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homemakers' chat
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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

QUESTION BOX

:How to wash cotton corduroy? :
:Boned loin lamb roast? :
:Baking with honey? :
:How to make dumplings? :

Thursday, October 9, 1941

Answers from:
Home economists and meat specialists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. (Free Leaflets: No. 74, Boning Lamb Cuts, and No. 113, Honey and Some of Its Uses.)

One laundering problem and several food questions come up in the mailbag today. The answers come from home economists and meat specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

First, the laundering problem. "Can I wash a fall suit made of cotton Corduroy?"

"Yes", the home economists say. Cotton corduroy isn't hard to launder, but your suit will look better if you follow some special directions. Wash the corduroy suit in moderately warm water with plenty of suds made from a neutral soap. Never use a strong soap or a bleaching agent in the water. Don't put other garments in the tub at the same time. The corduroy may be colorfast,-- and then again, it may not be. Wash the suit before it gets very dirty.

Squeeze the suds through the garments but don't rub and rinse in 2 or 3 more waters. Press out all the water you can after each rinsing, but don't wring or twist. Marks from wringing or twisting will show when the suit is dry. Hang the skirt and coat up on hangers so that the water drains down with the nap. While the suit is still slightly damp, pull each piece into shape and brush it along the direction of the ribs. If necessary, press the seams, pockets and the collar of the coat to give a tailored look. Brush the ironed parts again, lightly to raise the nap.

A birthday dinner for her husband is our next writer's problem. "I'd like to have something a little out of the ordinary for my husband's birthday dinner

next month," she says. "With Thanksgiving so near, I don't want poultry. What can you suggest?"

How about an extra special roast of lamb? A boned saddle or loin. This cut is seldom served in the form of a roast because the meat is so tender you can cook it quickly in the form of chops. But when you take out the bones, and roll the meat and roast it, it is equally delicious, and as easy to slice as a loaf of bread.

If you're having company on your husband's birthday, you may need the whole "saddle" or both sides of the loin. For a small family one side will probably be enough. The dealer is usually willing to bone any cut of lamb for roasting if he knows how you want it. Or you can bone it yourself. At least have the dealer remove the fell-- that thin, papery layer of fat that covers the outside of the meat.

For boning you'll need a thin, sharp, pointed knife. The U. S. Department of Agriculture explains that the bone in the loin is like a series of double T-bones, with the backbone at the top of each T. Place the loin on the table fat side down. Slip the knife under the tenderloin muscle and roll it back. Separate each bony projection from the meat without cutting through the outside layer of fat. You can stuff the boned loin if you like. A mint stuffing goes well with lamb.

Roll the edges of the fat cover underneath toward the center, and sew them together, or skewer them in place, or tie the roll in several places. Wipe the outside of the roll, sprinkle it with salt and pepper and dust with flour. Place on a rack in an open pan without water. Sear in a hot oven- 480 Degrees Fahrenheit-- for 30 minutes. Reduce the temperature to 300 degrees and cook until the meat is done. A saddle weighing 6 to 7 pounds takes 2-1/2 to 3 hours.

Next letter. "Can I use honey in cooking the same as sugar?"

Yes and no, the home economists say. It all depends. When you want to make a fruit cake, or a steamed pudding or any kind of cookie or candy intended to stay moist as long as possible, you can use honey in place of part of the sugar. But if you are making a frosting or a confection or cookies that you like crisp, don't use honey, Honey contains some moisture and tends to absorb more moisture from the air. That makes baked things stay soft.

Another point about using honey: In gingerbread, brown bread, and steamed pudding you can replace the molasses with honey, measure for measure, but with this difference, honey contains less acid than molasses. So leave out the soda called for and increase the quantity of baking powder. Add 1 teaspoon of baking powder for each quarter teaspoon of soda you omit.

There are several other points about substituting honey for sugar in baking. For example, some honeys are thicker than others. Perhaps you'd like to write to the U.S.Department of Agriculture, Washington, for a copy of the "Honey leaflet", Number 113, that gives full directions for baking with honey.

Last question. "When I make fricassed chicken with dumplings, the dumplings are soggy. Please tell me why?"

Probably your dumplings are soggy because you lift the lid of the saucepan before they're done. Here's the way the home economists suggest: Have your chicken gravy ready in a broad-bottomed saucepan with a tight-fitting lid. For the dumpling batter, sift together 3/4 cup of flour....2-1/2 teaspoons of baking powder....and 1/2 teaspoon of salt. Beat an egg without separating, and add one-third of a cup of milk to it. Mix with the dry ingredients, and drop by spoonfuls into the boiling chicken gravy. Cover tightly and cook for 15 minutes without one peek.

Lift the dumplings out with a skimmer.

No more questions today. We'll be back with others next Tuesday.

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