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U. S. Department of Agriculture

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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Thursday, November 23, 1933.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "The Bureau of Home Economics and the Recovery Program." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

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You've been hearing on all sides about how different organizations in different parts of the country are taking part in the national recovery program. I think perhaps you'll be especially interested in a brief sketch of some of the things your Bureau of Home Economics is doing in the present emergency, how this bureau of the government is working to help permanent recovery.

Recently Mrs. Roosevelt came over from the White House to visit the Bureau. One of the things that interested her most was some children's clothing made out of salt bags and flour sacks and old partly worn garments.

She was very enthusiastic as she held up these garments and looked them all over. What took her eye especially was a jumper dress for a school girl. It is made of blue and white crash used for salt bags and is very smartly tailored. A tricky little blouse goes with it, made from the good parts of a worn-out wash dress. Then there's a self-help suit for a small boy made from the cotton crash, babies' rompers from the good parts of a man's shirt and from flour sacks, and a child's play suit from a woman's jersey dress no longer usable as a dress. Miss Scott and Miss Smith, the clothing specialists who have been working on this business of getting new garments from materials already on hand, have put their ideas into a mimeographed circular called, "Clothing Economies." If you'd like a copy write to this station or the Bureau of Home Economics. The leaflet gives a lot of very practical suggestions on how to lengthen dresses so they'll still look in fashion, and how to make little changes that bring the wardrobe up-to-date without spending money.

Or if you're buying a new dress you'll find something in this leaflet to guide you in judging the quality of the fabric. I'm often surprised at how few people seem to know the simple test for a silk fabric. You know you can tell simply by burning a little sample of a silk fabric whether it is a pure dye silk or whether it is heavily weighted with a metallic substance that makes it appear rich and luxurious. These weighted silks wear out very quickly, as we know to our sorrow. Unfortunately, there's now no trade regulation or federal law that requires the manufacturer to label his silk goods accurately. A few silk mills are putting on labels that give some facts about their fabrics, even if not all the consumer wants to know. That's a step in the right direction. So read the label on silk yard goods before you buy and ask the clerk what he knows about the goods he's selling. In ready-made dresses look for any label that indicates quality of fabric or workmanship.



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Then for help in community sewing rooms, the specialists have brought together a lot of suggestions on arranging the equipment, choosing patterns that are easy for a number of people to use, and saving expense in little ways. If you are helping to manage a sewing room as part of the relief work in your neighborhood, the Bureau will be glad to send you this pamphlet. It's called, "Community Sewing in Relief Programs." These are certainly days to pass along to our neighbors any expert knowledge or surplus material we may have that they can use.

By the way, do you know what kind of a diet plan your local relief agency is following in aiding needy families? Without the advice of a trained dietitian or a well-thought-out plan it isn't easy to make sure that people are getting the kind of food that safeguards health. This is especially important for families with children. For if young children don't get the right kind of a diet they're bound to be handicapped for life with rickets and poor teeth and the other effects of undernourishment. So we've worked out diets for the use of relief agencies. These show just how many quarts of milk and pounds of flour and vegetables and so on to allow for a family of 2 persons or with anywhere from 1 child to 5. We don't consider these diets ideal. They're anything but. They simply show how to divide the food money when people are down to bedrock. So, if in your community relief work you need a low-cost family food budget, write to the Bureau of Home Economics, at Washington, D. C., and the specialists there will try to get it back to you by return mail.

To go with the salt pork, which the State and local relief agencies are now distributing, we prepared a printed sheet with a dozen good ways of serving this meat. One of the best we think is salt-pork and whole-wheat hash. I believe I can tell you how to make this in just a few words. First, of course, you boil the whole-wheat grains until they are tender. And you cook the lean salt pork in water and chop it. If your meat is very salty, you'll need to change the water a time or two. Then you fry a sliced onion in some of the salt-pork fat and add equal quantities of the cooked whole wheat and the chopped cooked salt pork. If you'd like, add some chopped green pepper or carrot. As soon as the hash is hot all through, it's ready to serve. Of course, in place of the cooked whole wheat you can use rice or hominy. And chopped cooked corned beef would be good in place of the pork.

The Bureau is also working with many of the committees of the NRA and the other organizations making codes. Naturally, they are representing the consumer every time. They want to see quality standards written into these codes so that women can tell what they are buying. But that's another story and must wait till another day.

Tomorrow we'll have a talk about holiday cookies, easy to make at home. And if you'll bring your pencils and paper, you can take down the recipe for those good cookies called best-ever which I'll give you at the end of the talk.

