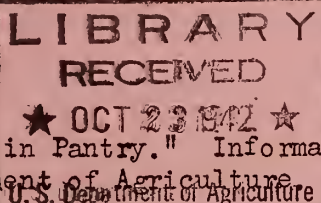


homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

Friday, October 9, 1942



Subject: "Blitzing Food Waste in Pantry." Information from home economists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture

We hear a lot these days about saboteurs....the men and women that work for enemy nations. But there are other kinds of saboteurs. Some are right in our own pantries, doing their own type of ruinous work - destroying food.

By saboteurs in the pantry, I mean insects, mold, dampness, mice, and all such food wasters. One effective way to defeat the pantry saboteurs is to store each type of food in the place it keeps best.

All through the year we have certain staple foods on hand. I have some suggestions today for storing these staples....suggestions from home economists, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Sugar and spice for instance, are doubly precious these days. To store well, they need clean, tight containers....the kind that keep out dust, moisture, insects, and mice.

If you open your cupboard door and get a spicy whiff of cinnamon or cloves, watch out! You can lose taste, along with fragrance, on the kitchen air. So keep your spices well-covered and in a cool place.

When you store flour, you want to keep out light as well as moisture, mice, bugs, and dust. The best place to put flour is in tight cans, jars, or bins. And remember to clean these containers well before you put in any new supplies.

Now for bread. One good way to store bread is to wrap it in paper that keeps out moisture and put it in the refrigerator. It keeps fresh longer this way....and, in humid weather, keeps from molding. However, any well-ventilated box is also a good storage place for your bread. And when you put away bread you bake at home, be

sure it's completely cool before you store it.

Cake is another food that needs to be thoroughly cool before you put it away.

Cake needs its own well-covered box too - a ventilated box if the climate is humid.

To keep away mold from both bread and cake containers, keep them spotlessly clean.

That means - scald, air, and sun them regularly.

If you want crackers and crisp cookies to keep their crispness, don't put them in with bread or cake. They soften if you do. Instead, give them clean air-tight tins or boxes to themselves. And you might take a look at that cookie jar - see if its top fits tight.

There should be plenty of canned food in many homes this winter, considering the success of Victory Gardens. A recent survey showed that American homemakers planned to put up over 3 billion jars of food in 1942. That's about 50 percent more in this war year than they put up normally in peacetime.

But, whether you have shelves full of canned goods or just a few jars, you can't afford to lose one jar. So here's how to store them safely.

If you have food canned in glass keep it in a cool, dark place. Keep it dark because darkness helps hold color and vitamins. As for tinned goods, keep them dry to prevent cans from rusting. Rust may eat through metal and cause the food inside the can to spoil.

Maybe you've home-dried some of the fruits and vegetables from your Victory Garden. If so, put the dried Victory foods in tight, moistureproof containers and store them where it's cool, dark, and dry. And make it a point to look them over once in awhile just as extra precaution.

Quick-frozen foods need a place in the freezing compartment of a mechanical refrigerator - and there they must stay, until used. You have to keep them frozen solidly. And don't keep them too long, at that. Remember, too, that once they're thawed frozen foods spoil quickly. Do not refreeze them.

Butter and cheese are two more foods to keep cold. They should be well covered also. If not covered, butter takes up odors from other foods. And cheese has a chance to share its strong odor with other foods around it.

If you have cottage or other soft cheese on hand, plan to use it quickly. You can keep hard, cured cheese longer. Wrap it well and store in a cold place.

The last food on the list today is fats. You've probably some fats on hand that you want to use again, as well as some new or unused kinds. Well, new or used fats keep best if you store them in clean, tightly covered jars or tins and put them in a cool, dark place. Of course, the fats you save to use again need straining before you put them away.

We've covered quite a few staple foods today. Every one of them can fall victim to food waste if it doesn't get proper care. So guard them from saboteurs of the pantry - keep a watchful eye and see if it doesn't help "blitz" food waste in your home.

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