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December 18, 1941.

QUESTION BOX

Winter care of shoes?
Storing candied grapefruit
peel?
Goat's milk raw or pasteurized?
Economical fruit cake?

ANSWERS FROM:

Home economists, chemists and
dairy specialists of the U.S.
Department of Agriculture

--ooOoo--

Questions from the mailbag today include one on the care of shoes, one on economical fruit cake, another on storing grapefruit peel so it won't dry out, and an inquiry about goat's milk. Scientists in several bureaus of the U. S. Department of Agriculture provide all the answers.

The first letter is from a mother. She writes: "My boys are so careless with their shoes they wear them out in no time. We have the shoes mended and re-soled, of course, but even so, they don't last long. Can you suggest any ways to make the shoes last longer?"

Yes, the leather specialists of the Department suggest several ways to make shoes wear longer. And now is the time to suggest to your boys that we must all make things last for the sake of defense -- get them to realize that polishing shoes regularly isn't just a cranky whim of Dad's or teacher's. Polishing shoes feeds the leather, makes it pliable, and protects it.

Many shoes come to an early end because they get wet and then aren't properly dried. Waterproofing shoes helps protect them but doesn't take the place of rubber overshoes or rubber boots for walking in water, slushy snow, or soft mud.

If your boys happen to get their shoes wet, show them the right way to dry them. Dry them slowly -- never in a hot place like the top of a radiator, or in the oven or even too close in front of an open fire.

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The right way to dry shoes is this: First, wash off all mud with a damp cloth and wipe the surface as dry as possible. Oil the shoes lightly all over with castor oil. Rub it in well. Straighten the counters, heels, toes and vamps if they need it. Then stuff the shoes with crumpled paper, or, on the farm, with oats to keep their shape and absorb moisture. Set the shoes in a moderately warm place for several hours or overnight. Polish when dry.

If you want to waterproof the boys' shoes, here's a good mixture: 8 ounces of natural wool grease, 4 ounces of dark petroleum jelly or vaseline, and 4 ounces of paraffin wax. Melt all 3 ingredients in a shallow rectangular pan such as a bread tin, as large as the sole of the shoe. Let each shoe stand about 15 minutes in enough of this waterproofing mixture to cover the sole, and become saturated with the grease. But don't have the grease hotter than the hand can bear. Don't let rubber heels get in the grease. For shoes with rubber heels use a pie pan to hold the melted grease and set the shoe so that the heel is outside.

Well, we'll hope that with these directions this family's shoes will last longer. Our next question is about candied grapefruit peel.

"The candied grapefruit peel I make soon gets dry and hard. What can I do to prevent this?"

Store it in layers in a tin container having a tight fitting cover. Separate the layers with waxed paper. Even when packed in this way, the candied peel will dry out in time. But here's another idea:

Cook your grapefruit peel in the usual way, as if you were going to candy it. That is, boil it 3 times in water to get rid of the bitter taste. Then cook it slowly in sirup until it is transparent. But instead of cooking the sirup down until it is all absorbed, leave the peel in the sirup and store in jars. When you want candied peel, finish cooking in the usual way until the sirup is absorbed.

Here's a letter asking how to make an economical fruit cake with prunes.

The home economists have a recipe for a cake using dried fruit in which you can use prunes, raisins, or a mixture of dried fruit. The ingredients are 1 cup of chopped, soaked, prunes..... 2-1/4 cups of sifted flour..... 3 teaspoons of baking powder..... 1 cup of sugar..... 3/4 teaspoon of salt..... 1 beaten egg..... 3/4 cup of milk..... 4 to 6 tablespoons of melted fat..... 1 teaspoon of flavoring.

Sift the dry ingredients together. Add the chopped, soaked prunes. Combine the beaten egg, milk and fat. Add this mixture all at once to the dry ingredients and prunes. Then add the flavoring, and stir until smooth. Pour into a greased pan, and for a thin loaf cake, bake in a moderate oven -- (350 degrees Fahrenheit) for about 40 to 50 minutes. Or, if you want to make cup cakes, pour into greased muffin pans and bake in a moderate oven for about 30 minutes.

Now one last question -- this one about goat's milk -- often recommended for infants, children, convalescents and people with digestive disturbances, because apparently it's easy to digest.

"Should goat's milk be pasteurized? Our dealer sells it raw."

Specialists of the Department made a study recently to find out whether pasteurization effects the nutritive value of goat's milk. These scientists report that pasteurizing goat's milk has practically no effect on the food value, and the flavor and keeping quality of the milk are improved. They recommend pasteurizing goat's milk for the same reason cow's milk is pasteurized -- because it is susceptible to contamination by disease organisms. Raw milk may be a means of contracting undulant or Malta fever. If the dealer will not sell pasteurized goat's milk, you can pasteurize it at home.

And with that bit of information, we'll stop for today. More questions and answers on Tuesday.

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