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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Friday

November 3, 1933

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U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Bureau of Home Economics

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SUBJECT: "Cranberries for Winter Cheer." Information from the  
Economics, U.S.D.A.

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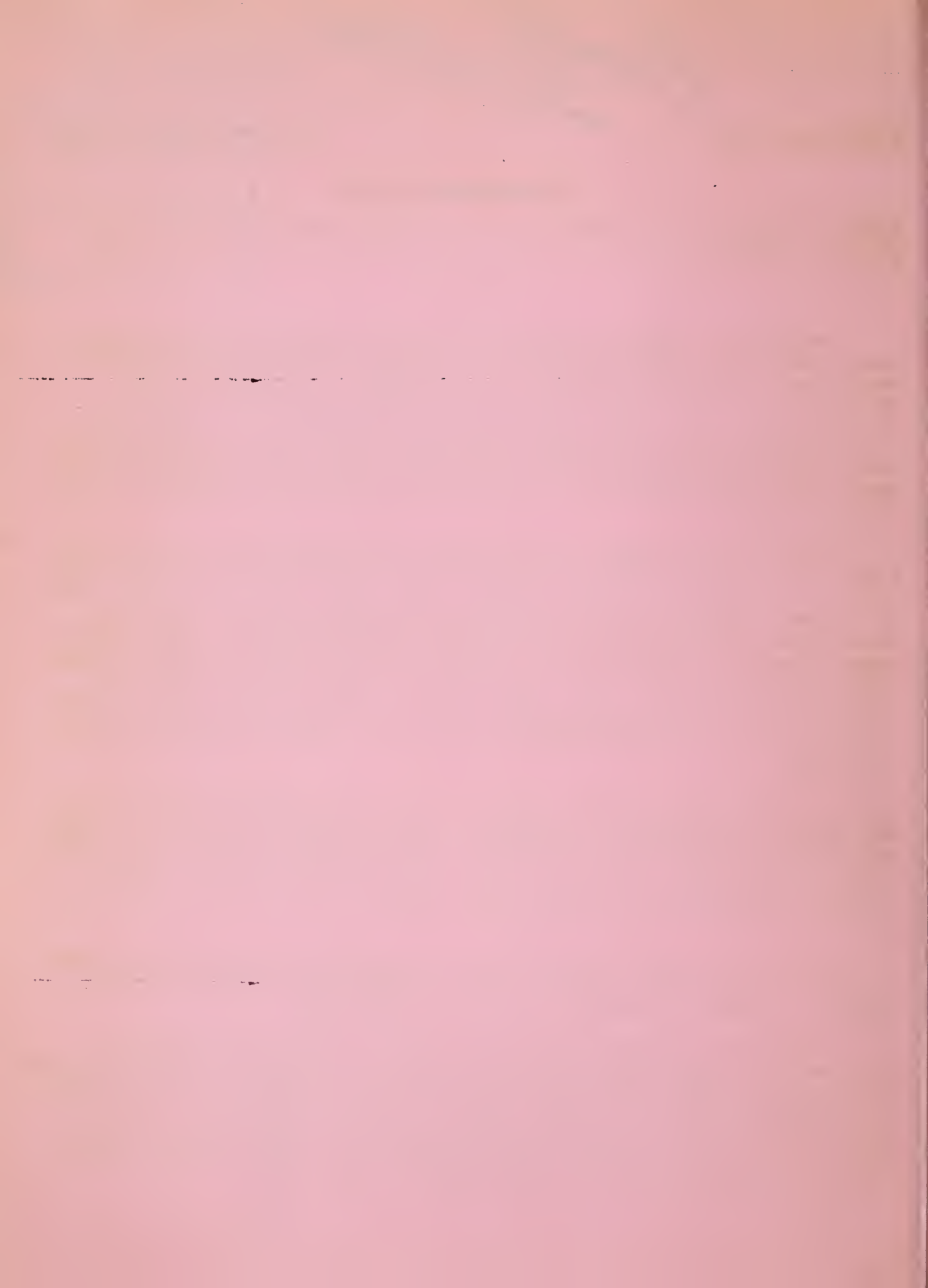
Sometimes I wonder if perhaps we don't get too practical and scientific in these talks of ours? What do you think? Sometimes I feel as if we didn't say enough about the gay and merry side of housekeeping. I thought about that yesterday when I went into a grocery store and saw a great pile of cranberries. Now cranberries of all fruits suggest gayety and good cheer to me. They're a festive, holiday berry that tradition says are a part of any true Thanksgiving or American Christmas dinner. So let's not mention vitamins and minerals and so on today. Let's just consider how we can use cranberries to best advantage to cheer up winter meals.

Color and tart flavor -- these are the two characteristics that have made cranberries popular. Just when all the world grows dull and cold and drab outdoors, these cheerful red berries arrive, ready to give color to our winter meals as well as a refreshing flavor. The bright color appears when you cook the cranberries. You know what a rich red shade cranberry jelly has -- and cranberry sauce, as well. The same is true of cranberry juice. That bright shade can do a lot toward cheering up the menu. For example, you can start your meal with a lively cranberry cocktail. Mix cooked cranberry juice with ginger ale or sweet pineapple juice or apple juice and serve icy cold. Another attractive appetizer for a winter dinner is a half grapefruit with a dab of bright cranberry jelly in the center.

You can use the cranberry color to touch up other foods lacking in color. For example, that stand-by -- applesauce. Add some stained cranberries to applesauce and you'll have a cheerful surprise. The apples will take on a nice reddish hue from the cranberry. The same is true of apple jelly and of such gelatin desserts as lemon jelly or sponge. Then, cranberry juice helps out the color of all fruit drinks, like punch for parties.

Now, if you want a rich red sweet for your meal, you can count on cranberry preserve, made with honey perhaps. And if you want a pretty fruit confection, nice for a garnish or decoration, try candied cranberries.

That honey cranberry preserve is an easy one to make. Use one cup of water, one and a half cups of honey and one quart of cranberries. Cook the berries in the honey and water until they are soft. Then remove the berries and continue boiling the sirup until it is thick enough to just cover the berries. Put the berries back in the hot sirup and pour the mixture into jars and seal. You'll find that this will be a better looking preserve if you prick each berry before cooking it and if you cook the berries slowly at first.



Here are two other cranberry ideas contributed by two radio friends. One friend says she serves hot cranberry sauce on waffles as a special treat to her family on Sunday morning. She makes the sauce extra sweet for this purpose. Another listener says that she slices cranberry jelly and cuts it into fanciful shapes to make garnishes for desserts and salads. She uses tiny cookie cutters for cutting these shapes.

And speaking of cranberry jelly, of course, you know that though cranberries make a firm jelly, this jelly weeps or becomes watery if the surface is cut. So mold the jelly in small containers or in a size sufficient for one day's use.

Cranberry relish, made with raw chopped cranberries and orange has a very lively flavor. It's excellent with roast meat or poultry. Run a pound of cranberries and one orange, rind and all, through the food chopper. Use the fine knife in the food chopper. Now add either a cup of sugar or a cup of strained honey and about a quarter teaspoon of salt to bring out the flavor. If you store this raw relish in a tight jar in a cold place you can keep it for two or three weeks.

Just to show you how good this cranberry relish is, let's plan a Sunday dinner featuring it. Let's have Baked chicken with stuffing for Sunday; then creamed turnips and buttered snap beans. Then the cranberry relish. For dessert, banana pudding and coffee.

Once more, that menu (REPEAT)

Time's almost up and only half the cranberry story is told. I haven't mentioned steamed cranberry pudding with cranberry sauce -- one of the best of winter desserts. We haven't even mentioned cranberry muffins and cranberry jam. Well, maybe you know how to make these things, anyway. Or maybe we'll have a chance to talk them over some other time.

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