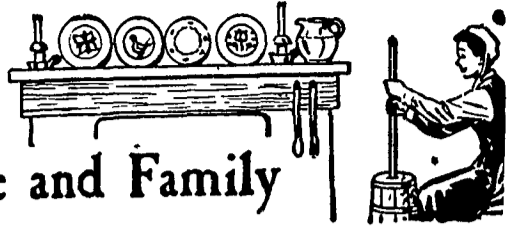


For the Farm Wife and Family



This and That

By Mrs. Richard C. Spence

If you are a housewife who has to prepare and cook the small animals and waterfowl your hunter husband kills, here are a few tips for you.

All game should be field dressed immediately to prevent bacterial action. This is the job of the hunter and usually means removing the viscera. Doing this not only prevents bacterial growth but opens the body cavity to the air so the carcass can cool more rapidly. When the hunter gets home, he should remove the skin of rabbits and squirrels and the feathers of birds — as well as their feet, head and tail.

Now it's up to the homemaker to either cook the game immediately or store it. If it's to be stored, freezing is easiest. Game is frozen the same as other meats. It should not, however, be kept more than 4 months. Since freezing does not improve the quality of any food, it is best to freeze only high quality game. Use moisture-vapor-resistant packaging materials. Label all packages with the name of the item, the date frozen and the number of servings or weight.

The best way to cook small game animals is according to their age. This may be difficult to judge, but you can figure 80 percent of the small game taken in season is less than 1 year old. This game is tender and may be cooked by oven-roasting, broiler, or pan-broiling methods. Because small animals are always skinned, the meat may easily become dry and tough. To avoid this, cover with an oil or fat-soaked cheesecloth during roasting. As this dries, baste with more oil or fat. Bacon fat is especially good because it masks the game flavor. It takes about an hour to braise, roast or pot-roast squirrels and rabbits. Rabbits, however, can also be broiled. This takes only 30 to 40 minutes. For every 1/2 to 3/4 pound of ready-to-cook squirrel or rabbit, you will get 1 to 2 servings. The rules for cooking wild ducks and geese are much the same as for small animals. Figure 1 1/2 pounds dressed weight to serve 2 to 3 persons.

Most people prefer to oven-roast ducks and geese. Without dressing, this will take about 45 minutes at 300 degrees; with dressing, 1 1/2 to 1 3/4 hours.

Apple chunks may be used as a stuffing. The apples will absorb some of the game flavor. They should be discarded after roasting is completed.

To add special zest to waterfowl, use spices and herbs — but with discretion. Try basil, oregano, marjoram, sage, thyme, savory, or rosemary.

Cook the meat until the thermometer registers 185 degrees. This will insure that all the meat has reached a safe temperature.

The oven temperature recommended for roasting is 325 degrees. But the cooking time varies according to the size, shape, and composition of the cut. A very fat roast, for example, takes longer to cook than a lean cut. Heat penetrates fat more slowly than lean.

How cold the roast is and whether it is short and thick or a long slender cut will make a difference in the length of cooking time. A meat thermometer is the only sure way to take the guess work out of the cooking time required for your roast. A "rule of thumb" guide to use in satisfactory cooking is 30-45 minutes per pound.

COOK PORK THOROUGHLY
Well done fresh pork is a must if you want to make sure this meat is entirely free of danger: from trichinosis. Raw or underdone pork can cause this serious disease.

Thorough cooking develops the rich, appetizing flavor of pork and is important for all forms of fresh pork including roasts, chops, spare ribs, fresh sausage, bacon, ground meat patties and meat loaf or other mixtures that include fresh pork. Cooking cured pork is another story. The curing process acts as a safeguard.

Fresh pork is done when all traces of pink color have disappeared. You can check chops and patties by inserting a knife into the thickest part to see the color. But in cooking roasts, follow a time-temperature table or use a meat thermometer. If you use a meat thermometer, insert it in the middle of the thickest part of the roast without the bulb touching the bone or fat.

What makes one pork chop better than another? The weight of the pig, its age, and the amount of marbling in the chop are the three most important factors. Marbling help the juiciness of meat. During the cooking process, it liquifies and serves as a basting for the meat. This juiciness keeps the meat more tender and brings out the fine natural flavor. Cuts without marbling tend to become dry, thus losing some of the good quality. Cuts from younger and light-weight pigs have to their advantage flavor, tenderness and juiciness. In selecting pork, a good guide to quality is its color. Dark meat is less acidic, juicier and loses less weight in cooking.

REUSING COOKING FATS
Do you save the fat from
(Continued on Page 9)

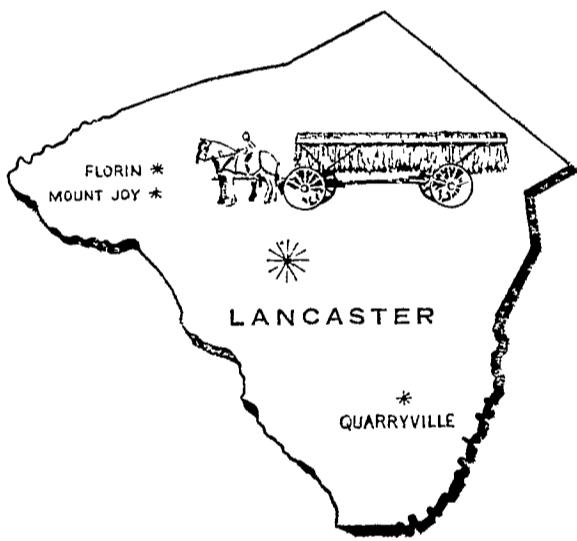
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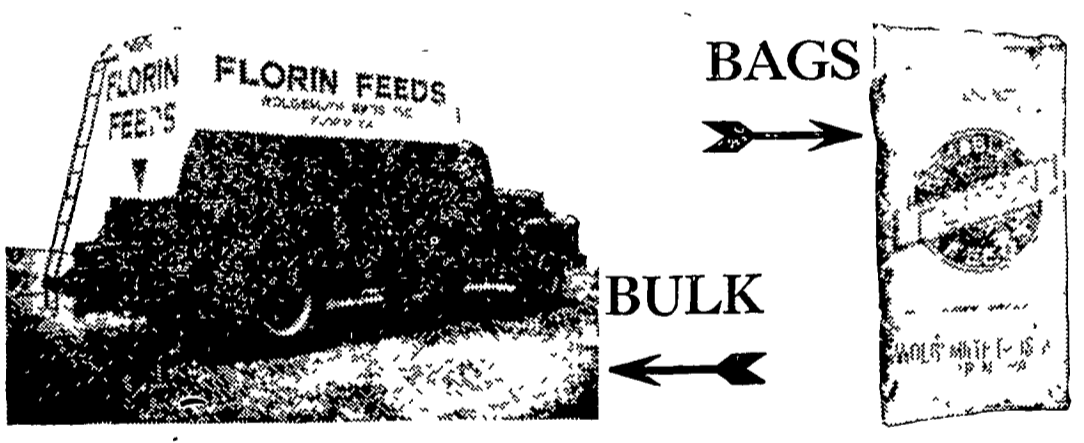
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