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# homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE



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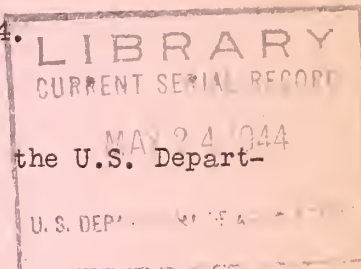
Thursday, May 25, 1944.

QUESTION BOX:

What is riboflavin?  
How use wild fruits?  
How care for lawn mower?

ANSWERS FROM:

Various scientists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture



---ooOoo---

Today we have a couple of food questions and a question on caring for lawn mowers. Nutritionists, soil conservationists, and farm machinery specialists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture all take a hand in the answers.

You may remember that we had a question about thiamine the other day, and learned that it is one of the B vitamins. Now we have a similar question, about another of the B vitamins. "What is riboflavin, and what is the correct way to pronounce this word?"

Nutritionists say "ry-bo-flay-vin" when they speak of this vitamin. Although it is one of the B vitamins, it is sometimes called vitamin G. Riboflavin is needed for health and normal growth. Many people get too little riboflavin for their needs.

Many common foods contain riboflavin in varying amounts. If you follow the "basic seven" foods in planning your menus, you are likely to get enough riboflavin.

Milk is the best all around source of this vitamin. Cheese, whey, and eggs are other important sources. Liver, kidney, heart and lean muscle meats all contain riboflavin, but dark meat is richer in riboflavin than white meat. The richest plant sources are the green leafy vegetables, but many fruits also supply some riboflavin. Fresh and dried legumes---that is, beans, peas and some of the soybeans---wheat germ and whole cereals, and enriched cereals---all add to the riboflavin supply.

Now for a question about wild berries and other wild fruits, which will



get ripe about the same time as "tame" or cultivated fruits of similiar kinds. "Could I use wild fruits for pies, stewed fruits and jellies the same as other fruits? We have sandcherries and buffalo berries, also wild plums and grapes."

By all means, gather these wild fruits and use them, as many farm families do. They will increase your food supplies with only the trouble of picking them--in fact, the children will probably pick them for you. They will also add variety and vitamins to your table. The North Dakota Agricultural Experiment Station, for example, reports that the buffalo berry is exceptionally rich in vitamin C. When made into jam, even the small amounts used as a spread contribute worth while amounts of this vitamin to the day's diet.

For several years past the Soil Conservation Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture has advocated planting fruit bearing shrubs for erosion control in gullies and using them to fill odd and irregular areas on farmlands that do not otherwise have any agricultural value. In the Northern Great Plains some of the fruit bearing wild shrubs that have proved hardy and yielded good crops of fruit are the American or wild plum, which you mention, the chokecherry, the western sandcherry, the buffalo berry--two others that you have--and the golden currant. All these species thrive well on different kinds of land, and in different ranges of temperature and climate, and they even do well where the rainfall is erratic or scanty.

The western sandcherry, as its name implies, prefers sandy soils, and is easy to grow. It makes wonderful jams, jellies, and a sirup to spread on hot cakes. Plant scientists are trying to improve the quality of the fruit. In North Dakota they report that the yellow and red sandcherries are less astringent or puckery than the purple black cherries.

Some farm families trade plums and chokecherries to their local stores for groceries. Homemakers who know what good preserves and sauces these fruits make are eager to get them.



In New England one of the favorite wild fruits is the blueberry. The New Hampshire Agricultural Experiment station made some tests of native blueberries, both the high-bush and the low-bush kinds. They found that although blueberry pies and muffins, and blueberry puddings are very popular, the wise homemaker will do best to serve most of her blueberries uncooked. Then they will supply a fair amount of vitamin C. But they are not one of the outstanding fruits for this vitamin.

Wild grapes, or "fox grapes" makes delicious jelly, as you probably know. Wild blackberries, black caps and raspberries all make good preserves similar to those made from the cultivated varieties. Of course you can stew any of these fruits or make pies of them or use them in other desserts, or eat them raw.

Cook or make jelly or jam of wild fruits just as you do with any fruits. Some of them may need slightly more sweetening for sauce, but tart fruits make the best jellies to go with meat or poultry. Most of them need from three-fourths of a cup to a cup of sugar to one cup of fruit juice.

We have one more question today. "Ought I to know anything special about caring for our lawn mower?"

Only to treat it with the greatest care. The farm machinery experts of the U.S. Department of Agriculture remind us you can't tell when you could replace it if anything happened to it while the war lasts. Keep it sharp, for your own good as well as the good of the machine. A sharp mower cuts easier and quicker. Usually it's enough to sharpen a lawn mower once a season. Keep the mower under cover when it's not in use. Oil it regularly, and keep it free of rust.

