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U. S. Department of Agriculture
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Wednesday, June 23, 1937

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

I n 3 H h

Subject: "FURTHER NEWS FOR ~~FAMILY FOOD SHOPPERS.~~" Information from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, United States Department of Agriculture, and the Consumers' Counsel, Agricultural Adjustment Administration.

--ooOoo--

Our fortnightly tips for food-buyers are on the schedule today -- notes on probable supplies and price-trends of seasonal foods. (The Department of Agriculture's economists compile this information and the Consumers' Counsel in the Agricultural Adjustment Administration analyzes it and sends it out as a Consumers' Market Service.)

Today's report includes news of the fresh vegetables coming to market, of potatoes, seasonal fruits, meats, and poultry.

The fresh vegetable news should cheer the harassed shopper and so should the potato news. "Fresh vegetable prices have declined," says the report. The season and favorable growing weather have both increased market supplies, especially those from local sources. And local supplies will be even larger shortly. This year's crop of cabbage, green peas, lima and snap beans, cucumbers, beets, carrots, and cantaloups are all larger than last year's, so the report says, and the condition of most vegetable crops has improved.

With the Fourth of July just around the corner, you will probably be interested to know that watermelon shipments from Florida are increasing, and more shipments are expected from Georgia and the second early producing States during the latter part of June and through July. The amount of land planted to watermelons this season and the present condition of the crop both indicate that the markets will have more watermelons on sale this year than last.

The 1937 crop of California cantaloups also promises to be larger than the crop of '36. During the latter part of June and throughout July cantaloups will be coming in not only from California but also from the second early producing States.

The peak season for strawberries has passed, but the markets will still have a variety of berries during the rest of June and all during July. To make up for fewer strawberries on sale, blueberries, gooseberries, and currants are coming in. (A penny for your thoughts, listeners. My guess is that you are thinking of blueberry muffins, and gooseberry tarts, and currant jelly.)

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Fresh plums are already on the market and will continue coming in during July and August. But some varieties of plums will be coming in smaller quantities this summer than last.

As for pears, you can start eating Bartlett pears in July this summer and keep right on until October. At least the report says: "Bartlett pears are expected to move in early July, continuing throughout September."

If you are one of those people who believes in an apple a day, you won't need to worry for fear your routine will be disturbed. For new apples from California will begin coming into market in July before shipments of storage apples from last season have stopped. California Gravensteins are expected first of all the apples coming to market. Other apples look promising, too -- look like a much larger crop this year than last.

Although the peach crop this year is small in the 10 southern States that produce most of the market eating peaches, you won't need to go without peaches this season. The later producing States are expecting a peach crop more than 11 million bushels larger than last year's crop.

The news about citrus fruit prices does not sound very hopeful for the family pocketbook. The economists, who have their own special way of saying things, announce that "citrus fruit prices continue to strengthen." They say that the short supply of California Valencia oranges means relatively high prices during the remainder of the summer and early fall. As for grapefruit, shipments from Florida are fewer and smaller, as they usually are at this season, and prices have risen accordingly. And lemon prices -- they apparently are going up, too, before the end of the summer.

As you know, meat prices went up during May. Pork prices will probably continue going up for the next few months, but the large supplies of pork products in storage should help to offset this expected rise in price. Most grades of beef cattle will also probably average higher in price during the summer and fall months than during the summer and fall months of last year.

Because the usual seasonal drop in lamb prices is later this season than usual, it will probably be greater than average. The delayed marketing of early lambs combined with the marketing of late-crop lambs is likely to mean more lamb than usual on the market in the late summer and early fall.

Poultry prices apparently have reached their seasonal peak and will probably go down during the next 3 or 4 months. As for egg prices, they are near the low point for the year and are expected to advance from now to December.

That concludes the news of market supplies and probable price trends from the Consumers' Market Service.
