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Housekeepers' Chat

Mon., Feb., 6/28

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "What's Wrong With This Menu?" Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture. Program includes new recipe for Gingersnaps, not in Radio Cookbook.

--ooOoo--

Today's subject was suggested by a letter from a young housewife who is learning to plan well-balanced meals. When I read her letter, please write her menu. Then we'll see what's wrong with it.

This is the letter: "Dear Aunt Samay: I am much interested in planning meals which are wholesome, attractive, and appetizing. Last week I planned a meal which I thought would be extra nice, but I must say that it was not a grand success. I served Stuffed Round Steak and Gravy, Mashed Potatoes, Winter Squash, Buttered Beets, Apple Pie, and Cheese. It seemed to me that the meal lacked something, and I don't know what. Will you tell me wherein I failed? Sincerely yours, Mrs. B."

Did you write Mrs. B's menu? Stuffed Round Steak and Gravy, Mashed Potatoes, Mashed Winter Squash, Buttered Beets, Apple Pie, and Cheese.

What's wrong with it? Too much starch, for one thing. Bread in the steak stuffing, and two starchy vegetables, potatoes and winter squash. The meat gravy adds still more starch, and fat. Did you notice that both vegetables are prepared the same way? Both are mashed. The third vegetable is buttered beets. The flavors of winter beets and winter squash are too much alike, and their color combination is not a bit attractive.

So much for the first course. On top of this starchy, monotonous first course come pie and cheese, also rich in starch, and fat. What does the meal lack? Something fresh and green and snappy; something with succulence, and vitamins.

My friend the Menu Specialist took this dull and uninteresting meal, waved a magic wand over it, and made it both well-balanced and attractive. First, she says, a generous supply of stuffing should be made for the steak, so that a starchy vegetable will not be needed. Use the beets, with chopped dill pickles, in a salad, and have five-minute cabbage as the hot vegetable. For dessert, what could be better than plain old-fashioned apple sauce, with ginger cookies to give the right amount of pep? I have the recipe for the ginger cookies right here in my apron pocket.

Now you may cross out the first menu, and write the second: Stuffed Round Steak with Gravy; Five-Minute Cabbage; Chopped Beet and Dill Pickle Salad; Apple-sauce and Ginger Cookies. This meal is balanced well enough to please the most exacting person, and far more appealing than the first menu. Every one of the five food groups is represented, and in good proportion.

As to the recipes, if you will consult the Radio Cookbook, page 27, you will find directions for Mock Duck, which will apply equally as well to Stuffed Round Steak, with Gravy.

The Five-Minute Cabbage recipe is also in the Radio Cookbook, but I'm going to broadcast it again today. Any dish as popular as Five-Minute Cabbage deserves to be broadcast more than once. Seven ingredients, for Five-Minute Cabbage:

1 1/2 quarts shredded cabbage	2 1/2 tablespoons flour
3 cups milk	Salt, and
1 cup cream or rich milk	Pepper
2 1/2 tablespoons butter	

Once more, seven ingredients, for Five-Minute Cabbage: (Repeat)

Cook the cabbage, for 2 minutes only, in the 3 cups of hot milk. Add the cup of cream or rich milk, the blended butter and flour, and the seasoning. Cook rapidly, for 3 or 4 minutes. The result is a crisp vegetable, delicate in flavor and color.

The next recipe is a new one, for Gingersnaps, tested last month by the Bureau of Home Economics. Seven ingredients, for Gingersnaps:

1 cup molasses	1 to 2 tablespoons ginger
1/2 cup fat	1 1/2 teaspoons salt, and
3 1/4 cups flour	1/2 teaspoons soda
2 tablespoons sugar	

Seven ingredients, for Gingersnaps:(Repeat)

Heat the molasses to the boiling point, and add the fat. Remove from the fire, and stir until the fat is melted. Sift the dry ingredients. Mix them with the molasses and shortening. Chill the dough, thoroughly. Then roll it out very thin, and cut into cookies. If the dough is thoroughly chilled it is not necessary to flour the board. Bake the cookies in a slow oven. Remove them from the pan before they cool. Store in a tin box, when cool, to keep crisp.

To repeat the menu: Stuffed Round Steak with Gravy; Five-Minute Cabbage; Chopped Beet and Dill Pickle Salad; Applesauce and Ginger Cookies. There's nothing wrong with that menu.

Questions and answers are next.

First question: "Please tell me what gelatin is made of, and why it is of value in the diet."

Answer: Gelatin is a protein food, extracted from the bones and tissues of animals. Its greatest value in the diet lies in combination with other foods. For instance, gelatin combined with milk, eggs, sugar, and flavoring,



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makes a very palatable and nutritious dessert, called Spanish Cream! This recipe, by the way, is in the Radio Cookbook. Very healthful desserts are made of fruit juices, especially fresh kinds, such as orange and lemon juice, combined with enough gelatin to give them a jelly-like consistency.

Second question: "Can whole wheat be prepared at home into a good breakfast food?"

Answer: Whole wheat may be easily prepared at home, into an appetizing breakfast food. After the wheat is cleaned and picked over, it may be ground in a hand mill, and then cooked with salt and water in a double boiler. Or the whole wheat grains may be cooked under steam pressure.

Third question: "Do you have any recipes for cakes and cookies which require no eggs?" Yes, indeed. I'm sending you a copy of the Radio Cookbook, in which you will find recipes for Applesauce Cake, Coffee Cake, and Scotch Wafers. No eggs in these recipes.

Fourth question: "I have heard that a loose-leaf budget book has just been compiled by the Bureau of Home Economics. Will you tell me how to get a copy of the book?"

Answer: The loose-leaf household account book can be bought for 50 cents a copy, from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C. It is made out according to the budget plan, and I believe it will prove very useful to homemakers, in keeping account of family expenditures. In ordering this loose-leaf household account book, send your 50¢ directly to the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., and ask for the book entitled "A Record of Family Expenditures."

One more question, and this is from a little boy. I can tell by the handwriting. "Dear Aunt Sammy," he writes, "do you know anything about building rabbit houses?" I'm sorry to say that I never built a rabbit house in my life, but I will send you a copy of a new leaflet, issued two months ago by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. It is called "Rabbit-House Construction." I'll be glad to send it to anyone else who wants working plans and bills of materials, for building rabbit houses.

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