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Thursday, August 28, 1941.

QUESTION BOX

How many fruit jars?
Why sulphur dried fruit?
Bias or straight-cut slips?

Answers From: Home economists and
plant scientists, U.S. De-
partment of Agriculture

--ooOoo--

Points on food preservation still come up to be settled by the scientists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Here's a canning question, and another on sulphur treatment for dried apples and peaches. A third letter-writer wants some information about slips. In case I forget to say so later on, the U. S. Department of Agriculture has bulletins on each of these subjects. But meantime I'll pass on the facts supplied by the specialists.

First letter: "We moved from the city to the country this spring. There are a number of things I need now and never had use for before. For example, I need cans or jars for putting up the fruit from 2 apple trees, 2 peach trees, a plum and a pear tree. I haven't the faintest idea how many jars I'll have to buy. Is there any way of figuring this?"

Yes, to a certain extent. If you have a large amount of any kind of fruit, you can go by the weight of the raw fruit. If you have only a very small quantity to can at one time, you can estimate according to the number of pieces of that kind of fruit it takes to fill a quart jar or a No. 3 can.

For example, it takes about 2 and one-half pounds of raw apples, peaches or pears to fill a quart jar or No. 3 can after the fruit is prepared for canning. Say you have a bushel of apples or a bushel of peaches. Weigh the fruit and divide by 2 and one-half. That gives you about the number of containers you need. It will probably be about 20 quart jars or No. 3 cans for a bushel of apples or pears and 13 or 14 for a bushel of peaches.

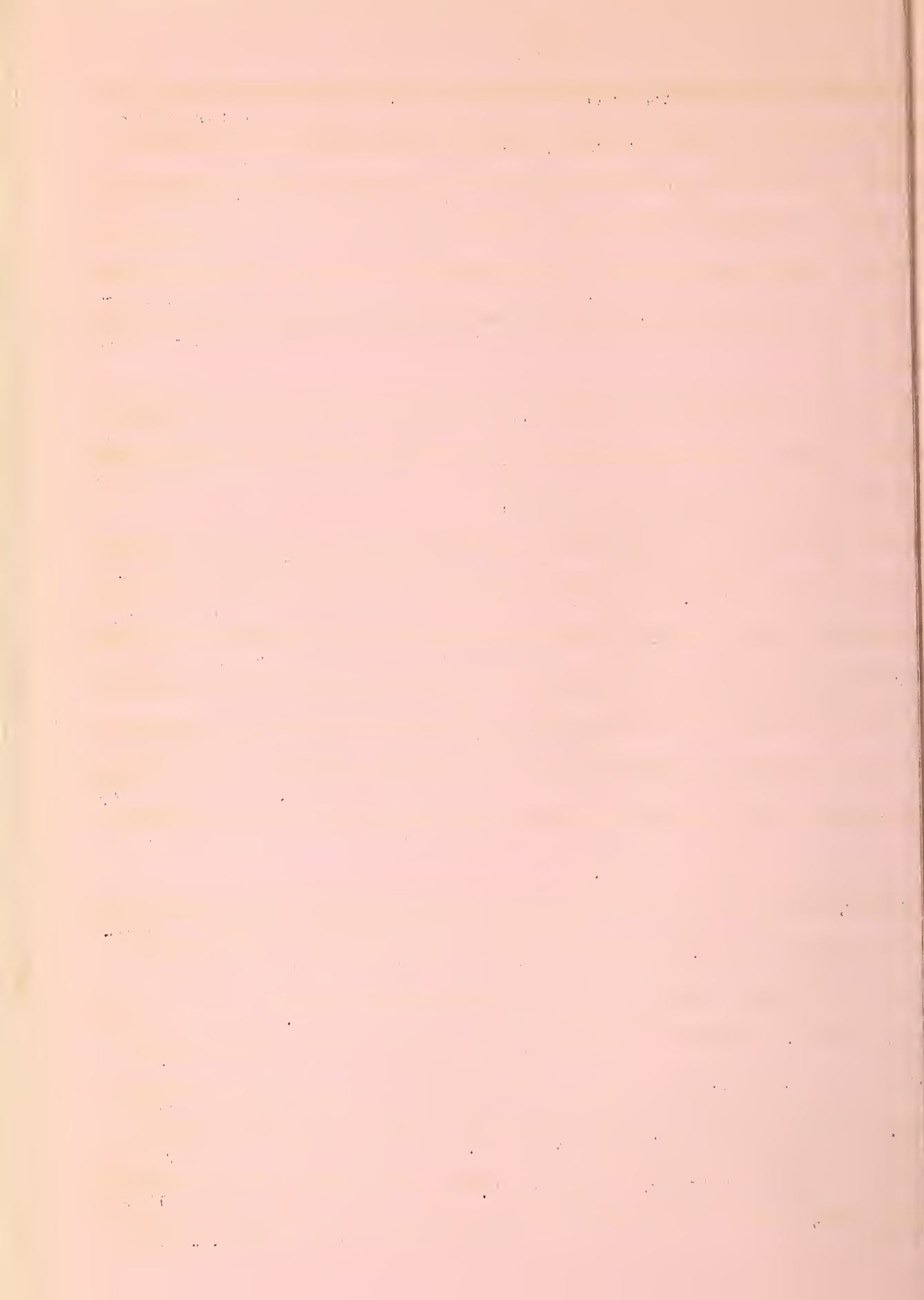
In the Government canning bulletin there's a table that shows how many of such fruits as apples, berries, cherries, peaches, pears, plums, and tomatoes it takes to fill one quart jar or one No. 3 can. This amount is given in pounds and in single units. The bulletin also has a table showing you how much canned vegetables you can expect a given amount of raw vegetables to yield. You can ask for this bulletin by number- Farmers' Bulletin 1762, or just say "Please send the canning bulletin."

The second letter-writer has heard that sulphured dried apples and peaches are harmful to health. She wants to know if this is true, and she also asks, "Why do manufacturers of dried apples use sulphur?"

The answer comes from a scientist of the Department of Agriculture who has made a special study of fruit. He says: "We often hear mistaken criticism of the sulphuring treatment used in drying apples, peaches, pears and apricots. But there isn't the slightest evidence of any injury to the health of people who have eaten sulphured fruits. Nearly all the sulphurous acid formed on the moist surfaces of the fruit is lost during the drying process and the storage period. If any of this acid still remains, ordinary cooking drives most of it off. The amount eaten is too small to have any effect on health.

"Moreover, scientists have recently found that sulphuring protects the vitamins of the fruit from destruction during drying. The vitamins of unsulphured fruit are almost totally destroyed by heating the fruit in a drier.

"One reason for sulphuring apples and other fruits is to preserve their natural color and flavor during drying. Another reason is to prevent the fruit from souring, and to protect it from insect attack. Anyone can easily sulphur fruit at home, but it is strictly an out-door job. All that you need is a shallow iron pan in which to burn the sulphur and a tight packing box to invert over the



pan and the fruit. Put a piece of oilcloth over the top to hold all the fumes of the sulphur inside for 20 or 30 minutes, as the box may have cracks. You don't have to sulphur dried fruits for home use, but if you intend to sell the dried fruit you need to sulphur it to make it look attractive.

"Before you dry much fruit, better send for Farmers' Bulletin 984-F on the subject. It is free. Just write to the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C."

Last comes a question on summer slips. "What is the best kind of slip to choose--straight-cut or bias-cut style? Which material is best for summer slips?"

One of the clothing specialists of the Department gives the answers to these questions in the bulletin on buying women's dresses and slips. She says, "Women's figures differ. A type of slip that fits one woman may not be right for another. Probably your daughter is slim. Women with slender figures like bias-cut slips because they fit smoothly and comfortably and have few seams. But they have to be cut on a true bias or they will twist, sag, and bind. Many women buy bias-cut slips too small because they stretch and do not feel uncomfortable. That's when the seams ripple and the slip hangs shorter at center back and front and rides up badly.

"Straight-cut slips usually fit stouter women much better than bias-cut slips. Since they stay down over the knees and do not cup under the hips, this type of slip is better under sheer summer dresses whether you're slender or stout.

"Very few slips hang evenly as you buy them. You may need to check the distance of the hemline from the floor just as you do when you buy a ready-made dress. Wear slips 3/4 to 1 inch shorter than your dress length so they won't show below the dress.

"As to what material makes the best summer slips,- that's partly a matter of personal preference. Cotton has its advantages. It's inexpensive and can be tubbed easily. If you choose a very smooth, highly mercerized cotton the material will not cling. But all these points are in the bulletin I mentioned--Farmers' Bulletin 1851, "Women's Dresses and Slips.----- "You might as well add this to your list when you send to the U. S. Department of Agriculture for the canning and drying bulletins.

That finishes the questions for today.

