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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "Living on Your Own Food Supply." Information from the Extension Service, U.S.D.A.

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Farm families in many parts of the country have been doing their own relief work in the past few years. Of course, you know how people have turned to home gardens and home preservation of food, how they have been trying to produce what they are unable to buy, and how they have sought information on gardens, canning and preserving, soap making, remodeling clothes, repairing and making furniture, from specialists and extension workers of the State agricultural colleges. The new slogan is: "Every home its own factory, if necessary, organized to live on what it has." Perhaps the home production of food has been the most helpful of all this home-made relief.

The woman who has her pantry stocked with enough canned, dried and stored food to carry her family through the winter and who has a garden to supply fresh food in summer can look at the future with confidence, even when money and jobs are scarce. In her pantry supplies she is saving dollars and providing food and good health at the same time.

Plan your canning early, say the specialists. Figure out on paper just how much and what kinds of food you will need to preserve for the winter. The one who lives in a part of the country where winters are long, will need to can, dry and store more food than the one who lives in the South where fresh foods from the garden are available most of the year. Of course, you'll plant your garden to correspond with your canning plans. The extension agent in your county will give you information on gardens and on making a canning budget to suit your climate. You can adjust this budget to the size of your family.

How have these home-made relief plans worked out? I'll answer that question by two reports from women who actually tried them last year. A New York State homemaker writes that her family is living almost entirely on home-grown foods. She says, "Our family is by no means exceptional. On the contrary, we are typical of many others who are using their land and other resources for everyday needs and who save all the money they can for taxes and interest on mortgages. Our family includes my husband, myself, two boys of nine and two, and a hired man. We are fortunate in having good cows and hens so that each person eats plenty of eggs and milk. Besides drinking milk, we eat it in Dutch cheese which I make fresh almost every day, and in other cheeses made at a regular cheese factory in exchange for milk. We keep bees for honey and we get maple syrup from our trees. Last year our garden furnished more than a bushel of beans, plenty of corn for





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both canning and drying, tomatoes, greens, and many other vegetables used fresh and for canning. Potatoes, carrots, beets, onions, turnips, cabbage and parsnips, grown in the garden, we simply stored in the cellar or in a vegetable pit outside. We had quantities of apples, some strawberries, more cherries than we could use, pears, plums, blackberries, currants, gooseberries and rhubarb, so I preserved them all. We butchered and besides the meat we used fresh, we canned 40 quarts of beef and 145 pounds of pork products. Wood from our own land gave us fuel in cold weather, but we had to buy coal-oil for our summer stove and for lighting. We had to buy very few articles during the whole year. In groceries we bought flour, tea, coffee, some sugar and molasses, soap, spices, raisins, butter and cereals. We bought the cereals in bulk at the mill so they cost only about three cents a pound."

That's the story of the way a New York State family lives on what the farm provides.

In Texas, Arkansas and some other states "pantry stores" -- family food supplies raised and preserved at home according to a food budget -- have been popular features of the home demonstration work. Here's how the wife of a Texas tenant farmer supplies her family with food for the year. She writes:

"I started my pantry by planning my garden. Though I had a quarter-acre fenced for a garden already, I added to it space for beans, peas, potatoes, pumpkins, kershaws, tomatoes, squash and cucumbers -- altogether 45 varieties.

"In order to buy a pressure canner and sealer and other canning equipment, I sold butter and chickens. My sister provided cans in return for some of the canned products. Then I worked out a canning budget to meet the needs of my family. The extension agent gave me a budget for an average family of five showing that buying the food needed would take \$650 a year. I learned that my family would need two hogs to supply meat; two milk cows for butter, milk and cheese; sixty pullets for meat and eggs; and about 800 cans of fruits and vegetables. My three hogs furnished us with plenty of pork and lard. Then I canned 3 beef cattle on shares, getting over 125 cans for my part. My poultry also supplied meat. I started the year with 60 hens to raise chickens from, but only raised about 130. I kept my chickens culled all along and sold the cull birds when I needed to buy canning equipment. After I finished setting my hens I canned my 5 roosters and from then on had infertile eggs to use and sell. I also had a turkey flock of about 45. As for milk, we had two Jersey cows that supplied us with all the milk we needed, and also with cream for sale. I sold from \$1.50 to \$2.00 worth of cream each week.

For fresh vegetables during the fall and winter I planted a fall garden of ten different vegetables including radishes, lettuce, spinach, onions and beans. But I had canned enough leafy vegetables besides to supply us even if the garden had failed. I have stored enough pumpkin and kershaw for several families. We raised more than a wagon-load. We sold some and fed some to the hogs. We raised enough Irish potatoes in the spring to last the entire season and had at least 15 bushels of sweet potatoes from our garden. I had no orchard to supply the



fruit necessary but I had plenty of tomatoes. I sold chickens and bought strawberries and peaches. I have dried 45 pounds of black-eyed peas.

Altogether I put up 1,380 cans of food. I sold some to my sister and gave about 100 cans to my mother, so I have left on my pantry shelves 1000 cans for our use. After filling my canning budget I didn't have enough space to store my supplies -- not even a smoke house, closet or cellar. Fortunately, in the spring we had a dressmaking contest and I won a prize -- lumber, nails and paint. My husband made portable shelves for me using the design from the extension specialists, and now I can take my canned goods' storehouse with me whenever I move.

Tomorrow: "An Inexpensive Chinese Meal."

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