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homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

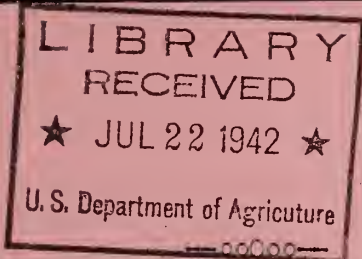
Thursday, July 23, 1942

ANSWERS FROM:

Poultry specialists, extension workers and home economists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture

QUESTION BOX:

How to prevent egg losses?
Salvage home wastes?
Change recipes for using enriched flour?



Preventing waste of every kind is the keynote of today's questions. First we have a question about saving eggs; then one about saving egg crates; and saving a number of other things. And by way of contrast, some questions on using enriched flour. Various specialists in the U. S. Department of Agriculture have answered these questions for us.

Here's a letter from a farm homemaker who writes: "I have read somewhere that at least an egg a day is wasted on farms and in poultry flocks all over the country. Can you suggest some of the ways that waste occurs, so that we can avoid it?"

The poultry specialists say that some of these eggs are lost by spoilage of fertile eggs. You can stop that by removing the roosters and producing only infertile eggs. Leaving eggs in the nest all day in hot weather or holding eggs in too warm a place causes spoilage. On the other hand lack of moisture in the room where you hold them causes the egg contents to shrink. Dirty eggs may contaminate other eggs if placed in the same case. Use them promptly at home if only a few or send them to market in a separate case. Of course, rough handling breaks a lot of eggs between the farm and the retail handler, due to bad packing. Allowing broody hens to set where layers can lay in the same nest is another common cause of spoiled eggs. Eggs spoil quickly in warm weather; they should be marketed at least 2 or 3 times a week.

Speaking of eggs brings up the next question, about egg crates and cartons. "Are dozen-size egg cartons worth saving? And egg crates? Please suggest other ways to save materials around the house in addition to metals, rubber, fats and newspapers."

Yes, there is a real shortage of egg crates, and undoubtedly those cardboard cartons in which eggs are sold could be used over again if you could return them to the person you get your eggs from. There is no special drive on egg cartons as yet, but both kinds are useful. Don't waste them.

And now we come to some questions that show the increased interest in enriched bread and flour. One woman wants to know if she can buy enriched flour, and if it is more expensive than other flours. The home economists say that enriched flour is sold in many places, and will be more widely distributed as people know it and ask for it. At present it costs a little more than ordinary flour, but its food value is greater.

Here's a second question: Do I have to change my bread and cake recipes when I use enriched flour?" The answer is: No, - not at all.

Another question often asked about enriched flour is whether or not using baking powder, which contains some soda, or soda and sour milk, affects the vitamin B₁ added to the flour? Nutritionists in Maine say that soda does destroy some of the vitamin B₁, so it is best to use no more than necessary. Baking powder may destroy up to one-fourth of the vitamin B₁ that has been added to enriched flour. But that leaves three-fourths of the vitamin B₁ value still there.

Some of the other things that are being salvaged are mentioned by extension workers of the Department. One is feathers - mostly chicken feathers. Both military and civil hospitals are creating an unprecedented demand for feathers for pillows, cushions, and mattresses. If you save your own feathers and make your own pillows and so on from them, you will be leaving the manufactured articles for hospital and barracks use; and there may come a time when you can help by selling the new, unused feathers you don't need right away.

Another item is nails. In Revolutionary days people saved their hand-forged nails very carefully. When a building burned down, someone organized a "nail party" to rake the nails out of the ashes and straighten them to use again. Wire nails are on the scarce list already, and farmers are salvaging old nails in boards and boxes

for the farm workshop. The kitchen might have a nail box, too. Make it with several partitions to sort the sizes as you drop them in and you won't have to hunt to find the nail you need in a hurry. Save bolts and screws, too. Give nails and screws a quick oil bath before you store them, to prevent rusting.

We used to smile at people who saved string, but the materials from which string is made are becoming scarcer every day. It's no laughing matter now to copy your grandmother and start a string box. But roll up each piece neatly and tie it so you can make use of it easily when you want it.

The family buttonbox isn't seen as often as it used to be. Cut buttons carefully from old garments and string the same kinds together. Or let the children do this for a rainy-day occupation. Sort white from dark or colored buttons, also save buckles and other fastenings. Many of them will be useful when you are remodeling clothing, and save you some pennies to put towards defense stamps.

Patchwork quilts are coming back, and an hour spent looking over your piece boxes may yield you some good strong scraps of pleasing color and pattern. The beauty about making quilt squares is that it's busy work for hands that like to be producing something even when just visiting or chatting or listening to the radio.

You can even save stubs of candles. Melt them together, pour the wax into individual jelly molds with bits of string for wicks. You can use them for a centerpiece, floating, lighted, in a shallow bowl of water. Candles of different colors can be kept separate, or blended together in a new color.

Of course it can't be emphasized too often that we homemakers take the best possible care of everything we now own in case we cannot replace what wears out.

The first part of the book is devoted to a general introduction and a survey of the history of the subject. The author then proceeds to a detailed study of the various aspects of the problem, and finally concludes with a summary of the results and a discussion of the implications.

The book is written in a clear and concise style, and is well illustrated with diagrams and examples. It is a valuable contribution to the literature on the subject, and is highly recommended for all those interested in the field.

The author's treatment of the subject is thorough and comprehensive, and his conclusions are well supported by the evidence. The book is a must-read for anyone who wants to understand the current state of the field and the challenges that lie ahead.

In conclusion, this book is a masterpiece of scholarship and a gem of modern literature. It is a work of great beauty and depth, and it is a pleasure to read it. I highly recommend it to all who are interested in the subject.