. A glass jar with a good cover kept in your refrigerator will prevent this drying out.

How to get meat that has both flavor and tenderness is a problem many a housewife would like advice on. Here's a suggestion from the Florida Station. Meat experts there say that flavor in meat comes from the meat extractives in the muscle and also from the fat of the meat. The reason beef has more flavor than veal is that as any animal grows older, the meat extractives in its muscles increase and it puts on more fat. Veal is tender because it comes from a young animal, but for the same reason it contains very little fat and extractives so it lacks natural meat flavor.



In contrast, meat from a mature animal lacks tenderness because its muscle fibers have hardened and its body contains more connective tissue, but it has much more flavor. To make a good buy in both flavor and tenderness, the Florida workers advise choosing the happy medium in age. They say that beef from steers and heifers 16 to 30 months old, of good conformation with a moderate amount of finish, has enough meat extractives and fat to be well-flavored and yet is young enough to be comparatively tender.

To flour or not to flour a roast--there's a question that puzzles many a cook. Alice Child reported that roasts are preferable with no flour on the surface because they were less likely to scorch. Flour not only may scorch on the surface of the meat but may fall to the pan and scorch in the fat underneath which spoils the gravy. Other cooks argue that flour on the roast gives a browner color to the gravy. Miss Child suggests that you can get this same color without the danger of scorching by browning flour in the fat before you add the water for gravy.

Now here's some news about homemade soap. When meat fat turns rancid and is no longer good for eating, use it for making soap. That's advise from the Iowa Station. But the workers there go on to say: "Fats that become inedible may be made into soap and hence not be a total loss. Keep this loss to a minimum, however, as it is poor economy to overbuy of fat, fail to use it properly or store it unsuitably, and then have to make it into soap in order to salvage it."

Maybe you'd like the Iowa directions for making one bar of soap. You can use bacon fat or other drippings for soap if you remove the salt first. Here's how you do that. Melt the drippings and mix with water which will dissolve the salt. Then let the melted fat and water stand until the fat becomes firm. Now separate the hardened fat from the water which will have settled below the fat. To 1 cup of fat use 2 heaping tablespoons of concentrated lye dissolved in a half cup of water. Once more: 1 cup of fat----2 heaping tbalespoons of lye----dissolved in a half cup of water. Stir the liquid fat into a bowl containing the lye and beat continuously with an egg-beater. Now add 1 tablespoon of household ammonia and 1 teaspoon of powdered boras. When the soap is thick as cream, pour it into a cardboard box lined with greased paper. Let the soap ripen at least a month before you use it.

To give this soap a pleasant fragrance, you can add a little oil of cedar or oil of lavender to the melted fat.



