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Housekeepers' Chat

Friday, November 7, 1930

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

Not for Publication

"Fish Chowder for Dinner." Menu and recipe from Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

Bulletin available: "Aunt Sammy's Radio Recipes," and "Home Baking."

--ooOoo--

"Miss Menu Specialist," I said the other day, "aren't you ever going to serve us a fish chowder?"

"Well, of all things!" said the Menu Specialist. "What a coincidence! The minute I saw you coming up the steps, I thought to myself: 'Why not have a fish chowder in the menu?'"

I looked at the Menu Specialist gravely and seriously, but so far as I could tell, she meant nothing personal.

"A Fish Chowder," said the Menu Specialist, "with Toasted Rolls and Cold Slaw. Then for dessert -- What do you want for dessert, Aunt Sammy?"

"Apple Sauce and Doughnuts. Just that."

"And Cheese," added the Menu Specialist. "Apple Sauce and Doughnuts and Cheese."

Before I left the Menu Specialist, I copied her favorite recipe for Fish Chowder. Would you like to write it now? Ten ingredients, for Fish Chowder:

1-1/2 pounds fresh cod, haddock, or any other large fish	1 onion, chopped
2 cups diced potatoes	2 tablespoons flour
1 cup diced carrots	1 pint milk
1 quart water	Salt
1/4 pound salt pork, diced	Pepper

Ten ingredients, for Fish Chowder: (Repeat)

Cut the fish into small pieces. Remove the bones and skin. Cook fish, potatoes, and carrots in the water for 15 minutes. Fry the salt pork until crisp, and remove from the fat. Cook the onion in the fat until yellow. Add the flour. Stir until well blended. Add the milk. Add this mixture to the fish and vegetables. Add the salt and pepper. Stir frequently, and simmer for 10 minutes longer. Add more seasoning if necessary, and

serve over crackers.

And that's the Fish Chowder. Besides Fish Chowder, we're serving Toasted Rolls, Cold Slaw, Apple Sauce, Doughnuts, and Cheese.

Now let's see what's in the question box. Here's a question, on pretty pale blue stationery.

"Please tell me, Aunt Sammy, how to sew in sleeves, so the right sleeve will be in the right armhole, and the left sleeve in the left armhole."

I could answer this question, right here and now. I could go on, and tell you what to do for sleeves that are too large at the armscye, too large at the bottom, for sleeves that twist, or wrinkle, or draw, or bind; for sleeves that are too tight around the upper arm -- in short, I could give you a remedy for all the defects that sleeves are heir to. But why should I? A friend of mine, who is an authority on fitting garments, has written a bulletin called "Fitting Dresses and Blouses," which contains 30 pages of practical, usable information for the home dressmaker. Shall I send you her bulletin?

Second question: "I have heard that aluminum cooking utensils are dangerous to health. Is there any truth to this statement?"

As far as scientific investigation has gone at the present time, there is no proof for the statement that aluminum cooking utensils are dangerous to health. Certainly we know that they are being used in households all over the country, and that people are suffering no ill effects. Research studies on this subject are being carried on at the Mellon Institute of Industrial Research, at the University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. You might write there, for any material they may have for distribution.

Next question: "Will you please send me a recipe for Rice Waffles."

Answer: I am sending you the bulletin called "Rice as Food." It contains a recipe for Waffles made with Rice, and a good many other rice recipes. Another good bulletin for your kitchen library.

Next: "Do you have any directions for making Cottage Cheese?"

Yes, "Making and Using Cottage Cheese in the Home." This bulletin also contains some mighty good cottage cheese recipes.

Fifth question: "Will you please tell me how to keep raisins and nuts from falling to the bottom of a cake?"

Answer: To prevent raisins and nuts from falling to the bottom of a cake mixture, they should be well covered with flour. Use part of the flour called for in your recipe; otherwise, the cake mixture will be too stiff.

Sixth question: "How can I keep my pastry shells from puffing up when baked. I use baking powder in my pastry shells."

Answer: It is better not to use baking powder in pastry, for this is

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likely to make it puff up, in just the way you describe. Roll your pie crust thin, and prick it in a number of places before you bake it. Don't bake your pastry shells long ahead of time. If you want to make a quantity of pastry dough, better cover it up and keep it in the refrigerator. Roll out the dough, and bake your pastry shell just before they are to be used.

Last question: This one's so good I'll have to read the letter: "Dear Aunt Sammy: I am wondering if you could tell me where my trouble is in making baking powder biscuits. They are just as hard as they can be on the outside. My husband says he has to crack the outside shell, before he can eat them. This will probably give you an idea as to how hard they are."

That's all of the letter. I strongly suspect that this housewife bakes her biscuits too long. Or perhaps she is not following a good recipe. I'm sending her a copy of the Baking Bulletin, which contains recipes for biscuits, bread, cakes, pies, cookies and so forth. This bulletin is free. Anybody else want it, for her kitchen library?

Monday: "Vegetables to Serve With Meat."

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