



## Doctor in the Kitchen®

by Laurence M. Hursh, M.D.  
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### ON BALANCING FOODS

Repeatedly, nutritionists emphasize the value of choosing a wide variety of foods for your meals. This is a wise course because through variety you will tickle your palate with many different tastes; you will, as well, be more likely to gain all the different nutrients you need than if you practice a narrow choice of foods.

#### Choose Variety

We suggest that you follow the four-food-group plan — that is, select your foods from the vast collection of goodies that belong to the milk group, the meat-fish-poultry-egg group, vegetables and fruits, and breads and cereals. These groups offer you everything except pure fats and sugars. But each of the foods will offer you some fat and/or some sugar in some form. In my opinion, only after these foods — and within a calorie level that will not cause you to gain weight — should you add sugars and fats per se in any quantity to your meals. I am not rigid on this. But generally, this is the pattern you should follow.

And speaking of calories, it is important that you choose your calories "by the company they keep." What that means is, choose foods that give you a lot of nutrition but not a lot of calories.

Take milk. "In 1972, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, of the foods available for consumption in the U.S., dairy foods (excluding butter) provided the following percentages of available nutrients: calcium — 76%; riboflavin — 41%; phosphorus — 36%; protein — 22%; magnesium — 22%; vitamin B12 — 20%; vitamin A value — 13%; vitamin B6 — 10%; thiamin — 9%; and almost all the vitamin D."

But with all this, dairy foods provided only 11% of the calories in our food supply. This means, of course, that dairy foods (excluding butter) do not qualify as "high energy" foods. That is not their bag. They are solidly nutritious without loading you with excess calories. Other foods —

high carbohydrate foods, for example, and fats — are noted for their energy value. And we need them, too. Just as we need all the

food groups.

#### Avoid Overloading

My point is that by choosing a wide variety of foods we avoid overloading on foods of higher energy value than we need while perhaps neglecting many nutrients that we need from other foods.

Adults should follow this daily food guide: the milk group — 2 or more glasses (or equivalent in other dairy foods); the meat group — 2 or more servings; vegetables and fruits — 4 or more servings; breads and cereals

— 4 or more servings. Children should get 3 or more glasses of milk; teenagers — 4 or more glasses. This is the foundation for a good diet.

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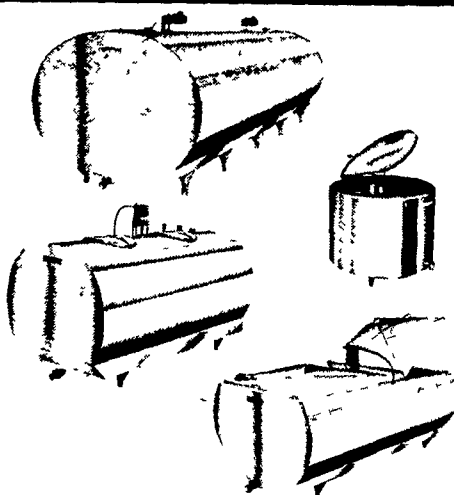
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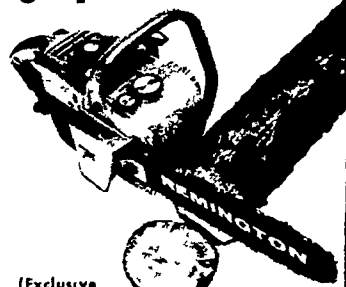
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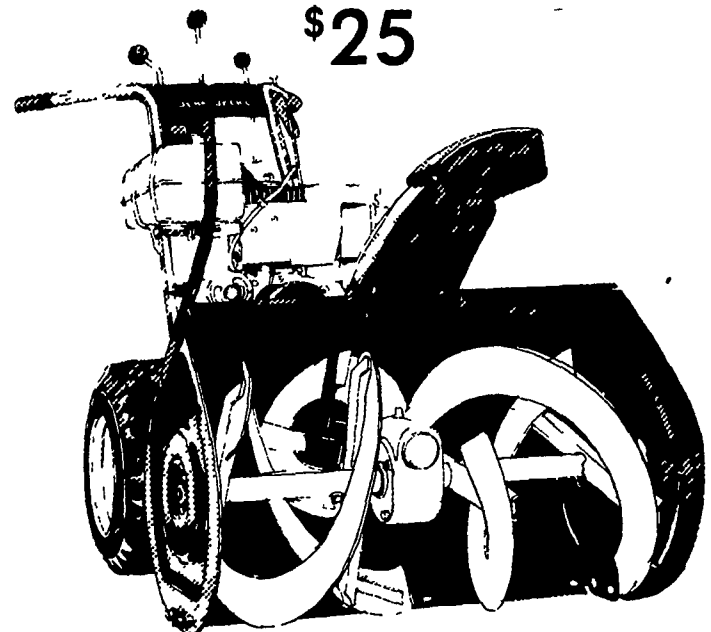
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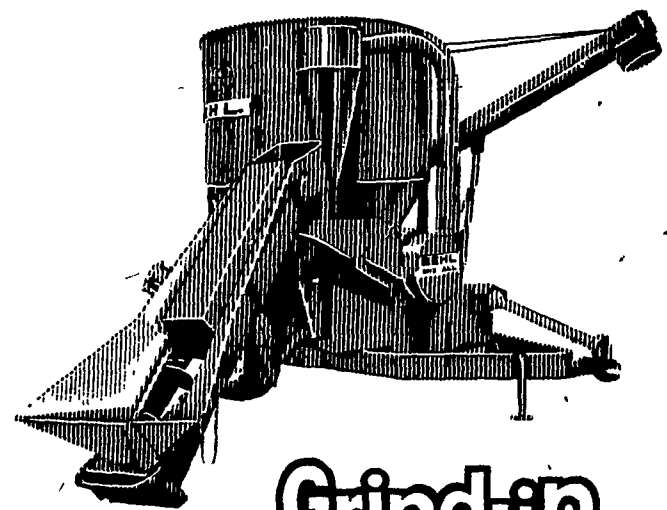


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