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# homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE

Wednesday, February 2, 1944

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Subject: "PLENTIFUL FOODS" Information from food distribution officials of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

We used to be pretty careless about meals. But wartime meal-planning takes skill. We have money...points...food...and food value to deal with.

We have to budget our food money carefully, and make sure we don't pay more for food than ceiling prices require us to pay. And we have to budget ration points, too...for our ration stamps give us a fair share of important rationed foods. We also watch our grocer's stocks...for we want to avoid scarce foods in our meal plan, and use plentiful foods as often as possible. And finally there's the question of food value...we try harder than we ever tried before to serve our families nourishing meals.

Oddly enough...there's a relation between plentiful foods and nourishing meals. In fact, plentiful foods help us have nourishing meals. The more kinds of food that are plentiful, the easier our meal-planning becomes. But using plentiful foods is more than just a pleasure...it also carries with it a responsibility in this year of war. We must make use of these foods...and not let any go to waste. But that's not hard...we need these abundant foods to piece out our supplies of scarce ones.

In the months ahead, some abundances will be nationwide...some will be regional...but most of the abundances will be local. That may be due to unusually good growing conditions...or because in wartime there aren't enough trucks, freight cars, and storage warehouses to cart the food away or store it. Some abundances will last only a short time...others may go on a long while.

But the idea of abundances isn't new. You remember that you used to get



plenty of tomatoes in August...lots of oranges and grapefruit in January... potatoes in October...berries in June and July. You'd buy them to eat fresh, and to can. You knew that those you didn't buy and use would spoil...but it didn't seem to matter. Maybe you bought them...maybe you didn't.

But that was peacetime. Now, our war food program demands that we pay attention to these foods in abundance. That's one way we can prevent food waste ...conserve scarcer foods ...and at the same time make sure our families are well fed. Pay attention especially to local abundances. Your local nutrition committee will be able to tell you what foods are plentiful in your community. And you can think of lots of ways to use these foods in appetizing meals.

Heres's a thumb-nail sketch of foods that are relatively abundant now on the markets of the nation. You can expect to find plenty of these unrationed foods in most parts of the country during the month of February.

First of all, let's look at fresh fruits and vegetables. Cabbage is becoming increasingly plentiful. This vitamin-rich vegetable deserves a place on your menu as salad...or as vegetable, cooked as little as possible. Especially when other salad greens are harder to find, raw cabbage can make a variety of salads...and give you lots of vitamin C.

White potatoes are still plentiful in the stores...perhaps you have some wisely stored away in your cellar. Many families serve potatoes twice a day, in different forms, for this food is very nourishing. You get the most food value if you don't peel the potato, but boil it or bake it in its skin.

This is the time of year you can get lots of oranges and grapefruit...and they're a welcome sight. As often as possible we have the whole fruit or its juice for breakfast, to supply most of our vitamin C needs for the day. But we can also use the citrus fruits as fruit cocktail, salad, or dessert. Fresh carrots and spinach will also be plentiful in many parts of the country.



if you have a full-time job, and every minute counts in preparing meals... then frozen vegetables make a big difference. And right now you can find plenty of frozen vegetables in stores that handle frozen foods. All frozen vegetables except corn, peas, and lima beans have been given a ration value of zero...so you can leave those ration books at home when frozen vegetables are in your meal plan. Frozen baked beans are also ration-free and abundant, so you'll want to buy them as often as you can. If there were a bubbling pot of baked beans on Saturday night's supper-table...no one would guess that you'd come home from work and quickly popped the frozen kind into your oven. And here's another unrationed time-saver; canned green and wax beans.

Eggs head the list of abundant protein foods. They're a nourishing food, and you'll easily think of ways to use them. Of course, in some places the price stays rather high even when there are plenty of eggs. But use them as often as you can. Young children need at least 4 or 5 eggs a week. Grown ups may well eat from 3 to 5 eggs a week...though, if possible, every member of the family should have an egg a day. Every additional egg in the diet means added food value. And there are hundreds of good recipes for eggs. As for other protein foods...pork and the variety meats are also abundant.

Even though butter isn't on the plentiful list, two tasty bread spreads are abundant and unrationed. Peanut butter is one...citrus marmalade the other. You can use both these spreads in cooking... in cakes, cookies, and other dishes ...as well as in lunch-box sandwiches. Sometimes you might try a delicious sandwich spread combining the two.

Soya products are still plentiful...and we're using more and more of these foods to supplement our meat supply and step up the nourishment of our meals. Stores in many sections of the country keep soya products in stock now...you can get soya flour or grits, or a soya pancake or muffin mix, and other soya products.

And to conclude our sketch of plentiful foods...one of the most important and abundant kinds is the cereal foods. That means we have plenty of whole wheat, rye, and enriched white bread...plenty of flour...plenty of breakfast cereals...and lots of biscuits and crackers.

So take heart. Many foods are plentiful in your local store. Pay attention to them...and the job of feeding your family good meals this winter will be easier.

