

Extension charts changes in American eating habits

LANCASTER — "You may have put on a few pounds over the last 20 years; however, it may not be from eating more pounds of food," according to Harold E. Neigh, Penn State Extension professor of agricultural economics.

"The amount is the same, but the mix has changed," says Neigh. He is referring to our buying habits in pounds.

Each of us consumed slightly over 1,400 pounds of food in 1980 — the same as 1960. That means that on the average each of us puts away almost four pounds of food per day.

"Price seems to be a major factor affecting food shopping," says Neigh. Shoppers are choosing alternatives to expensive meats.

We are eating 11 percent more red meat compared to 11 percent drop in dairy product consumption, he said.

During the 70's, red meat consumption increased very little according to Neigh. Most of the gain happened in the 60's. The average is misleading though because 1980 beef consumption was 13 pounds below the 20 year trend and 18 pounds below the 1976 high of 95 pounds.

He adds that beef production is cyclical. In those years when producers rebuild their herds, such as from 1979 to 1981, prices generally rise and production falls. Pork is subject to similar biological and economic factors, but in a somewhat shorter cycle. Pork consumption per person in 1980 was a record 69 pounds, 9 pounds above the nearly flat 20-year trend. Producers, responding to high pork prices in 1978, increased output substantially.

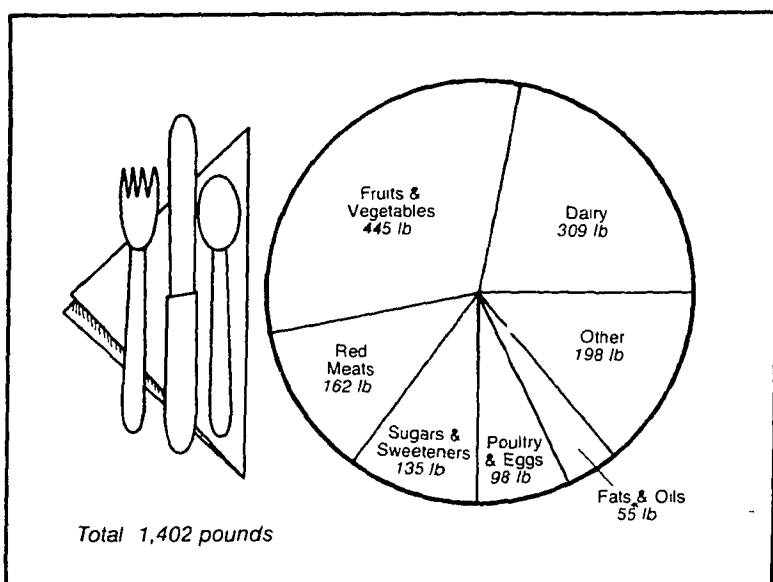
A delicacy before World War II, chicken became relatively inexpensive in the 1950s, with the advent of factory farming in the poultry industry. Consumption of chicken increased from 28 pounds per person in 1960 to 51 pounds per person in 1980, according to Extension.

Changing price relationships have contributed to the changing mix of meat consumption since 1960. Chicken prices have risen at only about two-thirds the rate of other meats. Consumer's desire to reduce fat intake has also encouraged shifts in consumption to leaner red meats and chicken.

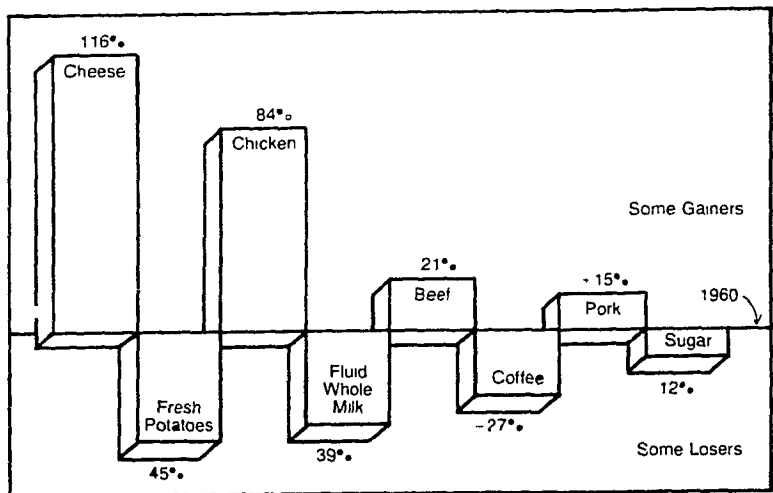
The pork industry has responded to changing consumer preferences by breeding leaner hogs.

Dairy products accounted for one of every five pounds of food consumed in 1980, a total of 342 pounds per person.

Cheese has had one of the most



Foods consumed by the average American in 1980.



Percentage change of per capita consumption figures - 1980 vs. 1960.

dramatic consumption histories, Extension says. In 1960, Americans ate only 8.3 pounds per person of all cheeses. The figure rose to over 11 pounds during the next 10 years. In 1980, each person consumed 17.9 pounds of cheese, a 20-year increase of 116 percent. Cheese is being used more frequently as a main dish and a protein source. The rise in fast-food outlets during the 1970s contributed to this growth.

Each of us used 141 pounds of sweeteners in 1980. About two-thirds was in the form of refined cane and beet sugar, with most of the balance being some form of corn sweeteners. A very small quantity of honey, maple syrup, and molasses was consumed. Since 1960, the use of corn sweeteners has increased fivefold, while cane and beet sugar has gradually declined.

Neigh points out that although

food prices have climbed continuously, food has not put more of a burden on consumer budgets. In 1960, about 20 cents of each dollar of disposable income went for food. In 1980, the dollar share for food expenditures was slightly more than 16 cents.

Consumption statistics are actually "disappearance" figures; they reflect total deliveries as opposed to actual use. No accurate figures tell us exactly how much sugar is eaten, but rather the data define the upper limits of consumption.

Consumption patterns, however, have shifted in the last 20 years. Changes in lifestyles and living arrangements have resulted in tradeoffs among commodities. Contributing to today's trends are health and safety concerns and an increase in the number of working women, two-income families, male shoppers, and elderly people.

Montgomery County schedules dairy goat clinic

NORRISTOWN — The Montgomery County Extension announces a Dairy Goat Clinic, open to all interested goat enthusiasts, to be held Saturday, April 24, at the County 4-H Center in Lansdale, 9:30 a.m. until 3 p.m.

The clinic will feature two widely-known veterinarians, Dr. Lynn Sammons and Lenora Sammons of the Willow Creek Animal Hospital in Reading. A registration fee of \$2 per person or \$4 per family (if more than 2 in the family are attending) will be collected at the door. Special door prizes will be presented in the afternoon.

The program will start at 9:30 a.m. with the morning session devoted to housing (ventilation, lighting, milking and feeding systems, manure handling, isolation and grouping of animals); transportation (safety

and stress); and shows and sales (testing and health exams).

A session on the selection of good goat stock is also planned. Lunch is set from 12 till 1 p.m. and is on your own. Participants can bring their own lunch or stop at one of the many fast-food places nearby.

The afternoon session will begin at 1 p.m. and will feature demonstrations on proper hoof trimming and care, dehorning, detecting mastitis, and how to give injections. Microscopes will be set up so that results of fecal tests for parasites can be seen.

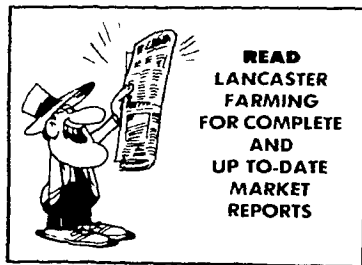
Also in the afternoon will be discussion on when to call the veterinarian and what to expect from your call. Included will be information on bloat, kid care, fractures, lab tests, injuries, death, medications to have on hand, and where to get supplies.

The program will be held rain or

shine. The 4-H Center is located on Snyder Road, off Route 363, between Sunnyside Pike and Allentown Road near Lansdale. It is convenient to the Lansdale Exit of the Northeast Extension of the Pa Turnpike.

If you need more details or directions, call county agent Nancy M. Kadwill at 277-0574 in Norristown.

Registration for the event will be from 9:00-9:30 a.m.



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