

Keep the milk habit

ROSEMONT, Ill. — Back in its heyday before World War II, Americans ate butter at a 12-pounds-per-capita annual rate. Then butter went to war and the price soared to \$1 a pound. People got out of the habit of eating it and since that time per capita consumption of butter lagged to four pounds a year, according to UDIA's John F. Etkin, author of "From this Corner"

From this Corner believes that milk drinking should be such a habit that consumption should at least keep pace with population growth. Milk drinkers should keep the healthful habit and we should never lose our market to sub-

stitutes or other competitive beverages.

One definition of "habit" is "an acquired mode of behavior that has become nearly or completely involuntary." Milk drinking should be such an integral part of our eating habits that maintaining production to meet increased consumption should be the dairy industry's problem, rather than vice versa.

From This Corner contends that habits must be maintained to keep them shiny bright, light silver and copper. They can easily be changed or forgotten through disuse.

Can you imagine cars without power steering, power brakes or

air conditioning? Those were created habits that the automobile industry convinced most of us we couldn't live without.

Why is From This Corner concerned with maintaining the worthwhile habit of milk drinking?

In the March 1983 issue of "Consumer Reports," there was a letter entitled "Rejecting 'the real thing.'" A mother and her daughter cooperated in a school science project to test one brand of margarine against butter. Two batches of shortbread cookies were baked, one with butter; the other with margarine.

More than 100 teachers and pupils were polled as to which cookie was made with butter. The teachers preferred and identified the butter cookie. But the vast majority of the kids endorsed the margarine cookie and deduced "that it must be the one made with butter."

"The kids knew what they were supposed to like: Having grown up

with 'the buttery' taste of margarine, the kids rejected the unaccustomed taste and texture of the real thing."

Even though milk drinking has become a pattern of behavior and not a front-of-mind activity, we should continue in the same nutritious way. From This Corner believes that we should build our dairy markets, not surrender our products on the installment plan.

Let's start at the beginning with milk. Can you imagine starting your day without it? On your cereal or in a glass, or both? Cold

milk with your luncheon sandwich is a natural. And a mealtime habit of milk is easy to maintain when you're home. It's a bit tougher when you're out, but work on it. And don't forget milk with snacks.

While we're at it, From This Corner opines that we should get butter sales back to where they were 40 years ago.


We should also support the dairy industry by keeping the milk habit. You won't have to think about it. Just don't change your ways once you've seen the milk light.

I'm all for it. How about you?

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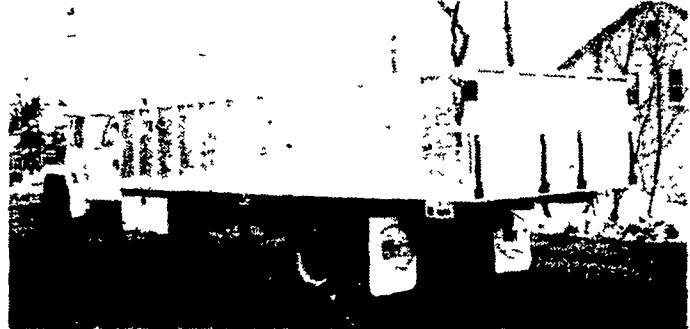
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