

A Tasty Basic Food

Taste buds are temperamental. Sometimes they crave exotic foods. Sometimes they need plain and simple fare.

On the days when the buds are begging for the basics, there's nothing like a good peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

And, simple though the fare may be, there's still a good deal for the consumer to know when you are picking peanut butter or jelly from among the many competing products.

Of course, peanut butter tastes good, but it's also good for you. It supplies proteins,

vitamins, minerals, and fats necessary to a balanced diet. The U. S. Department of Agriculture acknowledges the nutritive value of peanut butter by incorporating it into its food distribution programs.

When USDA buys peanut butter for these programs, it requires that the product be manufactured in a plant operating under one of USDA's inspection programs. Under these programs, inspectors from USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service check the quality of the incoming peanuts, plus the sanitation and operating procedures of the plants. And, most important, they check the quality of the finished product.

Today manufacturers have developed processes that produce a peanut butter that is creamier and smoother than the old-fashioned kind that stuck to

the roof of your mouth. But, if you like it the old way, some manufacturers still make it. And there's also the chunky style, with crunchy bits of peanuts mixed into the spread.

Style is important, but so is quality. When USDA inspectors are grading for quality, they check the peanut butter for the aroma of freshly roasted peanuts. They also check the product for spreadability and for color to assure that the peanuts have been roasted to the proper medium brown. Too light or too dark a color may mean that the peanut butter will have a bitter, burned, or raw flavor. Finally, the inspectors taste the peanut butter to determine if the flavor is clean, fresh, and has the right sugar-salt balance.

U.S. Grade A (or U.S. Fancy) peanut butter is the best quality. It is made from U.S. No. 1 shelled peanuts and rates high in color, consistency, absence of defects, flavor, and aroma.

Only a few commercial brands of peanut butter currently carry the USDA grade shield. Most plants, however, employ their own quality control personnel to evaluate the product and see that it meets their specifications, generally based on the USDA quality grade standards.

When it comes to the jelly part of your sandwich, there's even more to know. First of all, it's good to understand the differences among jelly, jam, preserves, and marmalade. Then you need to know something about quality.

All of these products are made from two basic ingredients — fruit, or fruit juice, and sweeteners. In addition, pectin generally is added to aid in gel formation, and edible food acids are added for flavor balance when natural acids are low.

The manner in which the fruit is prepared and the texture or gel strength of the finished product account for these different kinds of fruit spreads:

Jelly — is made from filtered fruit juice, has a firm gel that holds its shape when turned out of the jar, and is sparkling clear.

Jams or preserves — are made from crushed or whole fruit. Gel texture is not as firm as in jellies and it is not clear. Many preserves

consist of whole or large pieces of fruit dispersed in a gel that is thick but not stiff.

Marmalade — is a tender jelly with small pieces of fruit, generally sliced citrus peel, evenly dispersed throughout the gel.

Quality in such a speciality product depends on many complex factors. Processed fruit experts in USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service develop grade standards in cooperation with the preserving industry. The standards — available for fruit jelly, fruit jams or preserves, and orange marmalade provide for two levels of quality.

U.S. Grade A (or U.S. Fancy) and U.S. Grade B (or U.S. Choice). These standards are based on factors such as consistency, color, flavor, and degree of freedom from defects.

U.S. Grade B or Choice quality is good on sandwiches or in jelly rolls or omelets. But the top quality, U.S. Grade A or Fancy, is best used for desserts such as cheese cake or ice cream topping, where highest quality and appearance are important.

Some preserving plants use the services of an AMS inspector whenever the plant is in operation. Under this continuous inspection program, the inspector will check the product at all stages of production, and help the plant manager control the quality. The inspector makes sure the equipment is clean, the materials to make the product are wholesome, and the containers are properly filled — all this in addition to certifying quality.

When you see the continuous inspection shield, or more often, the red, white, and blue U.S. Grade A or Fancy shield on a jar of jellies, jams, preserves, or marmalade, you can be sure it was packed under the very thorough continuous inspection of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

And, no matter what the quality is, jellies, jams or preserves must comply with the Food and Drug Administration rules for composition and ingredients. Among other things, they must be manufactured with no less than 45 parts of fruit or fruit juice to 55 parts of all sweeteners. This ratio was based on trade practices and evidence brought forth at public hearings to establish the Food and Drug standards of identity that define these products. This proportion appears in cookbooks, both current and over 200 years old. If these fruit spreads are sold in interstate commerce and do not meet the composition requirements, they must be labeled "imitation."

So, next time your taste buds are calling for the basics — you can give them quality — not "just" peanut butter and jelly.

STEVENS LAYER FEEDS GIVE PERFORMANCE FOR PROFIT



For more information and Record keeping services call:

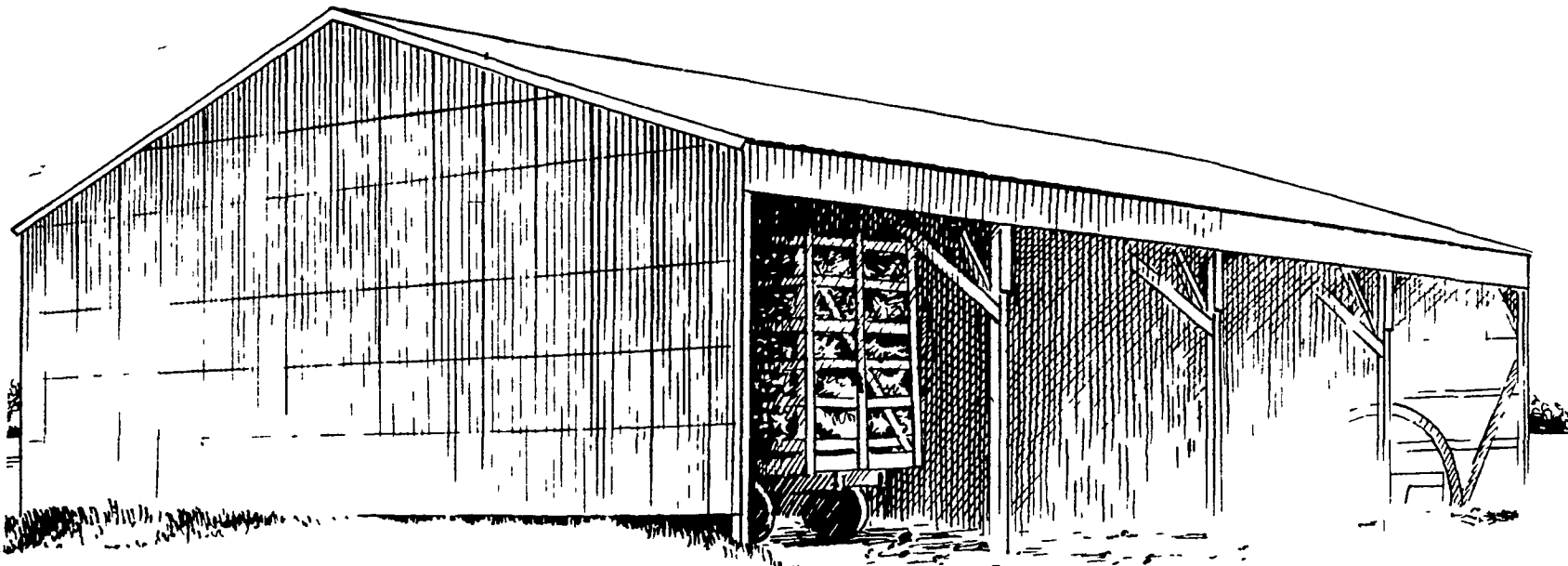
STEVENS FEED MILL, INC.

215-267-2150 or 717-733-2153

CHECK ON OUR SPECIAL "CASH BACK" \$\$\$
\$300 to \$500
PETTICOFFER DODGE, INC.

Route 230 East, Next to Shopping Center
Elizabethtown, Pa

LOW COST MACHINERY STORAGE



30' x 48' x 12'
OPEN FRONT

\$3,940.

CONTACT THESE REPRESENTATIVES FOR ADDITIONAL HELP IN PLANNING YOUR NEW BUILDING.



WILMER MARTIN
Home Phone
(215) 445-5652



MELVIN STOLTZFUS
Home Phone
(717) 392-0066



SUPPLY CENTER

1027 DILLERVILLE ROAD,
LANCASTER, PA.

PHONE 717-397-4761

BRUNING PAINT

I will do your spray paint job right and personally at a more reasonable rate with the latest equipment

BRUNING COUNTRY SQUIRE

Phone (AC)
215 445 6186

PHARES HURST
RD1, Narvon, Pa 17555