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homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE



Thursday, November 2, 1944

QUESTION BOX

1-3112
canning without sugar?
sugar situation?
vitamins in brown rice?

ANSWERS FROM: Nutrition experts, and
Home economists, distribution officials
of the U. S. Department of Agriculture

Once again it's time for our homemakers' question box. For the answers, we turn to specialists in the United States Department of Agriculture.

Today, I'm going to begin with a question a lot of you have asked, It's about canning without sugar. Like this letter from a homemaker in an apple growing section.

She says, "I had to finish canning the fall apples without sugar because we'd used our sugar allotment. Can I be fairly certain that they'll keep?"

Yes, food specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture say if you followed recommended canning practices, your apples will keep, even though they were canned without sugar.

Our grandmothers used to can a lot of their fruit without sugar. Not because there was a shortage of sugar but as a matter of economy. They added the sugar to the fruit as they needed it later.

You see, a little sugar helps canned fruits hold their color and flavor. But you don't have to put sugar in canned apples to keep them from spoiling. And the apples you've put up without sugar will make mighty good pies and Brown Betty and just plain apple sause when you have more sugar available.

As you probably know, the usual wartime canning recipes allow about a pound of sugar to 4 quarts of finished fruit. You can get by on this allowance and put up quite a lot of fruit with sugar if you use a thin or moderately thin sirup.

Or you can stretch your sugar supply by using honey or corn sirup in the place of sugar. If you use honey, count on replacing half as much sugar as the recipe

calls for with honey. And if you use corn sirup, you can replace as much as a third of the sugar. Food specialists don't recommend brown sugar for canning.

Have you been wondering about the sugar situation? Just how much is available and when we'll get some more?

Well, War Food Administration officials tell us the sugar situation will improve toward the end of the year. For onething, most of you homemakers have finished your canning. Won't be asking for any more canning sugar. Then too, supplies from the 1944 crops of both cane and beet sugar will soon be on the markets.

There's been a "shortage situation" of sugar. War Food Administration officials say this hasn't been due to a shortage of raw sugar. Rather it was caused by a manpower shortage at the sugar refineries. The refineries just weren't able to refine and distribute sugar fast enough to meet the peak demand that came during the canning season.

So that's the reason a lot of you home canners had to put up fruit this fall without sugar. Don't worry. Your fruit'll keep if you followed recommended canning practices.

And the War Food Administration people tell us there'll be enough sugar for us to get the same allowance we've been rationed in the past. Five pounds of sugar to each of us every two and a half months.

Our next question is from a homemaker who says, "I've been told that brown rice has more vitamins than polished white rice. Is this true? If so, why don't people eat more brown rice?"

We'll take up these questions one at a time. First, as to the vitamins in brown rice. Studies made by scientists in the agricultural experiment stations of Louisiana and Arkansas show that rice, like wheat, loses some of its vitamins when it's milled.

You see, the vitamins of cereal grains are largely concentrated in the outer layers. In the bran and germ portions of the outer layers. And when the grain's

milled, these outer layers are removed. That means the loss of the B vitamins. In rice, it means something like 65 to 85 per cent of thiamine, riboflavin and niacin.

These B vitamins promote growth. Thiamine is needed for the body tissues to make proper use of carbohydrates. And for the proper working of the heart, nerves and muscles. Riboflavin and niacin are important in the health of the skin and nervous system.

And now for your other question. Why don't people eat more brown rice? Well, it's probably a matter of habit. We've accustomed to eating white rice just as we're accustomed to eating white flour. Brown rice takes a little longer to cook than white rice. Brown rice doesn't keep so well as white rice. It get as rancid. However, brown rice does have a higher vitamin content than white rice. Most large grocery stores carry small stocks of brown rice.

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