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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Tuesday, Oct. 4, 1932.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "How Homemakers are Aiding the Family Pocketbook." Information from the Office of Cooperative Extension Work, U.S.D.A.

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How can I make money at home? How can I add to the family income? How can I stretch the household purse strings? These are questions women on farms as well as those in town have been asking, especially in recent years. And many women have found an answer. Mrs. Ola Powell Malcolm, of the extension service in Washington, has collected information on the different ways women all over the country have been adding their bit to the family income during the last year or so. I think the facts she has collected will interest you. So I'm going to give you in Mrs. Malcolm's own words some of the interesting facts she has gathered.

She says: "In spite of hard times and greatly reduced cash incomes, more than 874,000 farm women and girls with the help of their home demonstration agents, have developed new sources of income and enlarged old ones to provide the necessities and comforts for their families and have made country homes better places to live in. Each farm home represents a market for \$610 worth of food per year. Of this, \$547 worth can be produced at home from a quarter acre garden, a half acre orchard, 2 milk cows, 60 pullets and a few neat animals.

"Thousands of well-stocked pantries have added substantially to the family income by cutting living costs. For example, fifty-five members of one home demonstration club report that their families had to spend an average of only \$4.86 for food during a midwinter month--February of this year. One woman in this group spent only \$1.55 for the groceries she had to buy to feed her family of three for one month. Another reported that \$3.50 fed her family of six for one month. Still another homemaker commented that when \$1 a week pays the grocery bill, it isn't hard to sell enough eggs and butter, even at low prices, to make a living." You see, the family garden often pays well.

As for marketing the surplus from the farm, here again the women of the family have been right on the job. Perhaps you have heard about the marketing projects of homemakers and home demonstration agents in many southern states--Kentucky, West Virginia, South Carolina and Virginia, and several others. Women from any of these states will tell you that their efforts to standardize home-made products and establish different kinds of marketing enterprises have been well worth while.

"At first glance the returns from these home industries may seem small. But in reality these returns brought the cash that paid for important family needs. Perhaps the money paid the interest on the mortgage, the taxes, the year's grocery bill, kept a boy or girl in college, bought school books or clothed the

family for a year. Many of the families couldn't have provided for such items in any other way.

So, even small returns are vital to the individual family. And the returns don't look small when you total them up by counties and states. One home demonstration agent in Oklahoma reported that total sales in a farm woman's market, amounted to \$14,225; and women in several counties cleared from \$4000 to \$6000. In North Carolina 39 home demonstration markets did a business of \$236,517. In Alabama 29,288 farm women and girls last year contributed to their family incomes a total of two and three-quarter million dollars."

You'll be interested in some figures Mrs. Malcolm has as to the value of the home demonstration agent to her county. "Compiled reports from 46 Alabama counties which employ home demonstration agents show that according to a conservative estimate each agent has brought to the county in which she works an actual return of \$50,000."

One of the important movements toward success in any home industry has been standardizing of products. Fortunately "methods of standardizing have been steadily improving. Take home-made rugs for example. In some States rug-making is becoming a home industry under the guidance of extension agents. Before Christmas 1931 women in forty counties in Texas filled a rush order for 100 hooked rugs made with wool. A large department store advertised a special Christmas sale of these rugs. Since then the women have had many repeat orders. Needless to say, their reputation for workmanship of a high standard had much to do with their success and laid the foundation for future sales."

Standardization of many other home products beside rugs has been progressing rapidly in recent years. "With the aid of home demonstration agents many homemakers are now making food products according to standard. The dining car services of some of the large railroad systems are buying superior quality canned chicken, bottled fruit juices, sunshine marmalades and other special food products from home demonstration club women."

Well, these are just a few pictures to show you how women are producing and conserving the family living these days, how they are becoming both manufacturers and retailers to bring in cash for family needs.

Now how would you like to hear some accounts of women's club markets?

I'll tell you first about two markets in one county in Virginia that have been very successfully run by home demonstration club women. According to the report for 1931 these two markets together sold over \$15,000 worth of home products in one year.

The first market in the county started at Staunton and has been running under the manager plan with a committee from the home demonstration advisory board to give extra help. This board was very anxious that the market make a reputation for selling only high quality products, so the agent went out through the county and demonstrated standards and grades so that every woman could know what would be expected of the products she brought to market. Only women who attended these group standardization meetings got contracts to sell in the market.

When the market opened each seller pledged herself to follow the rules as to prices, quality, wrappings and so forth. The result is that customers know that everything they buy in this market is of excellent quality. And the products are not only of good material and well made; they also look attractive because they are packed in appropriate packages and carefully wrapped in cellophane. This wrapping allows customers to see what they are buying, yet the food is safe from dust and germs.

Half-cakes wrapped this way have been very good sellers because customers can see the texture of the cake all the way through.

The home demonstration agent writing about this market says it's a real treat to visit it every Saturday morning, to see the array of flowers, bitter-sweet and potted plants, the hundreds of cakes, large and small, the pastry, cream puffs, doughnuts, potato chips, dressed chickens, cottage cheese, butter, fruits and vegetables. Winter bouquets were very good sellers last fall and made lovely decorations for the market. Hundreds of customers visit the market every Saturday--quality there allow them to buy better food as cheaply as they could have it made at home.

How much do the women themselves make? Well, the accounts show that one woman sold almost \$1,500 worth of cakes during 1931. Another woman, in just nine months, sold \$1413 worth of dressed chickens, cottage cheese and cake.

The success of this Staunton Club market inspired the founding of a similar one in Waynesboro, another town in the same county. As a matter of fact, the Waynesboro Chamber of Commerce asked the club women to start the market and gave them a vacant lot for the summer and a building for winter use.

Several of the women who contribute to this market have also developed side businesses of their own. Two women arranged with a grocery owner to give them space in his store to sell their cakes, tarts, cream puffs and doughnuts every Saturday. The store owner soon found that this trade not only helped the women get a start in business; it also helped him by bringing more customers to his store. In seven months these women sold \$1200 worth of cakes and pastry at this Saturday counter.

Another member of the club brings her products to customers on days when the market is not running. In a few months she has sold \$1024 worth of cakes, flowers, chickens and eggs. She has also a good trade in box lunches. She packs delicious lunches of ham, biscuits, tarts, cake and fruit and sells them to offices, banks and stores for twenty and twenty-five cents apiece.

Some other day I'll tell you some more true stories about women who are helping out the family income.

Wednesday - "The Lunch for School."

