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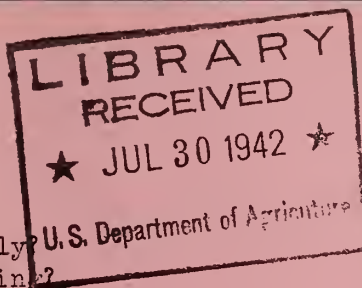


# homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE

Thursday, August 6, 1942



ANSWERS FROM:

Home economists of the  
U.S. Department of Agriculture

1.9  
In 3Hh

QUESTION BOX:

All right to buy flour in bulk?  
How use coffee and tea economically?  
Recipe for sour cream salad dressing?

—ooOoo—

Conscientious homemakers raise many questions in their efforts to make foods go as far as possible, to save on the use of the family car, and to waste nothing. Here are some questions of this kind on flour, coffee and tea, and sour cream. The home economists of the U.S. Department of Agriculture supply the answers to us.

A Pennsylvania woman writes as follows: "We are several miles from any store and because of gas and tire rationing can't shop often. Would it be hoarding if I should get a 100-pound bag of flour for the winter for family use, as we make our own bread in the winter?"

The answer to that letter is: You would be entirely patriotic and in no sense a hoarder if you buy whatever amount of flour you can store properly. That means storing if possible in steel, tin, or some other tight container, safe from mice and insects, in a moderately cool place. Take out only a small supply of flour at a time for kitchen use, and keep the rest tightly protected.

Whatever amount of flour you buy takes that much out of the dealer's hands and then he's able to stock more and help the general wheat storage problem a little. Just one word of warning from the nutritionists: Don't get into the habit of serving too many foods made with flour just because you have it on hand. If you do you'll find the family's nutritional balance is upset. Bake bread and other things as you usually do, but remember that flour and all the cereals are starchy foods, so serve plenty of fruits and vegetables in the day's meals, too.



So much for the question about buying of flour in quantity. Now one about coffee. Most everybody realizes that coffee and tea are becoming scarce because of shipping difficulties. One of our correspondents puts this question: "Please tell me how to make my coffee-drinking family satisfied with less coffee. I have heard that it is possible to boil the grounds over a second time, but I don't think my folks would stand for that. They like their coffee good tasting. And I'd like some similar tips on making tea go farther."

The home economists give these suggestions about stretching your supply of coffee: 1) Buy fresh coffee often, and have it ground when you buy it. Keep it in a can with a tight lid, even though it comes in a bag and keep it in a cold place.

2) Have the coffee ground fine--as fine as you can use for the kind of pot you have. Many coffee lovers prefer coffee made by the filter or drip method, but of course each family has its own preferences. Coffee ground for the drip pot can be used in many percolators, and it seems to go farther.

3) Measure accurately--both coffee and water--a level tablespoonful of coffee to a half a pint of water is the usual proportion. Don't waste coffee by making a large potful when you only want a cup or two. 4) Perhaps you can cut down on the number of times per day when you serve coffee; or on the number of cups for each person, or on the size of those cups. A small cup of really delicious <sup>coffee</sup>/may be more enjoyable than a very large cup of indifferently made or warmed-over coffee. 5) If you have been giving the children coffee, you can save by stopping that, because child feeding specialists consider milk and fruit juices the beverages for healthy children. 6) When you want to serve iced coffee, don't make it the wasteful way--pouring hot coffee over ice cubes. The cubes melt and dilute the coffee flavor. Make the coffee as usual and chill it. However, don't keep chilled coffee over for a second day's serving. Except for iced coffee to be used within an hour or two of making, always serve freshly made coffee. Warmed over coffee is never as good. As for using the grounds a second time, the home economists don't recommend it.



Many of the same tips hold for stretching tea. Most people use more tea than they need to in making a pot of tea. It pays to buy tea in bulk. Tea bags and tea balls are wasteful because each one holds enough tea to make four or five cups of pleasing strength instead of being dipped just once in a cup of hot water and then discarded. Make your tea in a china or porcelain or enamel pot. Measure the tea carefully. Use as little as you can to make tea of the strength you like. Steep the tea for only 4 or 5 minutes, and then strain into another warmed teapot, or directly into the serving cups.

As with iced coffee, the practice of pouring hot tea over ice cubes to make iced tea is especially wasteful. Make just as you do for hot tea, brew it full 5 minutes, and strain into a pitcher. Set it away to chill for several hours. Cubes of ice in the serving glasses will soon dilute the strength. So much for beverages, either hot or cold.

Finally we have a question about using sour cream in salad dressing. This writer asks, "Is sour cream salad dressing cooked or uncooked?"

And the home economists answer, "Either". If you want to make an easy uncooked sour cream dressing, whip one-half cup of sour cream. In another bowl mix 1 tablespoon of sugar, 1/4 teaspoon of salt, and a little pepper. Add 1 tablespoon of lemon juice and 2 tablespoons of vinegar to these dry ingredients; then stir this mixture gradually into the cream you have whipped. This is a good dressing for cabbage, cucumbers, or just plain lettuce.

Now for a cooked sour cream salad dressing. Beat 2 eggs very light. Add 1 cup of sour cream...one-half teaspoon of salt...one-fourth teaspoon of mustard...1 tablespoon of vinegar...and a few drops of tabasco sauce. Cook over hot water, stirring every minute until the dressing thickens—just as you make a soft custard. You can use this mixture hot on shredded cabbage for cole slaw, and then chill; or use it for hot potato salad, or let it chill and then use it like any cooked salad dressing.

More questions and answers next week.

