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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

THURSDAY, May 2, 1940.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS." Information from the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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Another question and answer day, with letters on all sorts of subjects from summer curtains to rhubarb conserve. Suppose we take the last subject first. I'm sure a number of our listeners today, like this correspondent, have some rhubarb growing out in the garden, and would like to capture part of its fine, tart flavor for later use. Here's the letter:

"Can you tell me how to make a thick preserve out of rhubarb, to serve with meat? The one I once tasted had nuts in it, I think, and some orange peel."

Probably what this writer has in mind is rhubarb conserve, and very appetizing it is. The Bureau of Home Economics gives these directions for making it. "Select young, tender rhubarb. Then wash, drain, and weigh it. To each pound of rhubarb allow 2 pounds of sugar.....an orange.....a couple of lemons.....a cup of blanched almonds. Cut the rhubarb into small pieces, without removing the skin. Remove the peel from the orange and the lemons, parboil it for 5 minutes in 1 cup of water, and then drain. Discard the seeds from the orange and the lemons and chop the pulp and parboiled skins fine. Chop the blanched almonds fine.

"Now combine rhubarb, sugar, chopped orange and lemon. Heat the mixture slowly until the sugar dissolves. Then boil rapidly, stirring constantly, until somewhat thick. Add the chopped nuts. Pour at once into hot sterilized jelly glasses or into glass jars and seal."

This makes a fine sweet relish to serve with roast meats and poultry. And



those who have more rhubarb on hand than they wish to make into conserve might try making a strawberry and rhubarb jam, using equal parts of each fruit. And don't forget that rhubarb is one of the easiest fruits to can, because of its acidity. You just boil it in a heavy sirup, and after packing hot in glass jars, process for 5 minutes in a hot-water bath. Some people, by the way, bake their rhubarb for canning. They mix one-fourth as much sugar by measure with small pieces of rhubarb. Bake in a covered dish until tender, and can in the usual way.

The next question is about a cleaning material. This woman writes: "I have heard recently of using a chemical in cleaning called trisodium phosphate or something like that. Is it a good cleaner, and is it safe to use, or will it injure anything?"

In the new housecleaning bulletin, published by the Department of Agriculture No. 1834-F, House-Cleaning Management and Methods, the Bureau of Home Economics mentions trisodium phosphate. I'll quote: "Trisodium phosphate is a moderately strong alkaline salt and one of the most effective in its cleansing action. It is seldom sold by its chemical name, and it is well to ask grocers who carry cleansing agents to find out which contains trisodium phosphate. When bought in drug stores or chemical supply houses it may be more expensive. A half tablespoon to a gallon of water generally is enough to remove any dirt that cannot be loosened with mild soap and water alone. A larger amount will injure surfaces on which it is used. Trisodium phosphate in strong, hot solutions is used as a paint remover."

Here's another kind of cleaning question about laundering marquisette curtains. "What is the best way to wash marquisette curtains?" this writer asks. And the answer is, "Make a good suds with neutral soap and lukewarm water. Put the curtains in a pillow-slip or net bag, not more than two pairs at a time. Before putting them into the warm suds, soak them in cool water for at least 10 minutes.



Hot water would set the dirt. Rinse in at least three rinse waters at lukewarm temperature. Add a little starch to the last water.

"Then, instead of hanging out the marquisette curtains, roll them up in a towel and iron them while still damp. If you put them on curtain stretchers with pins, the edges will dry in scallops. If you hang them up at the window and put a curtain rod in the bottom, as in drying some kinds of curtains, the marquisette may shrink too much crosswise."

The next letter is from a lady who has heard about the new types of cotton hose. "When are we going to be able to buy the cotton hose designed by the Bureau of Home Economics?" she asks. The Bureau has already designed and released to the trade over 50 types of full-fashioned cotton hose. One of these designs has now been manufactured commercially, and will soon be in retail stores. It is for a full-fashioned mesh hose made of American grown cotton. Our last query is about milk. This writer has heard that heating milk destroys some of its food value. "Is this true?" she wants to know. "And if so, is it serious?"

Heat may make some chemical changes in milk. But if people have a well-balanced diet, supplying plenty of vitamins, they don't need to worry about the effect of heat on the vitamins in milk. The heat used in cooking, boiling, pasteurizing, drying, or canning milk, has no appreciable effect on vitamins A and C. These are the two vitamins in which whole milk is especially rich. Any other change or loss is slight.

Well, that seems to finish up today's questions. More next week.

