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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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SUBJECT: "Keep It Clean" - Information from household equipment specialists of the United States Department of Agriculture

More precious than rubies...that's how the homemaker feels about her good kitchen range.

Don't know whether you've thought about it from this angle or not, but you've won half the battle of prolonging the life of your range when you keep it clean.

Here are some tips from household equipment specialists of the United States Department of Agriculture on keeping a kitchen range clean.

Chief thing you have to keep in mind when you clean the enamel surface of a range is to protect the glaze. Porcelain enamel is a kind of glass, you know. It's hard, but it can break with sudden changes of heat and cold. So a good rule to follow when you're cleaning your range is "Wait til it cools."

As you well know, there's a lot more to a stove than the bright and shining surface, however. And it's just as important that you keep all the other main parts of the stove clean too...the heating units...the oven racks...the drip pans.. and the broiler.

Do you ever use a toothpick to clean the gas burners of your range? Take the advice of household equipment specialists, "Don't". A fine wire makes a much better tool for this purpose because the toothpick may break and further clog the burner.

Ordinarily, the only equipment you need for cleaning the range is a cloth and a pan of warm soapy water. For stubborn spots, you may need a finely powdered cleaner. Whiting is good for this. If you can't get spots off the oven racks or the broiler, try rubbing it lightly with a fine steel wool - grade double zero.

Wash the stove clean with a cloth wrung out of warm, soapy water. And just a note of caution if yours is an electric range. Don't get soap on the electric coils when you're washing your stove. It's bad for the coils. After you've washed the stove with warm soapy water, go over it again with a cloth wrung from clear, warm water. This will rinse off the soap. Then wipe all parts dry.

