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# homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE

Thursday, August 14, 1941.

## QUESTION BOX

How cook hominy grits?  
Can I make preserves with  
honey?  
How select outing flannel?

Answers from: Home Econo-  
mists of the U. S. Department  
of Agriculture

--ooOoo--

Today's question box reflects the efforts of thrifty homemakers toward real economy. Hominy grits,-- honey in preserving,-- and outing flannel-- are the subjects on which information is wanted. And home economists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture have obliged with the answers.

Here's a woman who has heard that hominy grits are inexpensive just now.

"But," she writes, "my family don't like hominy grits, the way I cook them. We used to think 'hog 'n hominy' was pretty good eating when I was younger. Maybe I don't cook these grits right to make them tasty. The kind of hominy we used to have was what my mother called 'lye hominy'-- like white kernels of corn."

Hominy grits is just one form of hominy that is made from corn. When the corn is hulled by machinery and then dried, it is called "pearl hominy" or samp. When this large hominy is coarsely ground it is called hominy grits. It doesn't take so long to cook grits as to cook whole hominy, but still you have to give it plenty of time. The lye hominy your mother made was similar to samp except that she used lye instead of machinery to get the hulls off, then washed and boiled the grains.

Any form of hominy is good to serve with almost any meat, much as rice is served. You can also use it for a breakfast cereal. The principal points about making hominy grits taste good are: to use enough water, enough salt, and cook long enough to get rid of the uncooked starchy flavor. Then season it well with some savory fat or meat gravy.



For cooking grits you need five cups of water to one cup of dry grits, and two teaspoonfuls of salt. Add the grits very slowly to the boiling salted water. Boil 10 minutes over a low gas flame or on top of the range, stirring constantly at first so the grits won't lump or stick to the bottom of the pan. When the whole mass is evenly thickened you can set the pan in the lower half of the double boiler and continue cooking for 2 hours. Or cook directly over the simmer burner for at least one hour, stirring frequently.

And if your family likes fried cereals, try fried grits. Mold some of the cooked grits in a bread pan or baking powder can. When cold, slice about half an inch thick, dip in flour, and fry to a delicate brown. Serve as a dinner vegetable, or as a simple dessert with sirup or jam, or as a breakfast dish with bacon. In frying sliced cereals, you don't need a great deal of fat, but always have your fat hot enough to form a crust quickly. Complete the cooking on one side before you turn the piece over. If you turn the slices back and forth they will be greasy and will not brown attractively.

Jam-making suggests the problem in our next letter. "Can I use honey instead of sugar in making jam and other preserves? I understand that some of the delicate imported preserves, such as 'bar-le-duc' are made with honey."

The jelly specialist of the Department says you can substitute delicate flavored honey for half the sugar in making jellies and jams, and also in other preserves and conserves. If you use any more than half honey you may cover up the individual fruit flavor and also change the color and thickness of your product. Some honeys are much stronger in flavor than others, depending on the flowers from which the bees gather nectar. As a rule the light-colored honeys are mild and the darkest generally have a strong flavor.

It's best to make preserves of strong-flavored juices that are high in pectin and acid, if you're using honey. And remember that honey will cause the fruit





juice to foam as it cooks. So watch your pan while cooking jelly and jam with part honey, or cook it in a large enough pan to keep it from boiling over.

Our last letter is about buying outing flannel. "Please tell me if there are any guides for buying outing flannel? I use quite a lot of this material in the court of a year-- sometimes 30 or 40 yards. We use it for winter bed-sheets, and put them on for summer blankets; we also make all our own pajamas and night-dresses of outing flannel, and baby wrappers. There seems to be a good deal of difference in the quality of the outing flannel I find in the stores."

Up to the present time outing flannel is not among the fabrics having definite label requirements. The Bureau of Home Economics has done some research on outing flannel and suggested some facts which might well be given on labels to help buyers. If you need an outing flannel with a good deal of strength and weight, get a twill. That's the kind for summer blankets and winter sheets. For infants' wear and night wear-- pajamas and night dresses, plain light weight outing flannel will serve your purpose.

Get preshrunk material if you can, because all outing flannels shrink considerably in laundering. If you can't find any already shrunk, buy the yardage you need, and a little extra, and launder it yourself. This will preshrink it before you start cutting any garments from it.

If the color is not guaranteed fast to both light and laundering, or carries no label indication it has been vat-dyed, it may fade badly. Maybe if you want some color you could buy white outing flannel and trim it with colorfast binding or braid.

And later if the facts developed by the Bureau of Home Economics should be adopted by the trade, then we can buy outing flannel by weight per yard, yarn count, breaking strength, and percent of shrinkage we can expect. That's the way we buy broadcloth shirting and some other goods now.

