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# homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE



Thursday March 26, 1942

QUESTION BOX:

Value of liver and other meat organs?  
Tins for home canning?  
How fix home porch and use car less?  
Victory garden where Japanese beetles  
eat vegetables?

Answers From:

Scientists of the U. S.  
Department of Agriculture

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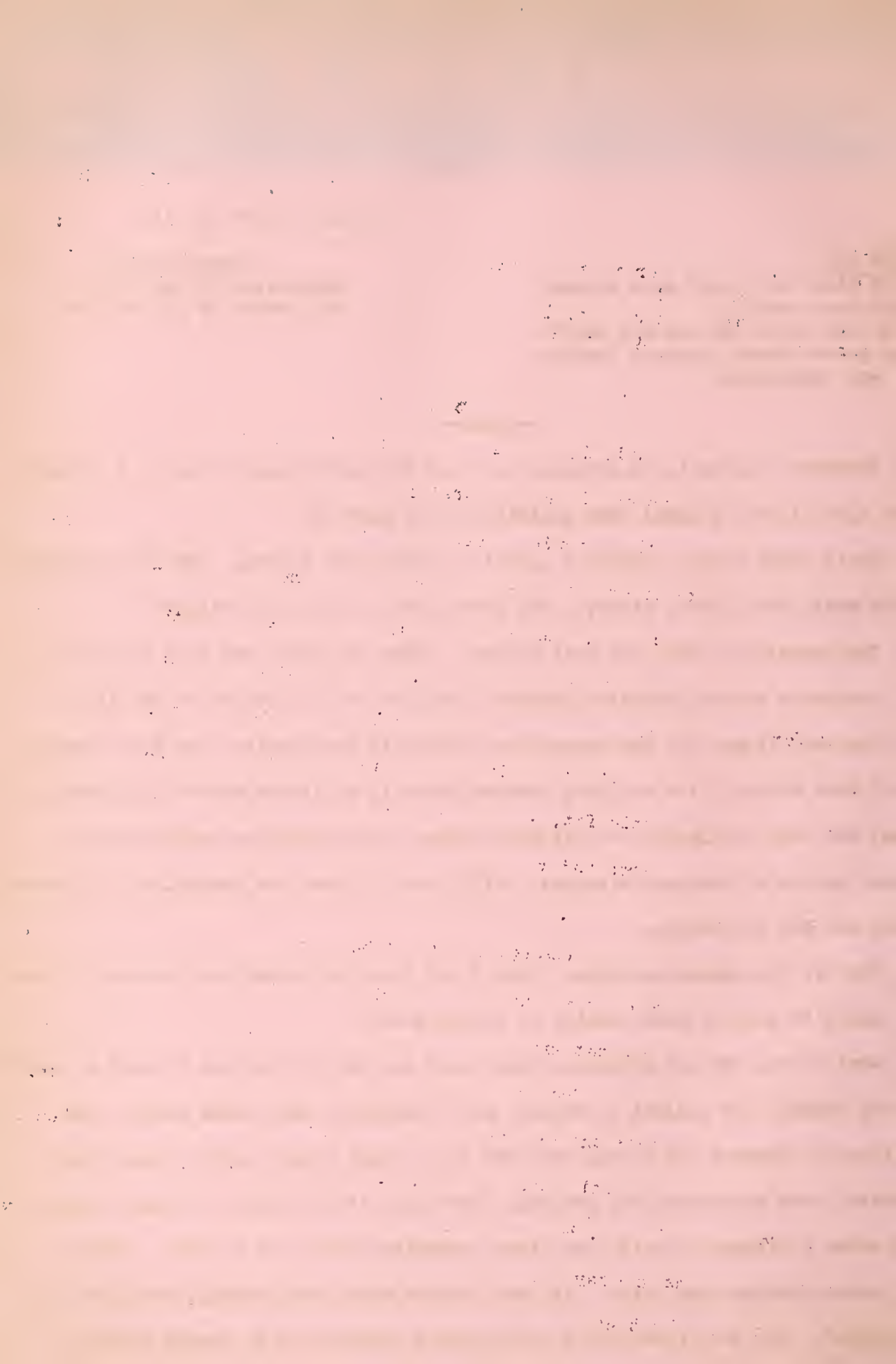
Thursday, as usual, is question day, and the scientists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture as usual have contributed the answers.

Let's begin with a couple of questions about meat organs. The first question is: "Do meats like liver, kidneys, and heart have unusual food value?"

The answer is: Yes, the meat organs. These are among the most nutritious of all the meats on the butcher's counter. And you can add brains to the list. Except for calf liver, all the organs are relatively inexpensive, and they furnish a lot of food value. It's not only because there is so little waste-- no bones, no gristle, and very little fat, -- but every ounce is good quality protein and an excellent source of iron and vitamins. All kinds of liver are particularly valuable for iron and the B vitamins.

Now for the second question: "Can I buy liver and other meat organs by grade or how can I be sure of good quality in buying them?"

Meat organs are not graded as other meat is, but if the meat crosses a State line, the animals are subject to Federal meat inspection for muscle meats. You might find out whether the organs you want to buy come from a packing house that has Federal meat inspection and grading. Look also at the color of these organs. Bright color in kidneys, heart, and liver generally means good quality. Fresh brains are a pinkish-gray color. All meat organs from young animals are plump and well-rounded. The best liver has a fine-grained texture and no coarse strings.



Don't cook tender liver and kidneys from young animals any longer than necessary. You can broil them under the flame or panbroil them, but cook only until the red color disappears. Beef kidney and beef liver are less tender and need longer cooking. Scald lamb and hog liver before you cook them to remove any strong flavor.

Here's a letter from a homemaker who's worried about canning supplies for her home canning this summer. "Is it true that we won't be able to get tin cans to put up our fruits and vegetables this summer?"

The War Production Board recently announced that can manufacturers may sell home canning type cans to hardware stores and others for resale to household users, so you don't need to worry. The Government hopes there will be plenty of home-produced food canned this summer.

And now comes a conservation question of another sort -- saving tires by making home an attractive place to stay. The letter says: "We should like to turn our porch into a sort of out-door living-room. Can you suggest how this could be done without costing too much?"

One of the extension workers of the Department answers this question. She says that the women in home demonstration clubs in one county of Virginia put on a "porch campaign" about 2 years ago which might give this writer lots of ideas. First, many club members decided that the outlook from the porch must be pleasant. So they set to work to clean up the surroundings thoroughly -- the yard, the flower-beds and other plantings, the walks, lawn, and driveway. Some of them planted more shrubbery, or vines to climb on the porch trellis and shade it.

Then they repaired porch steps, and floor boards, and did some painting where it was needed, or just freshened things up with soap and water and a scrubbing brush. Several women made bright colored rugs to scatter about, and decorated the house wall side of the porch with hanging baskets of ivy or plants, colorful gourds or bunches of colored corn, with pin-up lamps where they were needed.



Window boxes of flowers set on porch railings were used by several for decoration, or potted plants along the edge of the porch.

They mended porch furniture and many of them made fresh covers for the seats and backs of old chairs and cushions out of materials on hand or bought quite cheaply. They hunted up small odd tables and cut some of them down to go alongside of the easy chairs. A few shaded the porch with awnings or drop curtains to relieve glare or give privacy.

That's how one group of homemakers made porches into outdoor living rooms with little or no expense.

Our last question is about a common garden pest in many states. "How can we have a good Victory garden when Japanese beetles are such pests here and seem to eat everything?"

The entomologists say that among all the vegetables you might want to plant in your Victory garden, the only ones seriously in danger would be sweet corn and long-season beans such as bush and pole limas and other pole beans. The beetles also attack rhubarb and asparagus, but you probably won't plant these in a Victory garden because they take 2 years to get started. And you can plant some sweet corn late in the season. So if you don't plant beans in your garden, and put in only crops the beetles let alone, you'll still have quite a variety in your Victory garden. You could have cabbage, carrot, cauliflower, eggplant, lettuce, onion, parsley, peas, potatoes, radishes, spinach, squash, sweetpotato, tomato, and turnip. You can raise snap beans early and late in the season, before or after the period of beetle flight. And you can put in sweet corn after beetle season.

And, by the way, if you want to keep your garden free of Japanese beetles, don't forget that these pests destroy considerable ornamental planting and migrate easily from ornamentals to vegetables. They don't seem partial to evergreens, or to azalea, forsythia, deutzia, hydranges, weigelia, lilac, wisteria, privet, rhododendron, or spirea, so by using these ornamentals rather than plants the beetles like, you may be able to keep the pests out of your vegetable garden, too.

But don't plant cannas, dahlias, hollyhocks, marshmallows, rosemallows, or dark snapdragons, if you don't want the beetles to bother you.

And that answers our last question for today. More next week.

