



Ladies Have You Heard?

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Lancaster Extension
Home Economist

TERMS FOR EASTER HAM REVIEWED

We will observe Easter next weekend. That means, among other family traditions, that many of you will serve ham for your Easter dinner.

With all the terminology used, it is no wonder that many people tell me they become confused when trying to select the right ham when they do their food shopping.

Ham may be purchased whole, as halves, as portions or ends or as slices. If ham is labeled as a half, it must be a complete half with no center slices removed. After choice center slices have been removed, the remainder must be labeled as either butt or shank portions or ends.

You can also select from fully-cooked or cook-before-eating hams. Fully-cooked hams have been cured and cooked by the packer and they only need to be reheated to an internal temperature of 140°F.

If the label does not indicate that the ham has been fully cooked,

assume it is a cook-before-eating ham. It requires cooking to an internal temperature of 160°F. to bring out the best flavor and tenderness.

Ham may be sold semi-boneless, boneless, or shankless. A semi-boneless ham has the leg bone remaining, but the aitch (pronounced H) bone and usually the shank bone have been removed. In a shankless ham only the shank bone has been removed.

A semi-boneless ham is usually partially skinned and defatted. A boneless ham may be rolled, shaped, or canned. Shaped or rolled hams are skinless and boneless, formed into rolls or rectangles.

Some canned hams are perishable and must be refrigerated. Other canned hams are not perishable. Canned hams are clearly labeled and will indicate the need for refrigeration.

A term that frequently confuses shoppers is "water added." A curing solution of salts, sugar, and water is injected into the ham

during processing to produce the meat's familiar flavor and color. Most or all of the solution is lost during the curing and cooking process. Federal regulations require that a ham labeled as "smoked" weigh no more than its original weight. If some moisture is retained, and this can be no more than 10 percent, then the ham must be labeled "water added."

Country hams or country-style hams are processed by the dry cure method, as was done in early days of our country.

A dry mixture of curing ingredients, mostly salt, is rubbed onto the ham in an amount sufficient to ensure complete penetration of the curing mixture. Federal regulations require at least 45 days for cure penetration and an additional minimum of 25 days for the drying period. These hams require long slow simmering before eating or baking.

I frequently get questions about the rainbow-like colors often seen on ham slices. This coloring is called iridescence; it is caused by refraction of light on the cut ends of the muscle fiber. It is not harmful in any way. It does not indicate that the meat is old, spoiled, or anything undesirable. It is just the way the light strikes the meat.

For the correct time and temperature for cooking the Easter ham you select, consult the label on the ham or a cookbook and use a meat thermometer. The Cooperative Extension Service is an affirmative action, equal opportunity educational institution.

Horse farm

(Continued from Page B2)

assistant, horse trainer, and stable manager, Rita also does her own farrier work on her horses. She attended Penn State for two weeks in 1973 for their horse shoeing school and was one of the two girls in the class dominated by men.

"It was not hard to learn, but it's certainly hard work," Rita said. "I had to work a little slower than the men 'cause I wasn't as strong." She insists on taking her time and likes to train her horses from youngsters to stand quietly.

Mary Jo relates her beginnings with horses to the fact that her father was a judge at Beagle trials. Horses were provided for the judging.

"He used to take me to field trials hoping that I would become more acquainted with Beagles," she states. But, she adds, after she started riding the horses, the Beagles were forgotten.

Mary Jo's first horse of her own was bought from Rita. The purchase marked the beginning of a

long friendship, "Jazz" and Mary Jo stayed on at the Spatz stables.

Since that time the two girls have worked together on their horses, a riding ring for training purposes, a porch for their trailer, and an expansion of their stables.

"It's a matter of putting your mind to it," Mary Jo says about their goals.

Their stables include not only the horses, but Dolly's, Ruth's (Rita's younger sister), Mary Jo's and Rita's dogs and cats. Although they do not like to advertise it, no stray cats are turned away. The dogs and cats are close second-place favorites in the hearts of Rita and Mary Jo.

If you ever take a quiet drive around Centerport and see a car go by full of dogs, or see a cat sitting on the seat (that's Lester the cat, he thinks he's a dog), it will probably be Rita or Mary Jo. If you don't see them, they will be with their horses. According to the pair if they are not with the horses, they will be off with the dogs, or relaxing with their cats.

Broiler contest scheduled

FLEMINGTON, NJ — Hunterdon County 4-H members are invited to enter the 1984 Flemington Fair Broiler Contest.

Each entrant will receive five baby chicks about twelve weeks before the Flemington Fair. Instructions and further details will be given to each participant.

Members will raise the chicks during the twelve-week period.

Judges will evaluate how well the chicks were raised during the Flemington Fair.

Prizes of ribbons and cash awards will be presented to the winners. Orders for chicks must be made by May 10. Call club leader, Mrs. Maybelle Nief at 782-2526 to place an order or to obtain more information.

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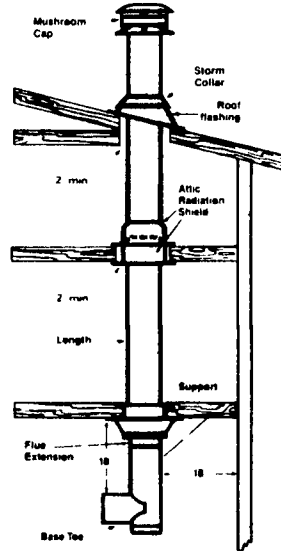
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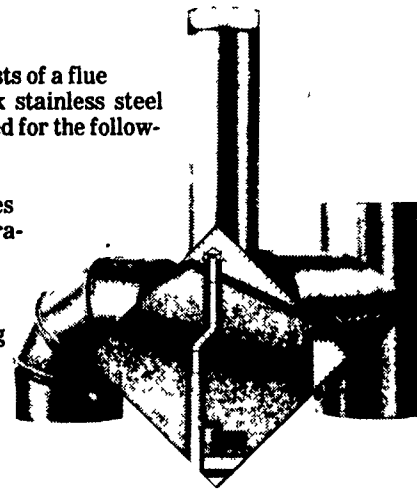
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