homemakers' chat
FOR USE IN NON-COMMERCIAL BROADCASTS ONLY
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Thursday, September 24, 1942.

QUESTION BOX:
How use horseradish?
Vitamins in fruit juices?
How keep canned foods from freezing?

ANSWERS FROM:
Scientists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture

Our mail bag today is as usual full of questions, and as usual, they are answered for us by scientists of the U.S.Department of Agriculture. The first question, about horseradish, seems to indicate that homemakers are turning to home-grown seasonings more than ever in place of some of the tropical flavors and spices that cannot be shipped in war-time. And there's that "hardy perennial" - that question that comes up every so often - about the vitamins in different fruit juices, and a question on preventing canned foods from freezing.

Let's read the first letter: " We have a small bed of horseradish. Please tell us when to dig it, how to store it properly, and suggest a few ways to use horseradish on the table."

Plant scientists and home economists both have something to say about horse-radish. The plant scientists say not to harvest your horseradish until October. Then it can make a good growth this month. Three or four days before you dig the roots, cut off the tops as close to the ground as you can. You can put the roots in cold storage, or store them in pits with other vegetables. Otherwise, store them in the barn or cellar. In the barn, cover them with straw or something simila: to keep them from freezing. Down cellar keep them well veltilated and as cool as possible. Don't expose the roots to light, or they will turn green.

If you want to grow horseradish again next year, save any rootlets as thick as a pencil or your finger. Tie them in bundles and store in a box of damp sand in

the cellar. By the way, there's a government leaflet on production of horseradish, which gives further details. The number is 129-L.

To prepare horseradish for the table, first peel or scrape the roots and remove all defects. Then grate the root directly into white-wine vinegar or distilled vinegar of 4-1/2 to 5 percent strength. Don't use cider vinegar. It will make the horseradish turn dark very quickly. Bottle, and cork tightly as soon as possible after grating. The bottled horseradish will keep a few weeks, but it is better not to make up too much at a time. You can also dry horseradish, grind it to a powder, and put it in bottles in dry form.

As to ways of using the horseradish in seasoning: The home economists suggest adding a little to tomato catsup for such appetizers as crab or shrimp cocktail, clams or oysters on the half shell. Or just serve the grated horseradish with the raw shellfish. When you help yourself, don't overdo the amount - horseradish is pretty peppery.

Many people serve plain horseradish with pot roast or baked ham or any kind of fish. Others make a sour cream horseradish sauce for meat or fish. Perhaps you'd like a recipe. Whip 1 cup of sour cream until thick. Add 1/2 teaspoon salt, 2 teaspoons of sugar, and 6 or 8 tablespoons of grated horseradish.

And here's a cream salad dressing containing horseradish that goes particularly well with crisp cold shredded cabbage: Whip half a pint of double cream. Season with 4 tablespoons of lemon juice, 12 drops of tabasco or hot chili sauce if you have it, 1-1/2 teaspoons salt, 1 teaspoon sugar, a little scraped onion, and 3 tablespoons ground horseradish. Don't mix with the crisped shredded cabbage until serving time, and serve the salad very cold. This is attractive served in a hollowed-out head of red or curly green cabbage.

Next question: "I would like to know the relative value of orange juice, tomato juice, grapefruit juice and pineapple juice. Can I substitute one for

another in preparing meals for growing children?"

Nutritionists of the department have said many times that orange juice, grapefruit juice and tomato juice are very high in their vitamin C content. (It's often called ascorbic acid.) Oranges, grapefruit and tomatoes and their juices are richer in this vitamin than canned pineapple or pineapple juice. In any case, because of war-time shipping conditions, it is doubtful whether we shall find any pineapple products on the grocery shelves much longer.

About two-thirds of a cup of orange juice or grapefruit juice provides all the vitamin C needed for an adult for one day. The same quantity of tomato juice provides about half the daily requirement of the vitamin. The natural acidity of these fruit juices protects the vitamin C content, so all three of these juices whe canned are almost as rich in vitamin C as are the fresh juices. It has been estimated that it would take about 3 times as much pineapple juice as orange or grapefruit juice to meet the day's requirement for vitamin C. Straining the juices wastes vitamin C.

Now a question from a woman who expects to shut up her place in the country during the winter months. She wants to leave part of the canned fruits and vegetables she has put up from her Victory garden in the farm house, because she has very little storage space in the city. She asks "How can I keep my canned foods from freezing? They are all in glass."

Wrap each glass jar in newspaper and pack in sawdust or excelsior, the home economists say. Keep the barrel or box where you store the jars in a sunny room on the first or second floor, not in the cellar. This will protect them unless the cold is very severe.

And that brings us to the end of our program for today.

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