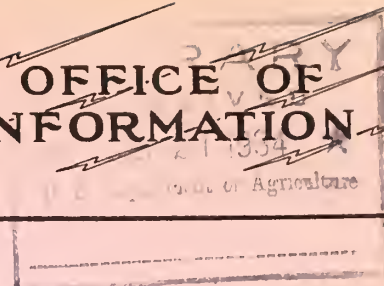


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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Friday, September 14, 1934.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "Fall Fruits." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

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An English statesman traveling in this country said recently that the chief difference between the English and the Americans was that Americans eat their dessert at the beginning of the meal while the English eat theirs last. He was referring to our custom of starting our meals with fruit -- fruit cup or fruit juice, chilled melon or grapefruit, and so on. The British hold to the tradition of eating their fruit last in desserts. Well, of course, we have fruit desserts, too -- plenty of them. But we probably consume the most fruit, first and last, of any country in the world. We go in for fruit at breakfast, in cocktails, in salads, and in fruit drinks as well as desserts and puddings.

But this rule applies to the lavish table. In homes where every penny spent for food counts and especially in cities where fresh fruit comes high in the market and you can't grow your own -- well, in such cases, we usually can't serve fruit so much.

But here's a season when we may well look over our fruit prospects. The summer fruits are gone but cantaloupes are still with us and grapes are just arriving -- a big juicy crop from the Ozarks. This is fall apple-time, too, but, unfortunately, this is a poor year for apples except in the Far West. It is a better-than-average year for pears, however. And bananas are cheaper than usual in many places.

Cantaloupes are good and also plentiful this year because we have had so much sunshine and dry weather. As you know, melons thrive and grow sweet with just moisture enough for their roots -- no more. Rocky Fords will be coming on the market all through September. And throughout the North Central and Eastern States the markets should offer plenty of home-grown melons.

Because home-grown melons can be vine-ripened, they can be much sweeter and have more true melon flavor than any others. Here's a pointer for any housewife who chooses her melons at the market. The fruit specialists say that no good cantaloupe has even a bit of stem left on it. A ripe melon comes off the vine almost at a touch, leaving a smooth place where the stem was attached. If the stem is still on the melon or if you can see evidences that it was cut off, you can know then and there that the cantaloupe was picked too soon. Generally, a ripe cantaloupe has a yellowish background under the network on its outer



surface. Look for this yellow color before you make your choice. Many people try to test the ripeness of the melon by pressing the stem end with their fingers. A ripe melon will yield to this pressure, of course, but so will one that was picked green and is going "soft."

This is a good year for grapes as well as melons. Grape buds form in the spring on wood that grows during the spring, so the cold weather that killed so many apple buds last winter didn't hurt the grapes. Ozark grapes are the first on the Eastern markets -- the earliest of the native American grapes except the muscadines in the South that aren't shipped much. Later will come the Michigan, New York and other northern grapes. All of these are of the slipskin variety and most of them are Concord. California and the West Coast produce the European grapes, the kind that are more solid and have skin and pulp that hold together. Western grapes have a higher sugar and solids content. Many of these are raised for wine and many for table use. This year's crop will contain plenty of both kinds.

We eat fruit because we like it, of course. But the food specialists offer other good reasons. Fruits have certain important nutritive values -- some more than others, of course -- and they answer a need in the diet. Their delicate fiber gives a helpful kind of bulk that is an aid in digestion. Then, although fruits are acid to taste, they are generally alkaline in their reaction in the body. This fact is important. Normally, the body is slightly alkaline. To keep it in this condition, we need to have a balance in our diet between foods that are alkaline and those that are acid-forming. Now, bread and cereals, meat, fish and eggs are acid-forming. So we need to balance these foods by vegetables and fruits which are alkaline.

Fruits like vegetables are also important for their vitamins and minerals. Food experts advise eating fruit raw and in generous amounts, if you want to get full value from them. You see, fruits are more than nine-tenths water so the food values in them are diluted and you must eat a good deal of fruit to yield enough of the vitamins and minerals they contain. But most fruits contain a considerable amount of natural fruit sugar. Cantaloupes, watermelons, grapes, bananas and yellow peaches are fair sources of the vitamins A, B, and C. In fact, you can get vitamin C in all fresh fruits. And you can get a fair amount of iron from grape skins which you may not eat fresh, but which are crushed and squeezed for grape juice, jelly, marmalade and so on, and dried for raisins and currants.

Just time for a Sunday dinner menu featuring autumn fruits.

Let's start the meal with an appetizer -- chilled new grape juice and ginger ale. Main course: Broiled slice of ham; Diced cucumber, boiled until just tender, creamed and served on crisp toast; Fried sweetpotatoes. For dessert, pears baked with sugar and lemon juice.

