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FOOD for the YOUNG COUPLE

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FOOD for the YOUNG COUPLE



The newlyweds, Helen and John Young, are well established in their first home. Helen keeps the apartment and prepares the meals in addition to her full-time job as secretary to the local school board.

Helen insisted that their first apartment have a convenient, well-equipped kitchen because she realized the demands there would be on her time and energy as a working wife. The efficient work centers, the good range, and the refrigerator with its freezing compartment are real aids in meal preparation and management.

Shower and wedding gifts provided the Youngs with many of the kitchen tools and utensils they needed. Helen's mother added other pieces, both new and used. The Youngs' starting set of kitchen tools and utensils is listed on page 15.

Helen likes to cook and enjoys trying out her shiny new pans and kitchen gadgets. She intends to prepare wholesome, attractive meals for her young civil engineer husband and herself and get full value for every food dollar they spend.

The Youngs Are Budget-Wise

Helen and John budget carefully, even though they are starting out on a double salary. Helen plans to work only until their first baby is born. In the meantime their combined incomes must cover monthly installments on a new car, payments on furniture, savings for a future family, and living costs.

All current expenditures, including the amount spent for food,

are held within certain limits.

The Youngs kept a record of their food bills for several weeks, then set up a food budget of \$20 to \$22 a week. When they need to economize, they cut costs within the food groups as suggested on page 7.

The initial purchases that John and Helen made to stock up on staples cost about the same amount as their average weekly

food bills—\$20 to \$22. A list of the staples they bought on their first trip to the grocery is on page 14.

The \$20 to \$22 weekly food figure applies to weeks when John and Helen eat all breakfasts and all dinners at home and take their lunches to work. Lunches bought at work cost almost twice as much

as those brought from home. For weeks when they buy lunches at work the grocery bill is less but the total amount spent for food is more. If they eat dinner at a restaurant or if friends or relatives dine with them in the apartment, they charge the cost of food above their regular food budget to their recreation allowance.

Helen Plans Meals Ahead

In her high school homemaking class, Helen learned that one of the best ways to insure good nutrition on a limited budget is to plan meals ahead. Now that she is in her own home she makes a week's meal plans and grocery list at the same time. Thus she avoids impulse buying and last-minute meal combinations that may unbalance both the budget and the diet.

Helen makes her grocery list and menus flexible enough to allow for unexpected good buys she finds when shopping or for changes in meal plans during the week.

As she makes out her menus, Helen likes to check each day's meals to see if she and John are getting enough citrus fruit, dark-green and deep-yellow vegetables, milk and other high-quality protein foods, and bread or cereals every day.

A food plan that suggests the amounts of different groups of food for a week's nutritionally adequate meals serves as a foundation for Helen's market list. From the 11 food groups she selects foods that she and John like

and that combine into flavorful, balanced meals. One of the Youngs' weekly food plans and shopping lists is shown on pages 8 and 9.

Each day Helen serves citrus fruit or juice, tomatoes, or some other *vitamin C*-rich fruit, such as



strawberries and melon, when they are in season. To make certain she and John get enough *vitamin A* in their meals, she includes a vegetable from the dark-green and deep-yellow group three or four times a week. If she buys more from these two groups in a week than the plan suggests, she buys less from the other vegetable and fruit group. The latter group, she knows, is not an alternate for either the citrus-tomato or the dark-green and deep-yellow group. Beets, for example, cannot be substituted for foods in either of these two groups.

Meat, poultry, or fish appears in some form on the Youngs' table every day. To enhance flavor and protein value and help stretch the meat dollar, these foods, and milk or eggs, are sometimes combined with a cereal product, as in macaroni and cheese, or with dried beans, as in chile.

Whole-grain products, those enriched with added vitamins and minerals or those restored to whole-grain value, are served every day. These foods as well as refined cereal and bread products help out with calories and protein.

Milk is a vital part of the Youngs' food plan. Helen and

John know that milk helps protect the radiant health they now enjoy. They often drink milk as a snack, or it may appear in meals as cheese or as an ingredient in soup or dessert.

Helen scans cookbooks and the food pages of magazines and newspapers for menu ideas. She and John watch advertisements for food specials, compare prices, and often build meals around the meat bargain of the week. At times special sales of canned or frozen foods offer savings.

When Helen finds a meal combination that appeals to her, she tests it with these questions: "Will I have time to prepare it after work?", "Will we like it?", and "Is its food value worth the cost?" If the menu measures up, she tries it out. If it works well, she repeats her success. The menu may earn a place in her "tried and true" file of favorite meals.

For a week's sample menus, based on the Youngs' weekly food plan, see pages 10 to 13. In addition to the foods listed on the menus, Helen and John like coffee for breakfast, tea or coffee for dinner, and usually have milk or cheese for lunch. Butter or margarine is served with breads.

Yes, She Uses Convenience Foods

"Many of the ready-mixed, pre-cooked, and frozen foods," says Helen, "are just made for an after 5 o'clock cook like me!"

She finds that an increasing number of the "convenience"

foods really save time and money. She likes the large bags of frozen vegetables because the amount needed for one meal can be separated from the package without thawing. Frozen fish steaks and

sticks are often packaged for easy separation into amounts just right for serving one or two.

Helen can buy her favorite cake mix in a small package for a single layer cake. A package of muffin mix comes divided into portions for two separate bakings. A box of hot roll mix yields a single loaf of bread.

After a little experimentation and practice with cake, cooky, pie, roll, and muffin mixes, Helen can prepare an impressive array of baked goods with homemade flavor.

"There's nothing," John affirms, "that adds more flourish to a meal than bread fresh from the oven."

Supplies for making all these baked products from "scratch" would crowd the Youngs' limited storage space and might even become stale before Helen found time to use them.

Gelatin fruit desserts, mixed fruit cups, and fruit cobblers are favorites with the Youngs. Prepared biscuit or pastry mix makes quick work of a cobbler or tart that can be combined with a variety of fruits, berries, or a filling from a pudding or pie mix.

Helen likes to keep a can of applesauce chilled and ready in the refrigerator. Often it adds just the right touch to a meal. She spices it with a little powdered cinnamon or clove and serves it with the meat course or combines it with orange slices, cherries or crushed pineapple for dessert.

Prepared pudding mixes provide a whole family of quick desserts for the Youngs. Helen dresses up the puddings with fruit or berries or a dip of ice cream or sherbet. As a general rule, however, she and John prefer a simple dessert of fruit or cheese.

Mealtime at the Youngs'

Breakfast is a hearty meal but one that Helen prepares quickly. It starts with chilled fruit juice or fruit in season. Often the main dish is a bowl of ready-to-serve cereal, quick-cooking oatmeal or whole wheat cereal, and milk. If Helen serves eggs on a weekday morning she soft-cooks them to avoid washing a skillet. Instead of making toast from loaf bread she sometimes toasts biscuits, muffins, and rolls left from dinner the evening before.

Weekend breakfasts are leisurely, even festive. There may

be a fluffy cheese omelet, griddle-cakes or waffles with bacon or sausage, french toast and sirup, or a freshly-baked coffeecake.

Lunch preparation is an in-between job. Over the weekend Helen prepares and refrigerates sandwich fillings—cheese mixtures—mashed baked bean-onion-pickle combinations—chopped or ground meat and mayonnaise—peanut butter-date-carrot-spread mixtures. With these on hand, it takes only minutes to make sandwiches. Helen usually makes them the night before, slips them

into sandwich bags and into the refrigerator—ready for their lunch boxes the next morning.

Helen often hard-cooks eggs for lunch while she is cooking other meals. Raw vegetables for lunch, such as lettuce, carrots, celery, and green pepper, are washed, fully prepared, and wrapped tightly in plastic bags. They stay fresh and crisp in the food freshener of the refrigerator ready for the lunch boxes. Fruits to be used for lunch are washed when they are brought from the market.

Usually Helen and John buy their beverage at work. If they want to save money, they take milk or hot chocolate from home in small vacuum bottles. In winter, Helen often fills their vacuum bottles with hot soup.

John likes an early dinner on workdays, so Helen prepares food ahead whenever she can. In the morning, vegetables are made ready for cooking and for green salads, put in plastic bags, and refrigerated. Fruit gelatin salads are made the night before. Casserole dishes and meat loaves are combined and refrigerated ahead of time so they can go into the oven as soon as Helen gets home from work.

Occasionally when she is especially busy or hurried, Helen heats and serves precooked entrees, such as canned or frozen macaroni with cheese sauce, spaghetti with meat balls, boned chicken or turkey, corned beef, chow mein, or chop suey.

Sometimes Helen “cooks dou-

ble” to save time and energy. Enough food is prepared at one time to make four servings. Half of it is packaged for freezing or refrigerated for serving a day or two later. A small Sunday roast serves several meals; so does a baked ham end or a beef stew.

When rib roast is a good buy, Helen has a three-rib roast cut into steaks, then freezes some of the steaks for use later.

The Youngs find ground beef is the most versatile of meats. They like it in patties, curried over rice, combined with beans in chile, or made into meat loaf or meat balls.

Chicken, too, solves many meal problems for the small family. It is economical and combines effectively with vegetables and cereals in a variety of dishes. It can be bought whole (at a saving of several cents per pound), cut up, or by selected pieces. Instead of cooking all the pieces at one time, Helen often freezes some of the pieces and prepares them later.

She has also learned the economy and ease of cooking a whole meal in the oven when the oven is being used for meat or some other main dish. Oven meals give Helen a chance to use her pretty “range-to-table” casseroles, which permit cooking and serving in the same dishes—a saving of time and dishwashing.

When Helen prepares an oven meal she puts the vegetables in boiling, salted water in a covered casserole, times the vegetables to finish cooking at the same time as the main dish.

How the Youngs Cut Food Costs

Here are ways Helen cuts costs within the food groups:

- | | |
|---|---|
| MEAT, POULTRY, FISH,
EGGS, DRY BEANS AND
PEAS, NUTS | Buys weekend meat, poultry, and fish specials. Includes variety meats, such as liver. Saves several cents a pound by buying dressed chicken whole rather than cut up. Buys medium-sized eggs when they are one-eighth cheaper than large eggs, small eggs when they are one-fourth cheaper than large eggs. Increases purchases of dry beans and peas, peanut butter. |
| MILK, CHEESE, ICE
CREAM | Uses evaporated and nonfat dry milk instead of fluid milk. Reconstituted nonfat milk may cost less than half as much as whole fluid. |
| FLOUR, BREAD, BAKED
GOODS | Chooses only whole-grain or enriched products. Bakes quick breads, cakes, and pastries at home instead of buying expensive ready-baked items. |
| CITRUS FRUIT, TOMA-
TOES | Compares relative costs of fresh citrus fruits and fresh tomatoes and frozen or canned juices, buys whichever form is cheapest. Keeps in mind that 1 cup of orange juice has about three times as much vitamin C as 1 cup of tomato juice. |
| DARK-GREEN AND DEEP-
YELLOW VEGETABLES | Chooses the best buys in this group—usually kale, collards, carrots, sweetpotatoes, spinach, and winter squash. Substitutes these for those in “other vegetables and fruits” when they are less expensive. |
| POTATOES, OTHER VEGE-
TABLES AND FRUITS | Buys these vegetables and fruits fresh if they are plentiful and cheap. Selects Grade C or Standard pack canned vegetables and fruits rather than Grade B (Choice) or Grade A (Fancy). They are less expensive and just as high in food value. Buys frozen vegetables and fruits if they cost less per serving than fresh or canned. |
| FATS AND OILS | Saves fats from bacon, other pork, and chicken for use in seasoning and cooking. |

The Youngs' Food Plan for a Week (\$20 to \$22)

Kinds of food	Weekly plan for two (approximate amounts)	A sample of amounts of food needed weekly for two
Milk, Cheese, Ice Cream (milk—fresh fluid, whole, and skim; evaporated, dry; butter-milk; as cheese or ice cream)	7 quarts (1½ ounces of cheddar cheese or 1 pint ice cream equals 1 cup milk)	4 quarts whole milk 6 ounces nonfat dry milk (to make 2 quarts milk) ½ pound American cheese
Meat, Poultry, Fish (beef, veal, lamb, pork, including variety meats, and bacon and salt pork; all kinds of poultry and fish)	9 to 10 pounds	1½ pounds ground beef ¾ pound cube steak 3 pounds ham (bone in) ¼ pound bacon 3½ to 4 pounds frying chicken 12 ounces tunafish
Eggs	12 eggs	12 eggs
Dry Beans and Peas, Nuts (including lentils and peanut butter)	¾ pound	½ #303 can kidney beans ¼ pound peanut butter
Bread, Cereal, Baked Goods (flour or meal made from any grain, cereals to be cooked; ready-to-serve cereals, rice; hominy; noodles; macaroni; breads and other baked goods)	6 to 7 pounds of flour or cereal (count 1½ pounds of bread and baked goods as 1 pound flour)	3 loaves bread (1 enriched white, 1 rye, and 1 whole wheat) ⅓ pound flour ¼ pound rolled oats 6 ounces ready-to-serve cereal ¼ pound rice ¼ pound cornmeal 1 pound all-purpose quick bread mix 1 pound package cake mix 1 cylinder caramel-nut rolls 1 8-ounce package brown-and-serve rolls ¼ pound graham crackers ½ pound cookies ½ pound crackers
Citrus Fruit, Tomatoes (grapefruit, oranges, tangerines, other citrus fruits; tomatoes and tomato products)	5 to 6 pounds	1 6-ounce can frozen orange juice 1 #303 can grapefruit sections 1 #303 can stewed tomatoes 1 10½-ounce can condensed tomato soup 1 #2 can tomato juice

The Youngs' Food Plan for a Week (\$20 to \$22)—Continued

Kinds of food	Weekly plan for two (approximate amounts)	A sample of amounts of food needed weekly for two
Dark-Green and Deep-Yellow Vegetables (broccoli; chard, kale, collards, spinach, and other dark greens; carrots, pumpkin, sweet-potatoes, yellow winter squash)	1 to 2 pounds	$\frac{1}{2}$ -1 pound carrots 1 10-ounce package frozen broccoli 1 to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds sweetpotatoes 1 green pepper
Potatoes (white potatoes)	4 to 5 pounds	2 pounds white potatoes 1 ounce bag potato chips 1 9-ounce package frozen french-fried potatoes
Other Vegetables and Fruits (all vegetables and fruits not included in other vegetable and fruit groups)	12 to 14 pounds	$\frac{1}{2}$ #303 can beets 1 bunch celery 10 ounces frozen green snap beans (from 2-pound bag) 1 head lettuce $\frac{1}{2}$ pound onions $\frac{1}{4}$ 15-ounce jar pickles 2 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ounce cans condensed soup (1 vegetable-beef, 1 cream of mushroom) 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 pounds apples 1 to 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds bananas (4 bananas) $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 pound pears 1 family-size frozen cherry pie 1 #303 can fruit cocktail 1 #303 can peaches, sliced 2 ounces raisins
Fats and Oils (butter, margarine, salad oils and dressings, lard, shortening, meat drippings)	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds	1 pound margarine or butter $\frac{1}{3}$ pint salad dressing $\frac{1}{4}$ pint salad or cooking oil
Sugars, Sweets (beet and cane sugar: granulated, powdered, brown; maple sugar; molasses, sirup, honey, jams, jellies, preserves, candy, and dessert powders)	2 pounds	$\frac{1}{2}$ pound confectioner's sugar $\frac{1}{2}$ pound granulated sugar 1 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ -ounce package vanilla pudding mix 1 3-ounce package gelatin dessert powder $\frac{1}{4}$ pint sirup

The Youngs' Menus for a Week

SUNDAY

BREAKFAST

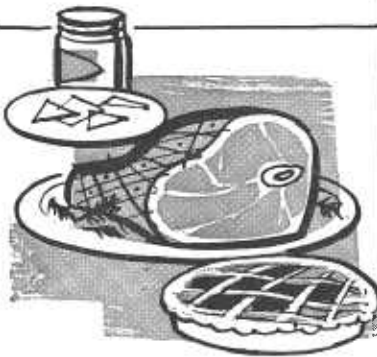
Grapefruit sections
Omelet
Caramel-nut rolls

DINNER

Baked ham
Baked sweetpotatoes
Green beans
Celery stuffed with cheese
Corn muffins Cherry pie

SUPPER

Vegetable-beef soup
Peanut butter Crackers
Cookies
Milk



MONDAY

BREAKFAST

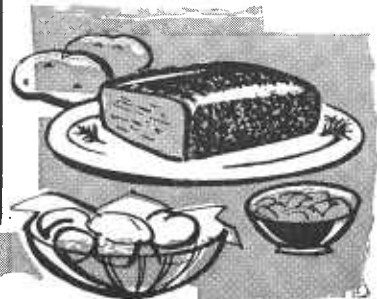
Grapefruit sections
Hot cereal with cinnamon
sugar, and milk
Toasted corn muffins

LUNCH

Cheese sandwiches
Carrot strips Lettuce
Potato chips
Banana Milk

DINNER

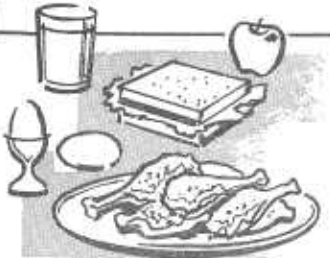
Meat loaf
Baked potatoes
Baked tomatoes and croutons
Lettuce salad
Brown-and-serve rolls
Cherry pie



TUESDAY

BREAKFAST

Orange juice
Soft-cooked eggs
Caramel-nut rolls



LUNCH

Meat loaf sandwiches
Celery strips
Apple
Milk

DINNER

Oven-fried chicken
Mashed sweetpotato
(from Sunday)
Whole beets
Green bean and onion salad
Brown-and-serve rolls
Fruit gelatin



WEDNESDAY

BREAKFAST

Sliced banana
Ready-to-serve cereal with
sugar and milk
Cinnamon toast

LUNCH

Hot tomato soup (in vacuum
bottle)
Tunafish salad sandwiches
Fresh pears
Graham crackers
Milk

DINNER

Orange juice—crackers
Sliced ham
Boiled carrots Creamed potatoes
Apple-raisin salad
Bread Cake



THURSDAY

BREAKFAST

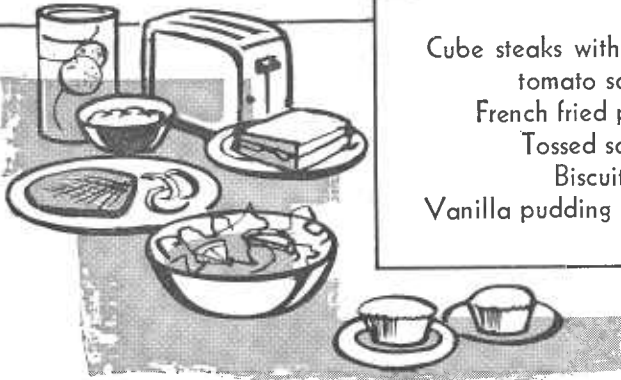
Orange juice
Hot cereal with sugar and milk
Toast

LUNCH

Sliced chicken sandwich
Lettuce
Pickles
Cake Milk

DINNER

Cube steaks with onions and
tomato sauce
French fried potatoes
Tossed salad
Biscuits
Vanilla pudding with peaches



FRIDAY

BREAKFAST

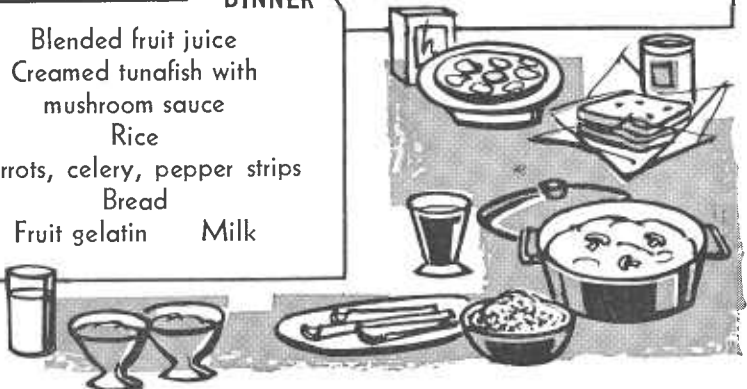
Sliced banana
Ready-to-serve cereal with
sugar and milk
Toasted biscuits

LUNCH

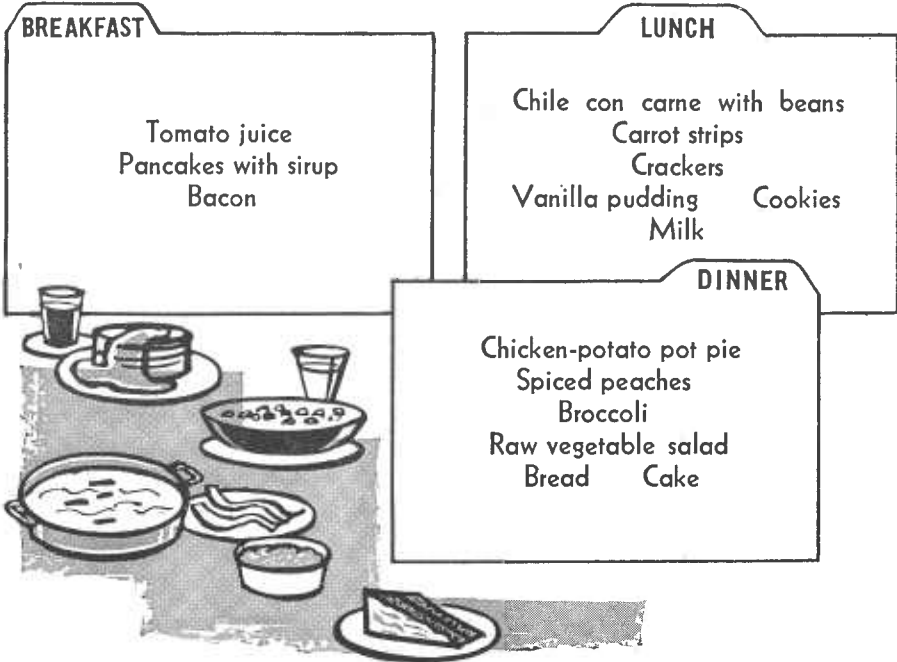
Peanut butter-raisin sandwich
Celery strips
Apple-cheese wedges

DINNER

Blended fruit juice
Creamed tunafish with
mushroom sauce
Rice
Carrots, celery, pepper strips
Bread
Fruit gelatin Milk



SATURDAY



Helen's Food Pattern for Pregnancy

Helen Young is a healthy young woman. She knows that her children will have a good start in life because she is well nourished and strong. She knows, too, that when she is pregnant, she must continue her good eating habits to insure her own and her baby's health.

Since her weight is normal, Helen will need only a slight increase in her usual food intake during the latter months of pregnancy. She will follow her doctor's advice about what to eat and how much weight to gain, and she will regulate her diet accordingly. Although the total calories she consumes each day will increase only slightly during the second half of pregnancy, she will need

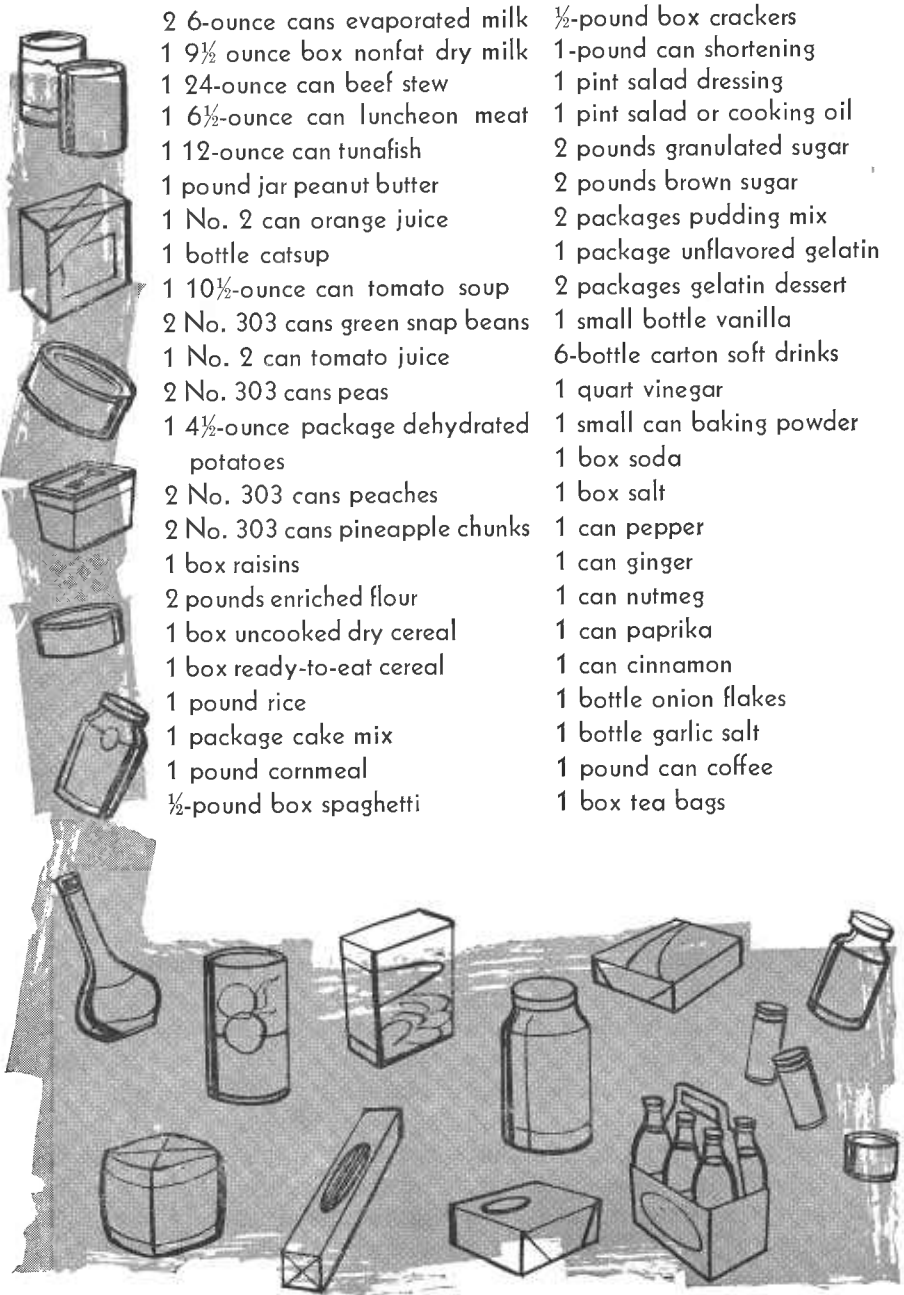
larger amounts of foods containing protein, calcium, iron and the vitamins than she now eats.

To supply these nutrients, Helen will increase their present weekly food plan as follows: Milk, cheese, ice cream by $3\frac{1}{2}$ quarts; eggs by 1 egg; citrus fruits, tomatoes by 1 pound; dark-green and deep-yellow vegetables by $\frac{3}{4}$ pound.

The amounts of other food groups in the Youngs' weekly plan will remain the same.

The doctor may prescribe some form of vitamin D for Helen during pregnancy. This may be obtained from vitamin D milk or a vitamin D preparation that provides at least 400 units of vitamin D daily.

Staples the Youngs Bought on Their First Trip to the Grocery



- 2 6-ounce cans evaporated milk
- 1 9½ ounce box nonfat dry milk
- 1 24-ounce can beef stew
- 1 6½-ounce can luncheon meat
- 1 12-ounce can tunafish
- 1 pound jar peanut butter
- 1 No. 2 can orange juice
- 1 bottle catsup
- 1 10½-ounce can tomato soup
- 2 No. 303 cans green snap beans
- 1 No. 2 can tomato juice
- 2 No. 303 cans peas
- 1 4½-ounce package dehydrated potatoes
- 2 No. 303 cans peaches
- 2 No. 303 cans pineapple chunks
- 1 box raisins
- 2 pounds enriched flour
- 1 box uncooked dry cereal
- 1 box ready-to-eat cereal
- 1 pound rice
- 1 package cake mix
- 1 pound cornmeal
- ½-pound box spaghetti
- ½-pound box crackers
- 1-pound can shortening
- 1 pint salad dressing
- 1 pint salad or cooking oil
- 2 pounds granulated sugar
- 2 pounds brown sugar
- 2 packages pudding mix
- 1 package unflavored gelatin
- 2 packages gelatin dessert
- 1 small bottle vanilla
- 6-bottle carton soft drinks
- 1 quart vinegar
- 1 small can baking powder
- 1 box soda
- 1 box salt
- 1 can pepper
- 1 can ginger
- 1 can nutmeg
- 1 can paprika
- 1 can cinnamon
- 1 bottle onion flakes
- 1 bottle garlic salt
- 1 pound can coffee
- 1 box tea bags

The Youngs' Starting Set of Kitchen Tools and Utensils

For top-of-range cooking:

- 1 double boiler, 1½-2 qt. (designed so each section can be used separately on top of range)
- 1 saucepan, 1-quart
- 1 saucepan, 3-quart
- 1 kettle, 6-quart
- 1 fry pan, 8-inch
- 1 fry pan, 12-inch

For the oven:

- 2 range-to-table casseroles with lids, 1-quart and 2-quart
- Cooky sheet
- 2 6-cup muffin pans (approximately 2¾ x 1¼ cup size)
- 2 layer cakepans, 8 x 1½ inch or 1 9-inch square pan
- 1 pie pan, 9-inch
- 6 custard cups
- Utility pan with rack
- 1 loaf pan

For accurate measuring:

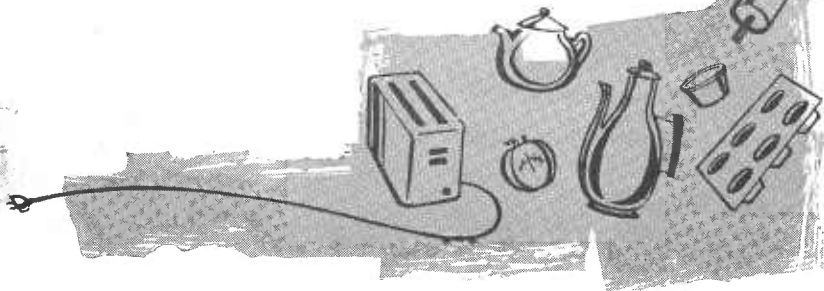
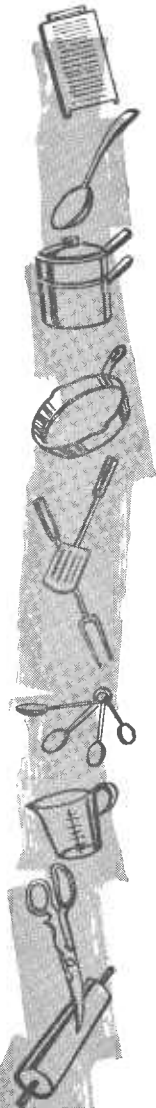
- 1 set measuring spoons
- 1 set dry measures (¼, ⅓, ½ and 1-cup)
- 1 qt. liquid measure
- 1 cup liquid measure

Other:

- Toaster
- Coffeemaker
- Teapot
- Timer

For food preparation:

- Small cutting board
- 1 fork, 2 tines, long handle
- 1 metal mixing spoon
- 1 slicing knife
- 1 3-inch paring knife
- 1 7-inch utility knife
- 1 butcher knife, 8-inch blade
- 1 peeler
- 3 mixing bowls (1-pint, 1-quart, 3-quart)
- 1 large cake cooling rack
- Juicer
- 1 pancake turner
- Pastry blender
- 1 spatula, 7-inch blade
- 1 rubber bowl scraper
- Combined grater and shredder
- Flour sifter
- Medium wooden spoon
- Rolling pin
- Egg beater
- Can opener
- Bottle or jar opener
- Colander or strainer
- 6-inch sieve
- Potato masher
- Vegetable brush
- Sink strainer
- Kitchen shears
- 4-6 refrigerator storage dishes



Helen Young's Kitchen Bookshelf

In her food planning and preparation, Helen often refers to the following publications available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250:



Food for Fitness—A Daily Food Guide. Leaflet 424.

Family Fare—Food Management and Recipes. Home and Garden Bulletin 1.

Food and Your Weight. Home and Garden Bulletin 74.

Money-Saving Main Dishes. Home and Garden Bulletin No. 43.

How to Use USDA Grades in Buying Food. Program Aid No. 708.

Storing Perishable Foods in the Home. Home and Garden Bulletin 78.

Prepared by
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Agricultural Research Service

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