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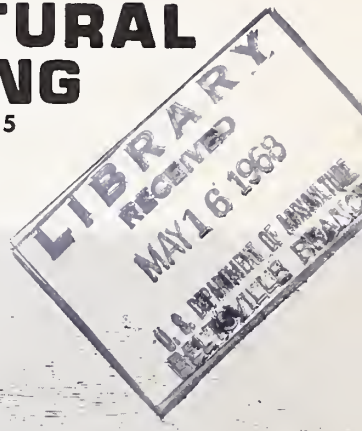
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AGRICULTURAL MARKETING

MAY 1968 — Volume 13, No. 5



HOW THE CATTLE BOOM CAME BACK TO KANSAS



C&MS Personnel Spotlight on Poultry Inspector

THE OBJECT OF poultry processing is to convert the live bird into ready-to-cook poultry or poultry convenience food—refrigerated, packaged, labeled, and ready to ship. The object of the Federal Poultry Products Inspection Program is to assure American consumers that federally inspected poultry is wholesome—safe, sanitary, unadulterated, and truthfully labeled.

Carrying out this vital assurance program are men like Dr. Slade H. Exley Jr., inspector-in-charge at a poultry processing plant in Atlanta, Georgia. As part of the team of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service, which administers the Federal inspection program, Dr. Exley and his staff of eight inspectors at the plant examine each of some 85,000 birds processed there each day.

The Poultry Products Inspection Act of 1957, which requires Federal inspection of all poultry which moves across State lines, compels the Federal inspector to be a man of many faces.

He must examine the poultry before slaughter and each bird indi-

vidually after slaughter to detect, isolate, and condemn diseased birds as unfit for human food.

He works in a plant which has had its equipment and facilities ap-



Dr. Exley examines poultry after slaughter.

proved by USDA to assure that they can be adequately cleaned and kept sanitary. The inspector must make sure that the plant operates in a clean and sanitary manner.

He must know and check the processing techniques and the formulas a plant uses if it further processes poultry into convenience foods. This assures that the poultry product is not adulterated.

He must make sure that the product bears the truthful, informative, USDA-approved label and that it is packaged in an approved material.

Last year, Federal inspectors like Dr. Exley assured consumers of the wholesomeness of nearly 11 billion pounds of poultry slaughtered and processed in the U.S. under Federal inspection.

Dr. Exley is one of those who make the circular inspection mark with the words "Inspected for Wholesomeness by the U.S. Department of Agriculture" a guarantee of safety.

"I feel that it's a very important career for a veterinarian," he says. (So did his father, now retired, who was a USDA meat inspector). "The work is satisfying, and I'm happy with the end result," he continues.

Others are, too. Dr. Exley has twice received the USDA Certificate of Merit.

COVER STORY

The fabled cattle ranges of western Kansas have given way to modern, scientific, factory-like cattle operations—and C&MS' livestock market news service in Dodge City reflects the changes. See page 7.



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Pilot Market News Reports on Cut Flowers

This experimental service in California is providing the first Federal-State market information for the cut flower industry and is receiving wide interest.

By Arthur E. Browne

GROWERS, SHIPPERS, wholesale receivers, and retailers of cut flowers throughout the United States are showing exceptional interest in the experimental market news reporting on cut flowers started in San Francisco, Calif., last December. Requests for the reports have come from every State except Vermont. Firms in 25 foreign countries, including such widely scattered ones as Finland, Greece, South Africa, and Australia have also asked for these reports.

The pilot market news project was undertaken by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at the request of the floriculture industry. This industry, with retail sales of over \$1 billion annually, had first requested

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a feasibility survey of a market news service on cut flowers. The promising results of this survey led to the pilot project. Funds for the survey and the project were provided by the floriculture industry through the Florists' Transworld Delivery Association.

The pilot market news service, which covers both production area and wholesale market sales of cut flowers, is operated by the Fruit and Vegetable Division of USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service in cooperation with the California Department of Agriculture.

Production area sales of cut flowers are of particular interest to producers, shippers, wholesalers, and retailers throughout the country. Information on market conditions and prices helps growers and marketers of cut flowers in their daily marketing decisions. The pilot service provides daily reports on prices and market conditions for roses, carnations, standard chrysanthe-

mums, and pompons sold by producers and shippers in the central coastal counties of California. These are four of the five major crops of the cut-flower industry. The other major crop—gladioli—is not grown in the California area covered by the pilot project.

Reports of sales on the San Francisco wholesale market to local and nearby retailers cover the five major crops, plus a wide range of other flowers shipped in from Hawaii, Florida, other parts of the country, and from foreign countries.

The production area sales information is available daily nationwide through a 20,000 mile leased-wire system which interconnects all market news offices throughout the country. Persons interested in immediate market information on cut flowers can telephone the nearest fruit and vegetable market news office. You can obtain a listing of the offices by requesting MB-39, *The Market News Service on Fruits and Vegetables*, from the Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Information on production area and wholesale market sales is also published three times a week by the San Francisco fruit and vegetable market news office. This mimeographed report is available free on request. By mid-April, the mailing list exceeded 1,550 names and was growing daily.

Although floriculture is a large agricultural industry — production has an annual value at shipping point equal to that of the U.S. rice or orange crops and a third larger than that of the apple or peanut crops—no Federal or Federal-State market news service has been available previously. Market information on most other major agricultural products has been provided by the Federal-State Market News Service for more than 50 years. C&MS ad-

ministers the Federal-State Market News Service in cooperation with State agencies.

In addition to information on prices, the pilot market news service on cut flowers plans to provide data on supplies of each of the four types of flowers moving from the California production area. Information on supplies is just as important as reports of prices to those who must decide where and when to buy or sell.

The pilot market news project, which is scheduled to end in June, was initiated to determine the value of such a service to the cut-flower industry. Indications so far are that the industry wants and needs this service.

(Top) Market news reporter Isaac Stewart interviews a wholesaler at San Francisco's wholesale cut flower market. (Bottom) A. M. McDowell, officer in charge of the San Francisco market news office, checks supplies of chrysanthemums on the wholesale market.



May Is Senior Citizens Month

C&MS FOOD PROGRAMS PROVIDE

In addition to the formal, month-long activity to honor and aid older Americans, many organizations and individuals work continuously and cooperatively to assist our senior citizens.

MAY IS SENIOR Citizens Month—when Federal, State and local governments, and private and community organizations join formally to honor—and help—older Americans. But cooperative effort to assist our Nation's aged is not limited to one month a year. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Distribution and Food Stamp Programs teamed with activities like

"Pau Hana" contribute to senior citizens' health and well being all year long.

Food Stamp recipients exchange money they would normally be expected to spend on food for food coupons of greater value—which are spent like money in retail food stores. Commodity recipients get direct food donations from local distribution centers. "Pau Hana" is

the name of a radio program in Hawaii devoted to retirees. Freely translated, the words mean "work's done."

Pau Hana regularly features discussions of the Food Stamp Program, administered by USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service. Like many other radio shows across the Nation, the program tells listeners what food stamps can mean to the needy aged.



Some of the programs for senior citizens include classes in nutrition education and food preparation. Stressed during these classes are the contributions that USDA's food assistance programs can make to better diets and better health.



YEAR-ROUND ASSISTANCE

Additional programs emphasize the benefits of food donations. They point out that participation is easy, that no stigma is attached, that the extra food garnered without extra expense contributes to physical and spiritual well being.

Latest figures show that nearly 5½ million of the Nation's needy now benefit from USDA's Food Stamp and Food Donations Programs. Many of these are senior citizens. For example, a recent survey shows that 2.1 million of the 7.3 million on welfare in the United States are over 65 with a median age of 72. Not included in the survey are low-income senior citizens able to make it without welfare, but who still need food help.

Senior citizens have often been called "the *most invisible* of the invisible poor." Many are confined to their homes by habit, illness, or lack of transportation. They may be reluctant to ask about food-aid programs, or unwilling to change eating habits of a lifetime. Many, of course, are not needy. But activities like Pau Hana extend a welcome to them on the premise that every senior citizen should have an opportunity to learn about USDA's food-aid programs and to consider participation with a full knowledge of the programs' benefits.

Local USDA workers and others spread information about the programs and help participants, elderly and otherwise, to make the most of their increased food resources.

Claridge Towers, in Washington, D.C., for example, is a public housing project exclusively for the elderly and the handicapped. Here, local church groups and others carry out a comprehensive recreation program. Part of this program consists of classes in nutrition education and food-preparation conducted by the D.C. Department of Welfare. Constantly stressed during these classes are the contributions that USDA's

Food Stamp Program can make to better diets and better health for the elderly.

Also, exclusively for the elderly, are the Senior Citizen Centers, or Senior Centers, that are springing up across the Nation. These are devoted to recreation and instruction and to stimulating the elderly to make their lives fuller and more enjoyable. These centers are eligible to receive USDA food donations as institutions, even though some of them are in food stamp areas and thus normally ineligible for donated foods.

In New York City, the Northeast District Office of USDA's Consumer Food Programs regularly helps the New York City Housing Authority set up food education programs for tenants who receive USDA food donations. Many of these are elderly. Volunteer home economists and homemakers also contribute.

Another project (the Tallatoona 1-county area project) is being carried out at Buchanan, Georgia. Here home-management aides receive nutrition training. They then visit homes and give group demonstrations. The elderly are most often "shut-ins" and are the ones most likely to benefit from home visits by home-management aides. In many food stamp areas in Mississippi and Minnesota similar groups, known as "program aides," visit non-participating households and encourage inhabitants to participate. One of their duties is to pass along nutritional hints to elderly shut-ins and others.

Where transportation is lacking, the elderly may be involuntary shut-ins. In West Dallas, Texas, however, a special bus carries the elderly from a rehabilitation center to the Dallas County Welfare Department where they pick up their USDA food. The bus may also stop at a hospital for visits to a clinic. Round-trip fare is 50 cents. Taxi fare would be \$4.

STATE MARKETING ACTIVITIES

Several States have teamed up with USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service to establish joint Federal-State meat inspection programs under the Talmadge-Aiken Act. Those signing the cooperative agreements are: California, Virginia, Utah, North Carolina, Illinois, Washington, Oregon, New Mexico, Missouri, and Tennessee.

The cooperative agreements provide for authorizing State meat inspectors to conduct Federal meat inspection at individually approved meat packing and processing plants. Inspection will be carried out under the Federal Meat Inspection Act and Regulations, and will be conducted under continuing Federal supervision. Plants will be jointly surveyed and approved by Federal and State officials. All labels for products originating in the inspected plants will require Federal approval, and products will be eligible for shipment across State lines.

Costs of the cooperative inspection programs will be shared by USDA and the States.

The Talmadge-Aiken agreements differ from cooperative meat inspection agreements provided for in the Wholesome Meat Act of 1967. Under the Wholesome Meat Act, USDA is assisting State governments—technically and financially—in developing State-operated inspection programs to operate under State-passed legislation and regulations. Several States have taken steps to establish Wholesome Meat Act agreements.



C&MS EGG STANDARDS — a yardstick to determine value

Grade standards have been providing a common language for the market place through the years.

By Jerald C. Fitzgerald

IN 1923—45 YEARS AGO this spring—the U.S. Department of Agriculture developed preliminary standards and grades for shell eggs.

For almost 75 years before that, egg producers knew about quality differences in eggs which could be recognized by holding the egg close to a candle flame in a darkened room and observing the contents.

The term “candling”—a check for interior quality—derives from this practice. (Today, most eggs are mass candled on a conveyor belt as they pass over high-intensity lights).

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, localities throughout the country gradually established their own classification systems for egg quality. Probably the first use of egg quality grades was in New York City in 1875, when the Butter and Cheese Exchange began classifying eggs as “extras, firsts, seconds, and thirds.”

Multiplication of terms for egg quality, such as “midwestern extra” and “nearby hennery whites,” led to increasing confusion for buyers and sellers, who understood only their local classification systems. So in 1923, USDA developed tentative standards for shell eggs for nationwide use. These first U.S. standards were sent out to the trade in 1925. They have not been changed greatly during the intervening years, but have been revised about every 4 or 5 years to keep pace with new developments in marketing practices.

Standards for quality apply to individual eggs. An egg can have only one quality rating and that is determined by the lowest rating given for any of the internal or external (shell) quality factors.

Grades, on the other hand, apply to groups or lots of eggs, such as a carton (1 dozen) or a case (30 dozen). Egg grades are based on the standards, but a small tolerance is allowed for quality and size variation between individual eggs in a lot.

Developing grade standards and the grading of shell eggs are among the responsibilities of USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service, which administers the Federal-State egg grading program in cooperation with individual State agencies. This program renders an impartial egg grading service based on official national standards and grades. The first Federal-State agreement on egg grading was made with California in 1925.

Those who want to use the Federal-State egg grading service must

request and pay for it. From the beginning, this voluntary service has been supported almost entirely by the fees charged users.

Operating under the Federal-State program, government graders examine eggs to determine both grade (quality) and size (minimum weight per dozen). Consumers are most familiar with the U.S. consumer grades—U.S. Grade AA (or Fresh Fancy), A, and B—which are applied to eggs in retail channels. U.S. Grade AA and A eggs are the highest quality—ideal for all purposes, especially frying and poaching where appearance is important. When broken out, these eggs have a round, high yolk and a thick white which stands high.

The egg sizes usually found in retail markets are Extra Large, Large, and Medium.

The author is Assistant Chief, Standardization and Marketing Practices Branch, Poultry Division, C&MS, USDA.

In addition to consumer grades, the Federal-State shell egg grading program provides for procurement grades—designed for egg shipments to military or institutional users—and for wholesale grades, which are used in trading between wholesalers and dealers.

The percentage of shell eggs graded under Federal-State programs has grown considerably since 1940, when 4.3 percent of the eggs were graded. In fiscal 1967, 25 percent of shell eggs were officially graded.

In addition, the U.S. standards serve as the basis for most of the trade in eggs, even those not officially graded. All 50 States have laws regulating the sale of eggs, and most of these laws are based on the U.S. standards.

In the 45 years since USDA's first tentative standards for shell eggs, the marketing system for eggs has become vastly more efficient. The standards and grades have helped to bring this about—by providing a common language for producers, processors, marketers, and consumers; by providing a yardstick for determining value.

HOW THE CATTLE BOOM CAME BACK TO KANSAS

C&MS' livestock market news service in Dodge City reflects western Kansas' resurgence as a livestock marketing center.



By John Haszier

ON THE FABLED cattle ranges of Western Kansas—rich in history and still haunted by ghost herds of days past—the Livestock Market News Service today has an office to serve the needs of the modern counter-parts to yesteryear's cattlemen.

The story of how market news service in this area has kept up with changing times is the story, in miniature, of the changing face of market news over the Nation.

The frontier towns of Dodge City and Abilene won fame as marketing centers for the herds of cattle that came up the famous trails from Texas and the Southwest a century ago. Although cattle production has always played a major role in Kansas agriculture, until a couple of decades ago, producers relied almost entirely on the Missouri River markets and other terminals in disposing of their livestock.

Since the mid-1950's, however, the Western Kansas area has grown rapidly and steadily in importance as a center of feeder cattle movement and more recently as a major cattle feeding area. Not since those storied days of the iron pony and the bawling, milling herds of Longhorns has the area been a greater focal point as a livestock marketing center than it is today.

This, plus several other factors, prompted the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service to establish a livestock market news office in Dodge City, right in the heart of Western Kansas.

These developments included:

- The opening of a number of slaughtering plants in the area;

- The subsequent rapid, and extensive growth of direct sales of slaughter cattle to packing plants; and

- The increasing movement of feeder cattle—both direct and through auction markets—within the area.

In 1965, the Market News Service decided that it should place a man fulltime in the area. An experienced market news reporter was reassigned from the Denver market news office—with other Denver reporters taking on extra work to fill the vacancy—and sent to Dodge City.

From the beginning, the project was designed to be flexible and to provide the most useful information to the greatest number of people in the area. The Dodge City reporter primarily covers auction markets in that city and in Garden City and direct sales of slaughter cattle to packers, and feeder cattle to feedlot operators.

In the first year of operation this reporter covered auction sales handling 468,352 head of cattle—mainly feeders but including more than 65,000 head of slaughter cattle. He also reported on direct sales to packers of 376,211 head of cattle—mainly slaughter cattle.

Covering these two types of marketing requires completely different reporting techniques. While volumes sold through auction are definite, known figures, reports on sales direct

The modern feedlot operation, with controlled conditions for preparing cattle for market, resembles a factory more than an old-fashioned cattle ranch.

to packers or to feedlots must of necessity be sample figures gathered painstakingly by the reporter from cooperating buyers and sellers.

In covering the auction markets, the reporter can see and evaluate the livestock as it passes through the sales ring, and can determine market activity by observing the vigor of the bidding and relative speed of sales.

To cover direct sales of livestock—especially from feedlots—the reporter must not only learn prices and weights as cattle are sold, but must also spend a lot of time traveling around the area to look at cattle offered for sale—so he can evaluate the reports he receives by telephone. Generally, the market news reporter tries to visit important feedlots at least every 3 or 4 weeks.

As the livestock industry came back to Kansas in a more modern form than its predecessor of a hundred years ago, so livestock market news there has “gone modern” with the very latest in dissemination equipment.

The Dodge City office is linked to the rest of the Nation by teletypewriter, on a 20,000-mile leased wire network which allows the office to receive valuable market news information within minutes from all over the Nation.

An automatic telephone answering system has also been installed. Now anyone interested in the area can dial a special number and re-

The author is Officer-in-Charge, C&MS Livestock Market News Office, Torrington, Wyo.

ceive instantaneous recorded market news from the Dodge City office—without tying up a reporter's time.

And the reporter regularly gives reports on the market over local radio stations.

Although changing times have brought the cattle boom back to Western Kansas—and with it the echos of times past—the modern feedlot and auction system there is a far cry from the meandering herds
(Continued on Page 13, Column 1)

BALTIMORE FOOD STAMP RECIPIENTS

FEDERAL AND CITY officials were on hand last October 3 when the Food Stamp Program started in Baltimore. On hand, too, were many low-income people, expectant, but uncertain about what this new program would mean for them.

During the official ceremony at the Baltimore Department of Public Welfare, 1515 Brentwood Avenue, the then Mayor Theodore R. McKeldin issued the first food stamp coupon books.

The ceremony marked a shift from one kind of Federal food assistance to another.

Under the former Commodity Distribution Program, welfare recipients went to a distribution center once a month to get free food donated to the local welfare department by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Successor to the donated food program in Baltimore is the Food Stamp Program which requires participants to exchange the money they would normally be expected to spend for food for coupons worth more.

The Food Stamp Program, as was the Commodity Distribution Program, is administered by the Baltimore Department of Public Welfare and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service.

Warren Maxwell, father of two girls, ages 7 and 11, his wife recuperating from open heart surgery and himself restricted by a heart condition, says "without the food stamps I don't know what might have happened to my family."

Mr. Maxwell is a sort of goodwill

Mr. Maxwell gives the information necessary to be certified to receive food stamps.



ambassador for the Food Stamp Program in his community. He owns a 300-pound food freezer—an item obtained in better times—which he shares with several neighboring food stamp families.

The amount Mr. Maxwell pays for food stamps is determined by the Department of Public Welfare which checks the number of members in a household against the monthly net income of the household.

In the Food Stamp Program a household means people who eat together and buy their food together. They do not have to be relatives. A boarder is part of a household. A person who just rooms in the house is not.

A six-member family with net income of \$120 to \$129.99 would pay \$56 for \$102 worth of food stamps.

From his \$193.30 monthly welfare check Mr. Maxwell pays \$64 and receives \$90 in food stamps.

Mr. Maxwell heads one of some 12,000 Baltimore households on public assistance, representing 40,000 people in Maryland's largest city who first got Federal food stamps last October.

In South Baltimore, 83-year-old Roscoe Kent is not on public assistance, but in recent years he has found it near impossible to make ends meet with the sole income of \$88 a month from Social Security.

For Mr. Kent and his 76-year-old wife who spend \$26 a month for \$54 worth of food stamps, the program has been "some help."

Mr. Kent owns the three-story brick row house they live in, but he is behind in paying his real estate taxes. And last January he had to

At a food stamp issuance office he buys food stamps which are worth more than he pays.



borrow part of the food stamp money.

Remarkably healthy and active for his age, Mr. Kent said he looks forward to the time when he can get some odd jobs. His wife has not been well for several years, and recently he has had to remain close by to look after her.

To be certified to receive food stamps the Maxwells and the Kents had to provide information regarding their income, bills, household members, bank accounts if any, drug and medical bills.

With this information the Department of Public Welfare determines the eligibility of a family to receive food stamps. If declared eligible, an authorization card is issued which tells how much must be invested in food stamps, the "purchase requirement." It also tells the total value to be received.

The head of the family, or someone he designates, takes the authorization card to the food stamp issuance office, pays the designated fee and receives the food stamps.

From there the food stamp purchaser can go to any food store authorized to handle food stamps, and spend the stamps like money for food.

It is illegal to buy non-food items with food stamps.

Edward L. Vogelmann, Jr., Chief of Food Stamp Operations in Baltimore, said the total number of food stamp participants, including public assistance and non-public assistance, decreased from 41,810 when the Food Stamp Program opened in October, to 34,500 in December.

There was a slight increase in

He can then spend his stamps for food in any food store authorized to handle food stamps.



SPEAK OUT!

January. But while there was a decrease in the overall total between October and December, the number of non-public assistance households on food stamps increased from 422 households representing 1,646 persons in October to 1,038 households with 3,828 persons in December.

Mr. Vogelman attributes the decrease in public assistance participants to several things. For one, over the past ten years Baltimore has distributed donated foods for which public assistance recipients did not have to pay.

With the sudden switch to the Food Stamp Program, Mr. Vogelman said some people were happy to buy food stamps and get more food, while others felt reluctant to part with any portion of their limited income in a lump sum.

There was also misunderstanding about the reduction of the purchase price to one-half the usual amount in the first month of participation.

The half-price feature for the first month was instituted in the summer of 1967 to make it easier for low-income families to get started on food stamps by not having to put out the full purchase requirement at the very beginning, and enabling new participants to get a head start on back bills.

Mr. Vogelman explained that some people found it objectionable to have to pay the full purchase requirement for food stamps in November because they thought the price had been doubled.

However, he said that as of January people are coming to recognize that the Food Stamp Program, by and large, is a good program.

Warren Maxwell enthusiastically endorses that sentiment and goes a step further to suggest that participation in the Food Stamp Program might be boosted if more food stamp offices could be opened in local neighborhoods.

He said this would make it easier for people to get more information and he feels certain it would generate an increase in applications to be certified.

Mr. Maxwell is so impressed with the Food Stamp Program that each month he borrows an automobile, usually from his sister-in-law, takes up to half a dozen neighbors to the food stamp office, and from there to Belair Market on Baltimore's Gay Street, where he has struck up hearty acquaintance with the folks at one of the numerous stalls in the market.

Prominently displayed on counters and at other market locations are the red, white and blue USDA posters:

"We Accept . . .
FOOD COUPONS"

On request, the proprietor, his wife or associates will cut and wrap separately the meat orders for Mr. Maxwell and his neighbors, making it easy for storage in and removal from the Maxwell's food freezer.

Mr. Maxwell thinks group buying is an idea that other food stamp shoppers might consider in low-income communities.

"That way, you can shop for the sales and buy in larger quantity," he says.

Generally, among low-income people, the Food Stamp Program has been well received in Baltimore.



SPRINGTIME is eggtime, and the Poultry and Egg National Board, and the egg industry have pinpointed May 1 through mid-June to celebrate a Springtime Egg Festival. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service is cooperating in this all-out endeavor to bring to consumers' attention the abundance of eggs and their important contribution to health and vitality in planning spring meals.

Last year, with production zooming to a new record, consumption of eggs did a turnabout—showing the first substantial increase in 16 years. Consumption climbed to an estimated 324 eggs per person, 11 more than in the previous year.

In this space age of astronomical figures, eggs have joined the parade. Chickens cackled their way to laying 5.8 billion dozen eggs, or about 5-1/2 percent more than in the previous year.

In nearly all American homes eggs are not only one of the most popular and palatable of staple foods, but . . . also indispensable in planning and preparing an almost unlimited variety of meals for the whole family.

And, in addition to their versatility as excellent eating fare, they make a worthwhile contribution to the nutrient content of diets for old and young alike. Valued as a source of protein, iron, vitamin A and riboflavin, eggs are one of the few foods containing vitamin D. Also, because of the amount and quality of their protein, eggs are an excellent alternate for meat.

Although any day of the year is really egg time, housewives can save especially by buying eggs during the egg industry's Springtime Egg Festival.

For 83-year-old Mr. Kent and his 76-year-old wife, who spend \$26 a month for \$54 worth of food stamps, the program has been "some help." They are not on public assistance.



Extension Service Intensifies Help for the Poor

Non-professional paid aides from low-income families show recipients how to use foods made available through C&MS' food assistance programs.

By W. J. Whorton

THE ANSWER WAS obvious—direct, intensive individual help.

The question was how could the Cooperative Extension Service most effectively help families living in hardcore poverty.

The problems and characteristics of these families vary widely. All have little money. Some don't have enough clothes. Some don't have the basic kitchen utensils needed to prepare a simple meal. Few understand the rudiments of good nutrition. Most poor families have several of these problems.

The answer posed another question. How could Extension provide the intensive individual attention needed? If a worker gives individual attention, the number of families he can effectively serve is reduced to a small fraction of the number he could serve using traditional Extension methods.

Extension drew on the past to develop its most dramatic and perhaps its most successful move to provide the needed help. Workers reasoned they had had a long and successful experience in training volunteers from Extension Homemaker Clubs to work with their peers. Why not apply this same technique, with a slight variation, to work with the poor? The variation—instead of volunteers to do the job, non-professional program assistants (aides) from low-income families would be paid to work with the poor.

Extension began testing the concept about five years ago. The use of non-professional assistants proved successful and the concept has been adopted on a wide scale.

The program aides provide help in foods and nutrition, plus other areas dictated by the needs and interests of the people, such as home and money management, gardening, child rearing and education, and family relations. It also includes

familiarizing the poor with assistance programs administered by other agencies.

Once the program is designed, the assistants are given a short period of intensive training and receive additional training each week. The home economist supervises the assistants closely, reviews their progress, and helps them with special problems.

The assistants frequently begin nutrition help to the poor by helping them understand they are eligible to take part in a Government food assistance program.

With families already getting food help, assistants show how to use the foods to improve their diets. Help sometimes includes showing the homemaker how to improvise with coffee cans or whatever is available to substitute for more conventional cooking utensils.

If garden space is available, the aides help families select and grow vegetables to supplement their other foods.

Improvement in dietary levels is not the only problem facing these

The author is an information specialist Federal Extension Service, USDA.

families, and may not be the one to tackle first. They need help in developing basic housekeeping skills—cleaning the house, food storage, cleaning dishes, washing clothes, and food preparation. The aides provide this help too.

Recipients appreciate help in doing even the very simple things connected with better nutrition and homemaking. This includes help with reading and understanding basic recipes. And in some cases aides make picture interpretations of simple recipes for those who cannot read at all.

A summary of complete records of 368 families living in poor rural communities who received help

from aides shows the program to be a phenomenal success. Fifty-one percent improved their eating habits—by increasing their milk consumption, having better balanced meals, improving food storage methods, and using better practices in freezing and canning foods.

Early in the work with poverty families it became obvious that traditional "how-to-do-it" Extension publications for homemakers are not suited to their ability. The writing style and words are too hard for them to read or understand.

Now special booklets, written at their level and illustrated with simple drawings, are available. The Federal Extension Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture has published five such series and makes them available to all State Extension Services. They are available to other agencies through the U.S. Government Printing Office.

Many State Extension Services have published their own series for people with low-level reading ability or have reproduced publications of other States to serve special needs. The total effect is that publications for people with low-level reading ability are available on nearly all homemaking subjects and in all States.

Lack of funds makes it impossible to hire aides in many situations where they could be effective. Extension has partly offset this by training middleclass homemakers who work without pay to help low-income families taking part in USDA Food Stamp or Commodity Distribution Programs. The volunteers are members of Extension Homemakers Clubs. The volunteers have also proved effective, and the sum of 6,000 individual efforts adds up to a sizable contribution.

County Extension home economists do much work directly with recipients of donated foods and food stamps. This is usually done through "point-of-distribution" de-

moustrations in the case of donated foods. Recipients can see how to use and prepare the foods included in the monthly distribution. They can also taste the finished product. Both the Commodity Distribution and Food Stamp Programs are administered by USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service.

Food distribution people attribute several benefits to the demonstrations. Recipients now take foods they previously refused and use them. Recipient families show evidence of better nutrition.

Extension home economists have teamed up with supermarket management in many locations to help food stamp recipients. The home economists give demonstrations in the stores where large numbers of food stamp recipients shop. The demonstrations show how to buy and use the lower-cost foods to prepare wholesome meals that stretch the benefits of the stamps.

Extension workers also help families living in poverty by training employees of other agencies who have frequent and personal contact with the families. So far, about 3,100 professionals and more than 3,200 non-professionals have been trained. Primarily the training is in foods and nutrition and in child rearing. Workers in the Public Health Service, Public Welfare Community Action agencies, VISTA, and others have received such training.

Nationally, Extension home economists devote 38 percent of their time to people earning less than \$3,000 a year. Work with families participating in Government food assistance programs has been dramatically expanded in the last five years. The 1,000 non-professional assistants devote more than 50 percent of their time to families on food assistance.

In spite of the huge expansion in this work by Extension, the unfilled needs of these families are still apparent even to the casual observer. Meeting these unfilled needs is the top priority project of Extension home economics programs. Work to this end is being expanded just as rapidly as resources become available.

How to Buy BEEF STEAKS



A Handy Guide for Buying and Cooking Beef Steaks

DO YOU KNOW the secret of selecting an absolutely delicious steak?

It's no secret if you know something about beef quality and the different cuts. A new publication from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service can help you learn. "How To Buy Beef Steaks" contains information on the USDA grades for beef—such as USDA Prime, Choice and Good. The booklet illustrates the various kinds of steak and suggests cooking methods and amounts you'll need per serving.

The difference between the shield-shaped grade mark—a mark of quality, and the round inspection mark—a mark of wholesomeness, is also explained.

A few specific tips from "How To Buy Beef Steaks" are:

*Some cuts of beef are naturally more tender than others, regardless of the quality grade. Cuts from the less-used muscles along the back of the animal—the rib and loin sections—will always be more tender than those from the active muscles such as the shoulder (chuck), and round.

*Any steak you intend to broil should be at least one inch thick. It is difficult to get your meat medium rare if you buy a thin steak.

*Meat grading is a voluntary service provided by USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service to meat packers and others who request it and pay a fee for the service. So not all meat is graded—although a large percentage of beef is.

*Only meat which has first passed a strict inspection for wholesomeness may be graded. So you may be sure when you see the grade mark that the meat came from a healthy animal and was processed in a sanitary plant.

*The U.S. grades for beef differ in tenderness, juiciness and flavor. USDA Prime grade beef—the top grade—is the ultimate in tenderness, juiciness and flavor. Prime has abundant marbling—flecks of fat within the lean—and loin and rib steaks of this grade are ideal for broiling.

USDA Choice steaks from the loin and rib are very good for broiling and pan broiling. Choice has slightly less marbling than Prime.

USDA Good steaks are more lean than the higher grades. They are relatively tender but because they have less marbling they lack some of the juiciness and flavor of the higher grades.

USDA Standard grade beef has a high proportion of lean meat and very little fat. Beef of this grade is fairly tender, but lacks marbling. It has a mild flavor and all cuts except those from the loin and rib should be prepared with moist heat.

*The grade most widely sold at retail is USDA Choice. It is produced in the greatest volume and retailers have found that this level of quality pleases most of their customers. Some stores, however, offer two grades—for example, USDA Choice and Good—so that their customers may have a choice of quality and price.

For a copy of "How To Buy Beef Steaks," Home and Garden Bulletin No. 145, send a postcard request to Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250. Please use your zip code.

CONSUMER AND MARKETING BRIEFS

Selected short items on C&MS activities in consumer protection, marketing services, market regulation, and consumer food programs.

STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT GRADES FOR PROCESSED F&V

Students in the institutional cooking and food processing fields in Maryland and Arkansas got a lesson last year in U.S. grades for canned and frozen fruits and vegetables that should help them in their future work.

Specialists in the Fruit and Vegetable Division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service demonstrated the differences in quality defined by the U.S. grades at the University of Maryland's Training Course for Institutional Cooks and at the Ozark Valley Vocational Technical School, Ozark, Ark. The Ozark vocational school is training students to enter the food processing field as quality control aides.

FOOD STAMPS MEAN BETTER EATING

A recent survey in and around Urbana, Ill., conducted by a local grocer's association, supported this fact: Low-income persons taking part in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food Stamp Program have better diets than their counterparts who do not participate. The survey was conducted in 4 one-week periods. It began by defining a good diet:

A good diet supplies a family with enough of eight nutrients to meet

the recommendations of the National Research Council. Nearly all of the food-stamp families surveyed had good diets as compared with about one-fourth of the nonparticipating counterpart families during the same period.

The surveyors then pointed out that food-stamp families have better diets than non-participating families because they have more food-buying power and because they use this power wisely. To prove this claim, they cited changes in retail food sales in the survey area after the Food Stamp Program began operating there. Meat, poultry, and fish sales, as a group, increased an average of 23 percent, and milk, cream, ice cream, and cheese sales increased an average of 33 percent. Fresh vegetables sales went up about 32 percent and fresh fruit sales about 30 percent.

There were no indications that food-stamp customers were buying more foods usually considered to be in the luxury class.

AIR SHIPMENTS OF CALIFORNIA PRODUCE UP AGAIN

Air shipments of California fruits and vegetables increased again in 1967, Federal-State market news reports show. The total of nearly 45.5 million pounds shipped by air was 68 percent more than the volume shipped in 1966 and nearly double the 1965 volume. Strawberries were still the major item, but air shipments of lettuce, cherries, grapes, and tomatoes were also heavy.

The Federal-State Market News Service is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service, in cooperation with State Departments of Agriculture and other State agencies.

USDA INSPECTS REINDEER MEAT

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service, which administers the Federal meat inspection program, has been inspecting cattle, swine, sheep, and goats to guarantee their wholesomeness since the passage of the original Meat Inspection Act in 1906.

In January, the usual before-and-after-slaughter inspection required of all federally inspected animals was given for the first time to reindeer. Thirteen animals, ranging in weight from 85 to 165 pounds, were slaughtered under the voluntary reindeer inspection program in a federally inspected establishment in Long Creek, Ore.

Labels and brands for the reindeer meat, to be sold to consumers in a retail store in Portland, were approved for use under the food inspection service. This is a voluntary program establishments elect to use so that they may guarantee their consumers that the product received complete inspection, was processed under sanitary conditions, and was passed for wholesomeness.

Now American consumers can delight in what must be the taste treat of the North Pole—and, thanks to USDA, be sure that the meat they are eating is safe.

EGGS HEAD PLENTIFUL FOODS LIST FOR MAY

Pleentiful eggs have won the feature spot on the Consumer and Marketing Service's list of plentiful foods for May shoppers. This ties in with the industry's Springtime Egg Festival.

Other May plentifuls are potatoes, milk and dairy products, and turkeys.

Egg production in May is expected to be near the record output of a year ago. Prices should be extremely favorable for the consumer, or about the same as in May 1967.

In addition to the heavy carry-over of potatoes, shipments of the early spring crop from Florida are expected to peak during May. Also, marketing in the late spring producing areas should be active, particularly in Alabama, California, and Arizona.

Milk production will be reaching its seasonal peak in May, and the dairy industry will promote milk and its products with the theme, "Easy, Breezy Summertime Eating with Dairy Foods."

Turkeys were featured on the April list of plentiful foods. The momentum generated by the USDA-industry campaign to make consumers turkey conscious should carry into May and encourage more consumption of this abundant, nutritious food.

(continued from page 7)

of Texas longhorns that once ended their long journey at the Kansas railroads.

Fittingly, the modern system of market news provided by the C&MS Livestock Market News Service is helping the area, not to return to the past, but to keep pace with the Nation's rapidly changing marketing system.

FOOD TIPS

— from USDA's Consumer and Marketing Service

FRESH STRAWBERRY LOVERS . . .

If you are lover of fresh *strawberries*, some tips from the Fruit and Vegetable Division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service will be helpful.

Fresh strawberries are usually marketed on the basis of quality grades—U.S. No. 1 and U.S. Combination. Look for firm-fleshed strawberries with a full red color and bright luster. The cap stem should be attached to the berry.

Avoid berries with large white or green areas and especially avoid mold, which spreads rapidly. It is a good practice to look down into the bottom of the strawberry containers to be sure that all of the berries are reasonably free from defects or decay.

CUCUMBERS ENHANCE SALADS

Cucumbers add just the right touch of taste and color to a green salad. Experts of the Fruit and Vegetable Division in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service advise consumer to look for cucumbers with a good green color, and firm over the entire length. Cucumbers may also have some white or greenish-white color and still be of top quality.

Good cucumbers typically have many small bumps on their surface. Cucumbers should be well shaped and well developed, but not too large in diameter.

Avoid cucumbers with shriveled

tips, a dull color, or turning yellow.

DIETERS—TRY ROUND STEAK

For diet-conscious people who also happen to like the taste of steak, here's a tip from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service. Try beef kabobs for a delicious main course. Cut *round steak* into cubes, place on a skewer with onions, green pepper pieces and mushrooms.

Round steak has very little waste and is considered an economical cut. Because it has little fat or marbling—specks of fat within the lean—it is perfect for dieters. Top round steak can be broiled and still be relatively tender if you buy the top grades—USDA Prime or USDA Choice.

GREEN PEPPERS FOR DINNER?

Green peppers are a good salad ingredient and a great main dish when stuffed. Those red peppers you sometimes see in the store are fully matured green peppers.

The Fruit and Vegetable Division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service says that the top quality grade under which peppers are marketed is U.S. Fancy. Look for peppers with a medium to dark green color, a glossy sheen, relatively heavy weight, and firm sides. Avoid those with thin walls, cuts or punctures on the skin, and soft watery spots.

PLANT SURVEYS ASSURE WHOLESOME DAIRY PRODUCTS

The USDA grade shield on products such as butter, Cheddar cheese, and instant nonfat dry milk tells the consumer that the products were produced in a USDA-approved plant.

By Roy F. Hedtke

ONE WORD IN THE vocabulary of consumers has become increasingly important. That word is wholesomeness.

People today want more than just convenient and economical products. They want to be assured that the products they buy are wholesome and have been produced in clean plants under sanitary conditions.

Such assurance for dairy products is available to consumers—and to retailers and wholesalers. This assurance is based on a plant survey program operated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service.

The author is a Marketing Specialist, Inspection and Grading Branch, Dairy Division, C&MS, USDA.

The program is offered to dairy plants across the country on a fee-for-service basis. It helps to inform a plant manager about the quality of the raw material, sanitation, condition of the plant and equipment, and processing procedures—factors affecting the quality of his finished products. He may use the service for his own benefit—and for the benefit of his customers.

A wholesaler or retailer may require that the products he buys be produced in a USDA-approved plant to get assurance of wholesomeness.

One way a consumer can tell if dairy products were produced in an approved plant is by looking for the USDA grade shield on products such as butter, Cheddar cheese, and instant nonfat dry milk. This is so because only approved manufacturing plants can qualify for the USDA services of grading, sampling, testing, and certification of dairy products. Grades are assurance of a product's quality—and also of its wholesomeness.

Each plant survey, made by an experienced and highly trained dairy inspector, consists of a detailed check of more than 100 items. Here are some of the items an inspector checks—and what he looks for:

*No rubbish or surplus equipment can be stored near the plant and adjacent area. These serve as "breeding grounds" for insects and rodents.

*All persons working in any room where dairy products are processed and packaged must be free of communicable disease. The inspector examines the company records to verify that satisfactory medical certificates have been issued for all employees.

*Personnel traffic must be restricted through processing and packing areas. This prevents possible contamination from one room to another.

*All of the processing equipment must be kept sanitary. This equip-

ment is dismantled and inspected for cleanliness.

*Proper lighting is required in such areas as the raw milk grading and receiving line, the manufacturing areas, and the warehouse and supply room. Sufficient lighting, as checked by a light meter, is necessary for effective cleaning.

*Ceilings and walls must be dry. Moisture indicates inadequate plant ventilation, and this could lead to mold growth.

*The plant must maintain a satisfactory testing program to insure wholesomeness. It must keep records of this "quality control" program and make them available to the inspector.

Each survey is also tailored to the kind of plant—such as those manufacturing and processing cheese, butter, or nonfat dry milk. For example, butter plants must pasteurize to a special high temperature all the cream which is churned into butter. This helps butter to retain its flavor for a long time.

And, in dry milk plants, the source of air used for the drying, conveying, or cooling of the milk powder must be free from objectionable odors, smoke, dust, dirt—and it must be filtered.

The inspector meets with the plant manager to review the results of the survey. If any deficiencies exist, he explains what steps must be taken before approval can be granted. When corrections are made, the inspector makes another survey before granting "approved" status to the plant.

Once approved, a plant does not automatically keep its status. A similar survey is required at least twice a year to maintain this approval; more frequent surveys—every 90 days—are made of plants manufacturing nonfat dry milk. If defects are found, the plant management is notified of improvements necessary, and a followup check is made.

There are now more than 1,200 officially approved plants in the continental U.S.—providing wholesome dairy products to wholesalers, retailers, and consumers. They can—and they do—point with pride to this fact.

SCHOOLCHILDREN "PROOF THE PUDDING"

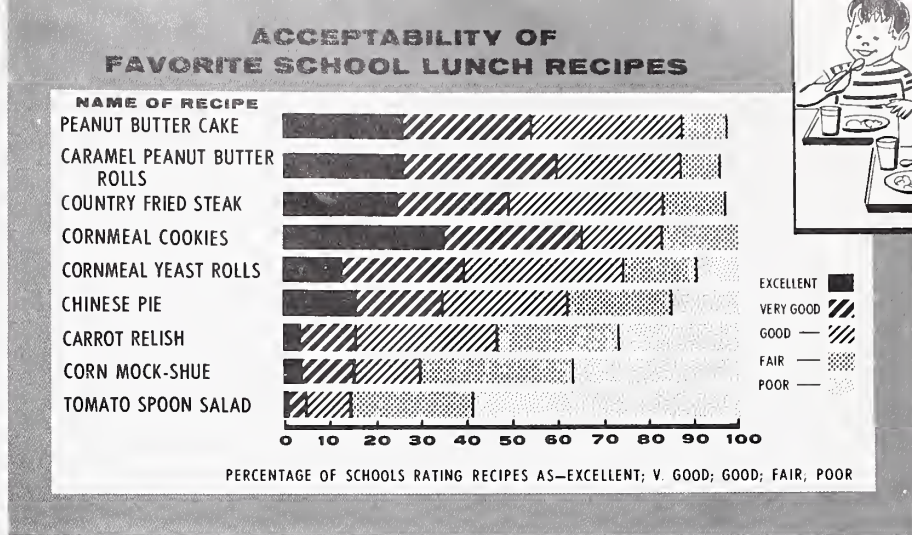
Results of a survey that gave several hundred youngsters a chance to try out new school lunch recipes.

AWISE, OLD saying goes "The proof of the pudding is in the eating." Continuing to put the "pudding" to the test, the Consumer and Marketing Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture has compiled results of a survey that gave several hundred youngsters in about 50 schools scattered throughout the Nation a chance to try out new school lunch recipes.*

Administrators and personnel of the National School Lunch Program constantly look for appetizing, nutritious recipes which are popular with children. Their goal is to improve the quality and acceptability of school lunches. In June 1965, each State was invited to submit 2 to 5 recipes for foods which have been student favorites, and which utilize USDA commodities, contribute to Type A lunch requirements, and combine well with other menu items.

Selected for economy and simple preparation, nine of these recipes were chosen for testing by C&MS and were standardized by the Human Nutrition Research Division at USDA's Agricultural Research Center in Beltsville, Maryland.

Each of the five Consumer Foods Program district offices chose two or three States which could be considered representative of that area of the country to conduct the recipe testing. The States then selected the schools to make the tests. Reactions to the recipes were recorded by the school lunch manager by grade levels, in groups of three grades



from grades 1 to 12. The teachers and the lunchroom staff made up the two adult groups to taste the recipes. The lunch managers were asked to prepare the recipes on three different days and to rate the children's reaction as "excellent," "very good," "good," "fair," or "poor." Also evaluated by the managers were such items as ease of preparing, ease of serving, and cost.

Students gave their opinions of such State favorites as Chinese pie (New Hampshire), country fried steak (Louisiana and Tennessee), carrot relish (Tennessee), tomato spoon salad (New Mexico), and corn mock-shue (Louisiana). Rounding out the list of tryouts were such delicacies as caramel-peanut butter rolls (Wisconsin), cornmeal yeast rolls (Connecticut and Wisconsin), cornmeal cookies (Connecticut and Kentucky), and peanut butter cake with vanilla cream frosting (Georgia, New York, Oklahoma, Texas and West Virginia).

Leading the popularity parade of the nine recipes were peanut butter cake, caramel peanut butter rolls, country fried steak and cornmeal cookies. Over 80 percent of the children and adults rated these dishes as "excellent," "very good," or "good."

Cornmeal yeast rolls proved highly popular too and ranked only a narrow margin behind the leaders.

Chinese pie was not as well liked as the top five dishes but this ground beef and potato recipe still reaped over 60 percent of its votes in the "good" to "excellent" range.

The remaining three dishes did not prove as popular as the other recipes—with the children, that is. Carrot relish, a preparation of chopped cabbage, carrots, green peppers and onions, pleased the adult appetites a great deal.

Corn mock-shue (corn, tomatoes, chopped onions and green peppers) and tomato spoon salad (canned tomatoes, chopped onions, and green peppers) rated below carrot relish. In most instances the junior and senior high school-age youngsters showing their developing maturity indicated a liking for these recipes.

The survey pointed up that nationwide, children's preferences were remarkably similar. With few exceptions, children from all parts of the country liked the same recipes and disliked the same recipes. Also the survey findings indicated that the school lunch managers felt the recipes were reasonably easy to prepare and serve and were within their budgets in cost. Recipes receiving favorable reactions will be included in the USDA publication "Quantity Recipes for Type A School Lunches," PA 631.

All published formulas and procedures are continually re-evaluated to keep up with new developments in food technology, production, and processing. The plan is to revise and update the recipe card file every 5 years to incorporate new findings and the supplements issued each year.

*See "Will New School Lunch Recipes Pan Out?", *Agricultural Marketing*, May 1967.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

SUMMER CAMPS CAN GET USDA FOOD

Non-profit summer camps for children may be eligible to receive USDA donated foods.

WITH A NEW summer camp season just around the corner, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Consumer and Marketing Service is reminding nonprofit summer camps for children that they may be eligible to receive USDA donated foods.

Last summer 1.4 million children in 7,137 summer camps received 12.6 million pounds of donated foods valued at \$2.6 million. This food aid represented a substantial gain to camps and campers—with a minimum of effort and cost to the camp.

C&MS's Commodity Distribution Division recognizes the important role of camps in educating and training children—physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually. The CD staff has been concentrating on making camps aware of the valuable services and programs of USDA—focusing on improved feeding and child nutrition.

Commodities available to eligible summer camps this year include:

Bulgur (wheat)	Dry Split Peas
Corn Meal	Corn Grits
Cheese	Flour
Canned Chopped Meat	Butter
	Nonfat Dry Milk

Orange Juice	Peanut Butter
Raisins	Rice
Rolled Oats	Shortening or
Rolled Wheat	Lard

This summer, camps can expect all or most of these commodities, depending upon availability and local food preferences. The quantity that camps may receive depends upon use patterns and distribution rates recommended by USDA to the State agency as to amounts usually used per eligible camper per month. Camps, of course, may accept lesser amounts that meet their needs.

Interested camps may learn when and if other commodities become available by requesting guidance and printed material from their State Agency or a Consumer Food Programs District Office.

All eligible camps must comply with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in that no child may be denied admission because of race, color, or national origin.

Summer camps may purchase the following publications helpful to their programs by ordering from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402: PA-631 "Quantity Recipes for Type A School Lunches,

(\$1.50), recipes are for portions of 100 and are on 5 x 8 cards; PA-270, "Food Buying Guide for Type A School Lunches," (\$1.25); PA-403, "Food Storage Guide for Schools and Institutions," (25 cents).

The USDA CFP District Offices have fact sheets available for some foods, giving information about them and recipes for their use.

C&MS's Plentiful Foods Program offers the camp feeding programs a variety of tips that will help provide better meals. Monthly bulletins containing helpful suggested uses for plentiful foods may be obtained from the nearest CFP District Office:

Northeast District
Consumer Food Programs Office
C&MS, USDA
346 Broadway—Room 614
New York, New York 10013

Southeast District
Consumer Food Programs Office
C&MS, USDA
1795 Peachtree Road, N.E., Room 302
Atlanta, Georgia 30309

Midwest District
Consumer Food Programs Office
C&MS, USDA
536 South Clark Street
Chicago, Illinois 60605

Southwest District
Consumer Food Programs Office
C&MS, USDA
500 South Ervay Street, Room 3-127
Dallas, Texas 75201

Western District
Consumer Food Programs Office
C&MS, USDA
630 Sansome Street, San Francisco, California 94111