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Monday, November 7, 1932

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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHEAT

FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY

Subject: "Lentils and Other Thrifty Legumes". Information approved by the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. D. A.

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Do you remember the story of Esau and how he sold his birthright for a mess of pottage? That pottage was very likely made of lentils, and Esau may not have been as foolish as he has always been considered, for a steaming dish of lentils, well cooked and seasoned, or a bowl of good lentil soup would be hard for anyone to turn down, especially a hungry man. Lentils are as old as history, and are very popular today in both Germany and France, yet they aren't a common food in this country. Lentils are about the size of a pea, but a flat disk instead of just round in shape, and brown instead of green. They taste very much like dried peas, and you serve them in much the same way -- as a vegetable and in soups and stews. Like peas and beans they're a good main-dish food for they contain both starch and protein. You can buy dried lentils just as you can buy dried peas and beans at the grocery store, in spite of the fact that most of them are raised in Egypt at the present time. Best of all, they're low in cost. The Germans use great quantities of lentils not only as a vegetable, but also made into meal and flour.

As you have probably already guessed by this time, we're going to have lentils for our dinner today. Here's the menu, as the Menu Specialist has planned it. Savory lentils; Crisp bacon; Grated raw carrot salad on lettuce; Cornbread sticks; and, for dessert, Steamed apricot pudding.

Now, if you have your pencils ready, I am ready with a recipe for savory lentils. You'll need six ingredients. Here they are:

2 cups of dried lentils	1 large onion, chopped fine
1 quart of cold water	1/2 cup of olive oil or bacon fat
2 teaspoons of salt	Few drops of tabasco sauce.

Once more I'll go over that list of six ingredients. (Repeat.)

First, pick over the dried lentils and wash them thoroughly. Now add the quart of cold water and soak them over night. If the water is dark and strong flavored in the morning, discard it and add a quart of fresh water and the salt. Now simmer the lentils in a covered kettle from 30 to 40 minutes--or until they are tender but not broken. Drain the lentils and return one cup of the liquid to them--or, if necessary, add enough water to the liquid to make one cup. Cook the onion for a few minutes in the olive oil or bacon fat. Add the lentils and cook them for about 15 minutes. Stir gently so that the lentils won't break. Add a few drops of tabasco sauce and more salt if needed. Serve piping hot.

Lentils belong to a very interesting family--the legume family. Some of its other members are peas, beans, peanuts, (the pulse of Biblical times), the curious tamarind of the East Indies, clover, alfalfa and lespedeza, a forage crop.

One of the reasons why this family is so useful is that its members enrich the soil in which they grow instead of exhausting it as most other plants do.

Besides lentils, two other legumes, often neglected, which are inexpensive and nutritious are soy beans and cow or field peas. In this country both of these excellent foods are grown chiefly as cover crops or as feed for livestock. The soybean in its native Orient ranks next to rice as a food crop, and, because of its high protein value, is the Oriental substitute for meat. The cow pea, common in the Southern part of the United States, we grow chiefly for forage and soil enrichment, but it makes a delicious food, served just as other beans and peas are served. One variety, the black-eyed pea, we often grow for the market. So, you see, the soybean and the cow pea both furnish valuable food which is very cheap in the districts where these crops grow.

The soybean is so rich in high-quality protein and contains so much fat that Oriental peoples make substitutes for milk and cheese from the ground bean. It is also rich in calcium and iron and has a considerable vitamin content, especially vitamin B. Soybeans contain so little starch, that you can use them in the same meal with rice, hominy, potatoes, or other starchy food.

You can prepare dried soybeans in much the same way as you do navy or other dried beans, but you'll find that soybeans require longer soaking and much longer cooking than our common varieties of beans. In general, dried soybeans need soaking for 24 hours and cooking for at least two hours, but the time, naturally, depends partly on how dry the bean is and its variety. As a rule, simmering is better than rapid boiling. And by the way, since these beans are very rich in fat they don't really require extra fat in cooking, but some people like to add a little meat fat or butter for flavor.

Soybean sprouts make a good green salad for winter. You can sprout the beans right in the kitchen. First soak them overnight. Then put them in a strainer or collander and keep them covered and in a warm place. Flood them with warm water four or five times a day. The sprouts will appear in four to six days. They are very good to eat when they are about an inch long.

Tomorrow: "How Farm Homemakers Spend Their Time."

