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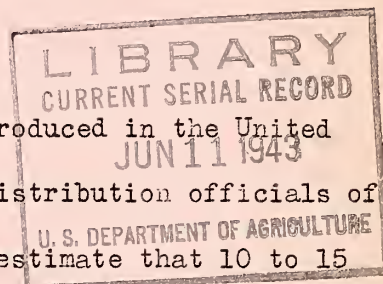
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Wednesday, May 26, 1943

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SUBJECT: "FOOD WASTE AND THE WAR." Information from feed distribution officials of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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Do you know that 30 to 40 percent of the food produced in the United States goes to waste? That's the estimate of food distribution officials of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. And they also estimate that 10 to 15 percent of this amount goes to waste in homes. You have probably often heard that an average European family could live on the food the average American family throws away. Is it any wonder the United States has been called the most wasteful nation in the world?



Here are more figures on American food waste: A study of garbage collection in 48 representative cities showed that food thrown away averaged two-fifths of a pound for each person every day. Over a year this amounts to 235 pounds of food waste per person. In one city the garbage collection totaled as much as 532 pounds for each person a year. Today with much of the world's population hungry these facts are important. Today when the Government is urging farmers to raise more food...when wartime food shortages are occurring here in the United States, this waste of food is something to think about. Saving food from waste amount to the same thing as raising more food.

And more than food goes to waste when garbage cans fill up. The labor that went into growing, harvesting, and processing the food...the transportation and ware-housing facilities that got the food to market...the retail clerks who packaged, displayed and sold the food...and finally the garbage trucks and men who picked it up and hauled it away...all are a waste

along with the food.

These are facts Americans at war may well think about when they leave food on their plates or let it spoil for lack of care.

Much good food goes to waste in grocery stores. You will probably say that this waste is no fault of yours. But too much handling of food by customers...too much insistence on buying only top grades...as well as the habit of buying the week's food supply on Friday and Saturday rather than on other less busy days of the week are all causes of food waste in stores. Spreading your shopping through the week would probably cut waste in grocery stores by at least half.

Food goes to waste in homes by poor storage...wasteful cooking and preparation...too big helpings on plates.

The study of garbage in 18 American cities showed that 15 percent of all food thrown away by housewives is bread. This is partly because housewives have not made it a habit to use breadcrumbs, dried bread crusts and "heels" of loaves. If each family in the United States threw out just one slice of bread a week, it would total 34 million slices or nearly 2 million loaves.

Mold causes much of this waste of bread, especially in summer. To keep bread safe from mold, store it when thoroughly cool in a clean, well-aired, covered, and ventilated bread-box or other container. Wash the bread box often in hot soap suds...rinse with boiling water...dry thoroughly, preferably in the sunshine or in the oven. As soon as you find a moldy piece of bread in your bread box, throw it out. Then wash, scald and sun the box so the mold won't spread to the rest of the bread. Remember that moisture and heat encourage mold to grow on bread and other food.

Now for some tips on caring for meat, milk and eggs...three of our most important foods. Keep fresh meat, meat with a mild cure, and poultry in the coldest part of your ice box with only a loose cover over it. Uncooked, well-cured meat, like well-cured ham or bacon, will keep in a dark, cool, dry, airy place, not necessarily the refrigerator. Leave the wrappings on ham, bacon and other cured meats until time for cooking them. As for cooked meat, keep that cold and covered. Remember that chopped and sliced meat spoils more quickly than meat in one piece, so cut or chop just before using. Meat sandwiched or salads should stay cold right up to serving time. As for chicken and other poultry, wash it inside and out, then pat dry with a clean towel before putting it on ice. Fish and sea food spoil in a few hours at room temperature. So cook fish at once, or wrap it in wax paper, and keep in the ice box. The wax paper wrapping is to keep the fish odor from reaching other foods in the ice box.

Milk and cream are the most perishable and easily contaminated of all foods. Since they are usually served uncooked, they can be a menace to health if not cared for properly. Make it a rule never to let milk stay out of the ice box for long. When cooking with milk, take out only the amount you need and let the rest stay cold. Don't pour leftover milk back in with the fresh milk in the bottle. Keep food with strong odors away from milk. Wash all milk containers with soapsuds, scald often, sun when possible.

As for eggs, don't wash them until just before using because washing takes off the protective film over the shell that keeps out air and odors. If eggs are soiled, wipe them with a dry, rough cloth. Store eggs in an open bowl or wire basket in the ice box.

The amount you save in your kitchen may seem of little consequence to you, but a little saved in each of 34 million homes adds up to a lot. Government officials estimate that if all the food wasted last year had been saved, it would have been enough to supply the entire needs of our armed forces and allies. What you do with your food is no longer your own business. It is now of world-wide concern.

