

# On being a farm wife - And other hazards

Joyce Bupp



Perhaps it's the cycle of the moon, or the sign under which I was born, or the stage of the tides, or maybe we have a backyard full of four-leaf clovers.

Whatever the reason, the good fortune which has befallen me in recent weeks is simply unbelievable.

It began with one morning's mail, from which I extracted a large, colorful envelope. Imagine my delight when I read that Mrs. Bupp shall be paid one million dollars in cash. Guaranteed.

Whew. I had to sit down from the excitement before slashing open the envelope for the rest of the wonderful news. Shaking with

anticipation, I withdrew the contents, only to learn that my million depended on my being declared the Grand Prize winner. But, if I hurried and sent back my very own lucky number in time, and happened to be the big winner, they'd double the million.

Ge. Two million would pay for a pile of combine parts and calf starter.

Thus you can understand how crushed I felt to read further, and learn that it was our daughter's name in smaller print at the bottom. And she isn't a Mrs.

Oh, well, I didn't want any of their magazines either.

Lo and behold, just days later here comes another, if lesser, offer—for a mere quarter-million to a J. Bupp. All she had to do was play the secret combination, stamp a batch of lucky numbers to a game form, peel off and sign the winner's release form, return the new customer gift certificate for lots of freebies and ship it all back — preferably with an order for some of the "no risk - guaranteed" merchandise.

Not to forget filling out the color J. Bupp would prefer for her new car or refrigerator or coffee brewer or junk jewelry ring.

J. Bupp is allergic to junk jewelry rings, which make her hands break out in a rash. Here we come again, Mr. Trashcan.

By now our dependable mailman was on a roll and soon stuffed the box with yet another goodie offer. Glory be, I had been named a prizewinner - somewhere between first to eleventh place — in another quarter-million sweepstakes.

Just mailing the enclosed sheaf

of little flyers was all that was necessary — by Dec. 25. A certificate of authenticity would even be provided. Authentic what? And why did I have to fill in my Social Security number? Eventually I did unearth the list of prizes — which turned out to be junk jewelry.

The trashcan grew fatter.

Then came the latest, an invitation to visit a new recreational facility resort, for which I would be rewarded with my choice from three prizes for listening to a sales pitch.

That brought back a memory. About ten years ago, planning a Sunday drive to look at the fall foliage, we took up one of those resort land ads on their visit offer. When he learned we were farmers, the salesman became very rude and disinterested, ultimately admitting that they didn't like to talk with our kind. Seems that farmers are accustomed to dealing with land prices of a more realistic ilk than what they were charging for a quarter-acre in the middle of some weekend development.

Still, we ate their free lunch, allowed our toddlers to play on their playground equipment and insisted on being given the tour, at the end of which we insisted on receiving our "free prize." We still use a few of the unbroken glasses from that large set of glassware, and often chuckle about where they came from.

This whole account recalls to mind history lessons of how colonial land speculators once purchased Manhattan Island from the Indians for \$24 of blankets - and junk jewelry beads.

This is progress?

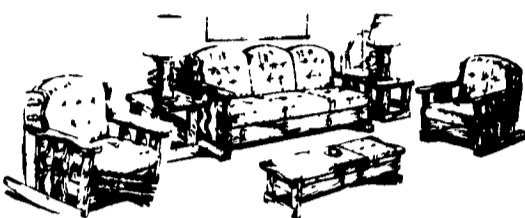
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## Cut calories at Christmas

Those extra calories add up during the holiday season. Extension home economist Greta C. Vairo, offers some suggestions for cutting down on calories and still enjoying Christmas meals.

For an appetizer, try fresh raw vegetables with a dip made from low-fat yogurt rather than sour cream. If you serve soup made from stock, skim the fat off. You won't lose the flavor, but you will reduce the calories. Also, cream soups or those with a cheese base have more calories than those made with a broth base.

Instead of the usual Christmas ham, serve turkey or chicken, roasted with your favorite stuffing. If you choose to prepare beef, pork or lamb, serve it well drained and trimmed of visible fat. When preparing gravy from meat drippings, cool the gravy quickly in the refrigerator or freezer, then skim the fat off the top to reduce calories.

Serve vegetables with lemon

juice or herbs. If you want to use butter, drizzle a tablespoon or two over the vegetables in the serving bowl, rather than placing the butter dish on the table. Serve baked potatoes instead of mashed. This eliminates the added calories from the butter and milk. If making mashed potatoes, use 2 percent or skim milk.

For dessert, you can reduce the calories in pumpkin pie by making it with skim milk or 2 percent low fat milk. Instead of a pastry crust, make a graham cracker crust using less butter. Or, better yet, make a pumpkin custard rather than a pie. In many recipes, such as mincemeat pie, you can reduce the amount of sugar called for by up to half. Other good low caloric desserts are fruit salads, crepes with fruit filling or a yogurt parfait instead of one made with ice cream. Moderation is the key to low calorie eating.

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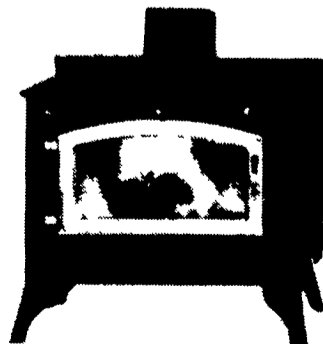
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