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U. S. Department of Agriculture

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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Friday, August 24, 1934.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "Cottage Cheese Dishes." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

--ooOoo--

One of our friends has been complaining recently that the cottage cheese she makes doesn't have a good flavor. And she asks for some cottage-cheese advice over the air. Well, we're happy to oblige. Cottage cheese has the floor today. Let's start by bringing up this matter of flavor.

The specialists tell me that the little matter of whether the milk sours fast or slowly makes a great difference in the flavor of the cheese. Quickly soured milk gives by far the best flavor. In warm weather milk naturally turns quickly and easily, so this is one of the best times to feature cottage cheese in your meals. I can give you several good reasons for eating cottage cheese. It has all the values of the milk from which you made it. Cottage cheese ranks with meat as a high-protein food. And like milk, it is very valuable for the calcium it contains. But food value isn't the only reason for singing the praises of this home-made cheese. Another reason is that it is economical, a fine way to use up surplus milk or sour milk. Then, it's the easiest kind of cheese to make at home. And finally, it fits so well in so many different places on the menu.

Well, let's talk about making cottage cheese first. And then let's discuss the different ways to use it. Most people know how to make the cheese, but many of them don't know how to make it well or make the most of it. Making the cheese is just a matter of first heating the thick, freshly soured milk and then straining off the whey through a cloth bag. You heat the sour milk to separate the curds and whey. As the experts say, the heating "coagulates" the protein in the milk. Gentle heating makes the best cheese. Too much heat will harden the curds and make the cheese tough. You can heat the sour milk in one of two ways. You can put the milk in the upper part of the double boiler and heat it over hot water, or you can pour hot water into the sour milk. If you use the double boiler method, bring the water in the lower boiler just to the boiling point. Then remove the boiler from the flame but let the milk stand over the hot water covered with a cloth until it cools. Some people let it stand overnight

The next step is draining off the whey. You can pour the milk into a clean piece of cheesecloth, gather the cheesecloth into a bag and let the curd drain for twenty to thirty minutes. Or you can use a clean salt bag. Hang the bag of curds on a fruit drainer rack or on a hook and let it drip until the cheese is dry enough to suit your taste. Stop the draining when the whey stops dripping to avoid getting your cheese too dry.



Now, when you take the curd from the bag, work it with a spoon until it is fine in grain and smooth, much like mashed potatoes in consistency. Now add either sour or sweet cream to increase the smoothness and improve the flavor, Add salt to season. Most people like about 1 teaspoon of salt to 1 pound of curd.

For finest flavor, eat cottage cheese while it's fresh. If you must keep it a day or two, store it in a covered glass or china or earthenware container in the refrigerator.

Now about the many ways to use cottage cheese. Aside from using it plain, just seasoned with salt, you can combine it with other foods in both cold and cooked dishes. You see, cottage cheese is so mild in flavor that it will combine well with many different foods. It's generally "a good mixer."

Take salads, for example. Cottage cheese is popular in a large number of salads. You can mix it with chopped pimientos and green peppers or with diced cucumbers or celery or chopped raw carrots. You can also season it with salad dressing or with horse-radish or onion juice.

I can't think of a better stuffing than cottage cheese for salad fruits and vegetables. What looks more attractive on a hot day than a bright tomato filled with white cheese set on crisp green lettuce leaves? Or what could look more tempting than slices of green pepper stuffed with white cheese? Then, think of all the fruits that are good stuffed this way -- canned pears or peaches, dates or prunes, cherries or even pincapple slices.

The cheese-ball salad is generally popular. You can roll cheese balls in chopped parsley or chopped mint or watercress, if you want a green color. Or you can roll them in paprika, chopped nuts or grated cheddar cheese for a different flavor and appearance. Serve on a bed of crisp green leaves with mayonnaise dressing.

Cottage cheese is also a great favorite for sandwiches. The plain white cheese is good between slices of brown bread. A layer of cheese and then a layer of tart conserve makes a delicious sandwich filling. Cheese with chopped nuts, raisins, figs or dates makes another. So does cheese with chopped pickles or chopped olives or some home-made chutney.

Now about the cooked dishes with cottage cheese as an ingredient. Did you ever try lemon cheese pie? Did you ever try old Dutch cheese cake? Here are two excellent and different desserts. If you have a pencil handy, I'll be glad to give you the recipe for old Dutch cheese cake. You make it with cottage cheese and crumbs -- an economy recipe, you see, Eleven ingredients:

1/2 cup of fine toasted bread crumbs	1/4 cup top milk
1/2 cup sugar	3 tablespoons flour
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon	3/4 cup sugar
2 tablespoons melted butter	1/2 teaspoon salt, and
2 cups cottage cheese (1 pound)	Grated rind of 1 lemon.
3 eggs	

Once more, (REPEAT)

Make the bread crumbs from crisp oven-dried toast, crushed fine, and then sifted. Reserve 2 teaspoons of the crumbs for the top of the cake. Blend together thoroughly the remaining crumbs, sugar, cinnamon, and melted butter. Press the mixture in an even layer on the bottom and sides of a shallow baking pan or, better still, use a spring form. To the cottage cheese, add the well beaten eggs and remaining ingredients and mix thoroughly. Pour the cheese mixture carefully into the crumb-lined pan, and sprinkle the remaining crumbs over the top. Bake 50 to 60 minutes in a moderate oven (350 degrees F.) -- or until the cake is set. Let the cake stand until cold, and serve in wedge-shaped pieces.

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