

# Homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE

Friday, May 19, 1944

SUBJECT: "Army Share of Food Supply". Information from food distribution officials of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and Army Quartermaster Corps.

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If you have a son...or a husband...or just a friend...in the American Armed Forces...you probably often wonder whether he is really getting good food...and lots of it. When they were home, the boys were pretty crazy about Mom's cooking. Who's looking after their likes and dislikes now?

Well, to begin with...the War Food Administration has allocated fourteen percent of our food supply to meet the needs of military and war services this year. This will give each man in uniform about twice as much food as he used to eat when he was a civilian. A soldier gets about five pounds of food every day...except when he is in a combat area. In combat areas, the men must use concentrated, packaged food. But any way...your man in uniform is a member of the best-fed armed forces in the world. Whether he's fighting in the infantry...flying a plane...driving an armored tank...gliding across the snow on skis...or firing heavy artillery, the War Food Administration and the Quartermaster Corps are looking after his food needs.

Perhaps you'd like to know more about those five pounds of food he gets each day. The five pounds consist of one pound of meat, poultry, or fish...one egg...one pint of milk...three ounces of fats including butter...twelve ounces of grain products and cereals...twelve ounces of Irish potatoes...four ounces of tomatoes and citrus fruits...seven ounces of leafy green vegetables...and twelve ounces of other fruits and vegetables. Bread...a beverage...and dessert are also included in each meal. And that's good, hearty fare.

While he is taking his basic training, a soldier gets a regular daily ration that is known as "Field Ration A". Overseas, unless he's in the combat zone, a



soldier gets "Field Ration B". These two rations are very much alike...except that overseas they have to plan on more non-perishable foods. Of course, with both "A" and "B" type rations, the quartermaster will serve fresh food available locally, if he can. Both the "A" and "B" rations are planned in advance from master menus... and they're served either in mess halls or temporary mess tents. Here's what the men might have for breakfast with these rations: baked apples, dry cereal and milk, fried cornmeal mush and syrup, sausage, toast and butter, coffee. Then for mid-day dinner they might get beefsteak with gravy, mashed potatoes, fried cabbage, a salad of beets and sliced egg, bread and butter, pineapple upside down cake, and fruitaid. In the evening the supper menu might include veal patties with tomato sauce, browned potatoes, parsnips, a salad of peas, celery, and cheese, rolls and butter, butterscotch pudding, and cocoa. So you see, the meals served under Field Ration "A" and "B" are very nourishing, and appetizing, too.

Often, however, soldiers are in combat areas, or where they don't have the facilities to prepare meals like those. Then they have packaged field rations, planned to meet special needs. These rations are known as "C", "D", "K", "10-in-1", "Bail-Out", and "Life Raft" rations. Perhaps you'd like to know more about what these rations are like.

Field Ration "C" is previously cooked and prepared food, packed in sealed cans. The soldier may eat it hot or cold. One day's ration consists of three meat units and three units containing biscuits, confection, sugar, and beverage concentrate.

A soldier would use Field Ration "D" only under conditions of extreme stress. This ration is nothing but three, highly nourishing, four-ounce bars of chocolate. This chocolate bar is also known as the "D" bar, and is highly resistant to all temperatures. It can be carried in climates ranging from 20 degrees below zero to 120 degrees above zero. It contains chocolate, skim milk, sugar, cocoa fat, oat flour, vanillin, and 150 international units of vitamin B<sub>1</sub> (thiamine).

Field Ration "K" was first developed for the parachute troops. But it proved so useful that now it's given to all troops in combat areas. In its package, the "K" ration is about the size of a pound box of candy. It has three units, each of which is a complete meal. The ration is carefully balanced to provide the necessary



carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals, and also about 3700 calories. There are a number of different combinations in the "K" ration package, and the contents of each package is printed on the outside so a soldier can choose his favorite combination. This is what a typical "K" Ration might have in it: For breakfast, two kinds of biscuits, a can of ham and eggs, malted milk dextrose tablets, soluble coffee, sugar, and chewing gum. Dinner could provide the two kinds of biscuits, a can of pork luncheon meat or cheese spread, malted milk dextrose tablets, concentrated bouillon, and chewing gum. Then for supper there might be the biscuits again, a can of cervelat sausage, a two-ounce "D" bar, sugar, lemon juice powder, and chewing gum. And each package also contains four cigarettes.

The "Bail-Out Ration"...as you probably gathered from the name...is designed for Army flyers, paratroopers, or other men who may have to bail out of planes without other supplies. The "Bail-Out Ration" is a small, pocket-sized package...it weighs only eight ounces. Each one contains small "D" bars, fruit bars, malted milk dextrose tablets, concentrated bouillon or powdered lemon juice, and chewing gum.

Perhaps you've wondered what was meant by the "10-in-1" Ration. Well, that's a day's complete food supply for ten men. It's most often used for units of men in areas where field kitchens cannot operate...or when units of men are on the move. Here's what a typical "10-in-1" Ration has in it: canned pork and sausage meat, canned tomatoes, dehydrated baked beans, biscuits, pre-cooked cereal, evaporated milk, canned jam, pineapple and rice pudding, canned butter, soluble coffee, sugar, and salt. Added to this are enough "K" ration units for one complete meal for each man.

When bomber crews are forced down at sea they carry "Life Raft Rations". This type of ration gives the men the nourishment they need, with a minimum of thirst. In the package are hard candies, chewing gum, and vitamin pills. One ration can feed five or six men for one day.

So you can see that every effort is being made to give our men in uniform the best and most nourishing food possible...and the Quartermaster Corps is constantly working to develop new food processes and new packaging materials, to improve the rations our men are getting.

Now just a word about cooking. Of course there's always a difference between the food Mom cooks for a small group around her attractive dinner-table, and the food the most expert chef cooks for a large group. But the Quartermaster Corps never ceases its efforts to make every army cook a good cook. The program starts at the induction center, where men with special aptitude for cooking and baking are singled out. These men get intensive training at one of the many schools for cooks and bakers...in one year a hundred thousand men completed the courses for cooks, bakers, mess sergeants, and so forth. So your soldier...son...husband...or friend is getting good food. But more than that --the food he gets is being prepared by well-trained cooks, so that his meals are appetizing, as well as nourishing. Temporarily, the War Food Administration and the Quartermaster Corps have taken Mom's place...and they're doing a first-rate job.

