

## LADIES HAVE YOU HEARD?



By Doris Thomas, Extension Home Economist

### The "How-To" On Making Pickles, Jellies, and Jams At Home

A wide variety of fruits and vegetables may find their way to your table as pickle products—adding spice to meals or snacks. Skillful selection and blending of spices, sugar, and vinegar with fruits and vegetables give crisp, firm texture and pungent, sweet-sour flavor.

#### Basic steps —

1. Use only good quality ingredients, firm, not too ripe fruits or vegetables.
2. Use vinegar that is high grade cider or white distilled of 4 to 6 percent acidity. Strength of vinegar is usually shown on the label.

Use pure granulated salt. Alum and lime are not needed if quality ingredients and up to date procedures are used. Do not dilute the vinegar, unless the recipe so specifies.

3. Use tested recipes. Measure or weigh all ingredients.

4. Use proper equipment. For heating pickling liquids, do not use utensils of copper, brass, galvanized, or iron; these metals may react with acids or salts and cause undesirable color changes in the pickles or form undesirable compounds. For fermenting or brining, use stone, glass, or unchipped enamel-lined containers.

5. Use a water-bath

canner for processing jars of pickle products. Any large metal container with a close-fitting lid, deep enough to allow for one to two inches of water above the tops of the jars, plus extra space for water to bubble during boiling; and a wire or wood rack to keep jars from touching.

**HEATPROCESSING** is recommended for all pickle products, including sauerkraut. Adequate heating is best achieved in a boiling water bath. Such treatment destroys organisms that cause spoilage, and inactivates enzymes that may affect flavor, color, and texture.

**SPOILAGE?** Always be on the alert for signs of spoilage. Before opening a jar, examine it closely, for leakage or bulging lid. When a jar is opened, look for spurting liquid, mild, unusual odor, off-color, softness, or slippery feel. If there is any doubt, do not taste; dispose of contents so that they cannot be eaten by humans or animals and then boil empty jars for 15 minutes.

**PROBLEMS WITH PICKLES?** Shriveling? It may result from too strong vinegar, sugar, or salt; overcooking or over-processing.

**Soft or slippery?** Generally means microbial action has caused spoilage. This action may be caused by too little salt or acid, insufficient heating, moldy spices, improper brining, or seal not airtight.

**Dark Color?** Ground spices or too much spice, iodized salt, overcooking, minerals in the water or use of iron utensils.

**CAUSES OF SPOILAGE IN SAUERKRAUT?** Softness — not enough salt, too high temperatures during fermentation, air pockets caused by improper packing.

**Pink color** - caused by yeast on the surface; these grow if there is too much salt, uneven distribution of salt, or if the kraut is im-

properly covered or weighted during fermentation.

**Rotted** — occurs during fermentation when cabbage has not been covered sufficiently to exclude the air.

**Dark** — unwashed or poorly trimmed cabbage, not enough juice to cover the cabbage, exposure to air, high temperatures, long storage.

**About Picnic Food Safety**  
Going on a picnic? Remember that even on a picnic you need clean hands, clean utensils and a clean work area when working with food.

Washing hands and utensils can be a problem on a picnic, so you might use something disposable such as wax paper, to protect your hands when you pick up hamburger patties to put them on the grill.

Take along extra forks and spoons for serving so you won't have to reuse the ones you cooked with. Use a clean plate for those patties when they come off the grill instead of the plate you used before cooking.

When cooking outdoors, use a low fire instead of a roaring one. Longer cooking over low heat means less shrinkage, more thorough cooking. Cook ground meat all the way through.

Once you're through eating, put any leftovers back into your portable cooler to keep them cool and safe to eat until you put them into your home refrigerator or freezer.

**Easy Cleaning**  
Microwave ovens are very easy to clean and should be cleaned after each use. Just wipe with a damp cloth.

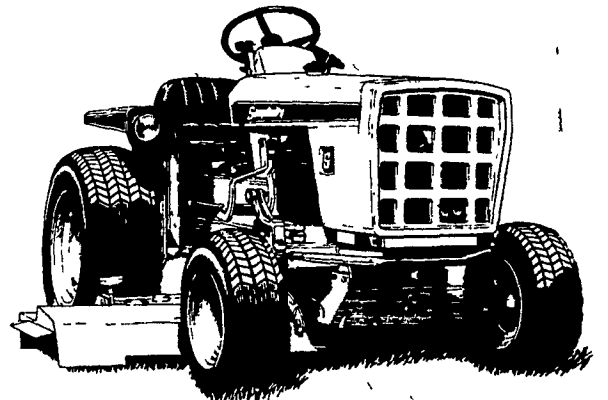
**Olive History**  
In ancient times, the olive was cultivated for its oil. The ancients used the oil for medicine, for food, and for anointing their bodies.

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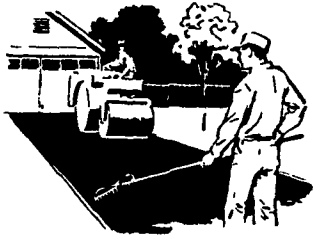
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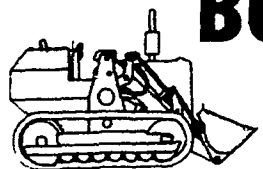
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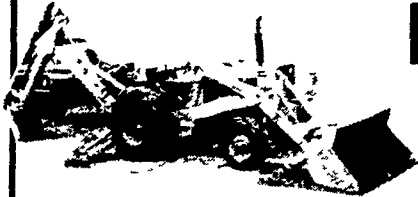


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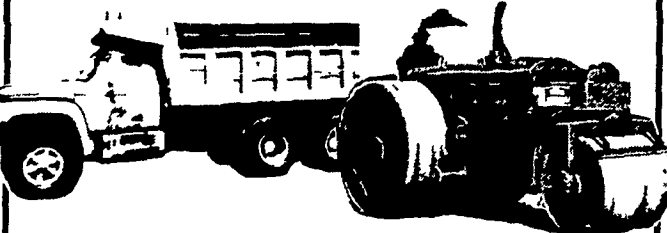
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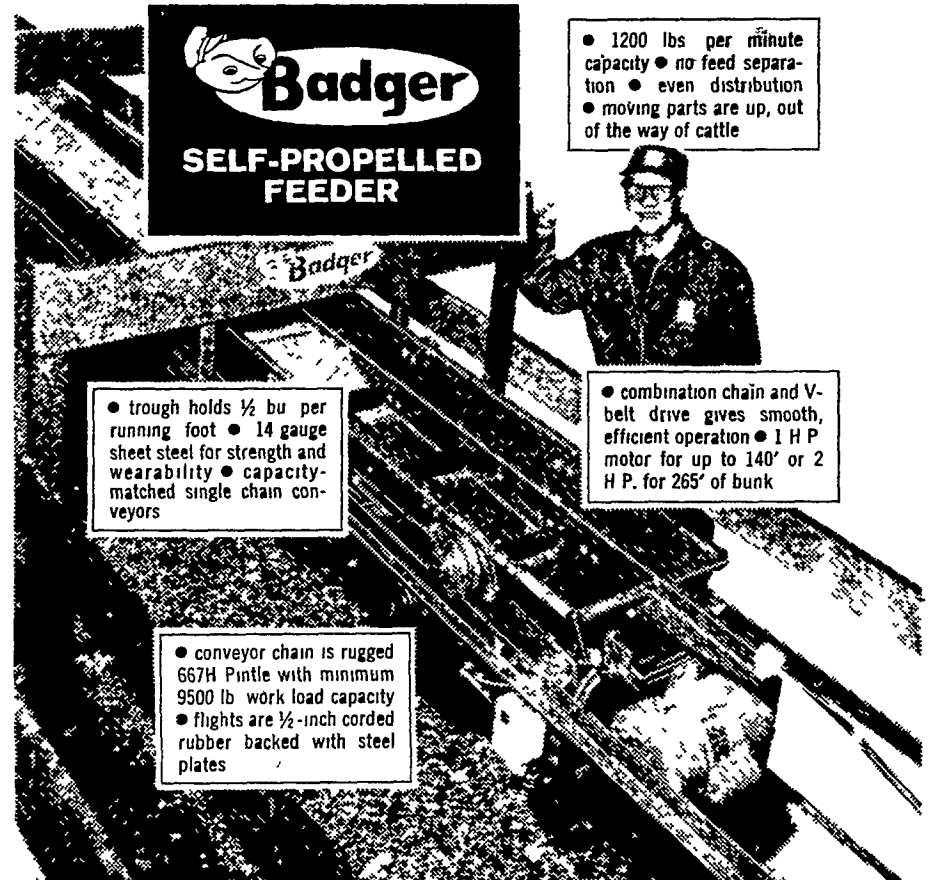
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