

# BACK HOME



By Michelle S. Rodgers

## Berks Extension Home Economist

### Buying Children's Clothing

You can often tell what kind of morning I am experiencing by the amount of clothing that has been taken from the closet, tried on and left rejected on the bed! The other morning, I was completely dressed and in the car when I decided that I just didn't feel comfortable with what I had on. I dashed back into the house for another try at wardrobe selection.

While I may be an extreme example, clothing really does affect us and the way we feel. Different items of clothing are chosen for comfort, coolness, or a certain look. Some items in my wardrobe make me feel more cheerful or self-confident. We probably all have favorite items that we wear often for one reason or another.

A challenge awaits every shopper who is being beckoned by the advertisements to do "back to school" clothing shopping. On a practical side, you may concentrate on matters such as fit, quality, price, and care requirements. These are all very important. But clothing choices will also play a part in a school child's self-esteem. I remember each fall buying a new pair of school shoes. As I walked out our dusty farm lane, the new shoes supplied a fresh sense of confidence in starting a new school year.

Clothing also provides school age children with a sense of ownership. Choosing, taking care of, and combining garments to make outfits allows a child to experience the pleasures and the responsibilities of ownership. School-age children have very definite opinions about the clothing they like. I remember being very anxious to make my own clothing choices. Helping to select clothing also assists in developing skills in decision-making and shopping.

I have fond memories of a day of school shopping with my mother. Usually each of us got a turn to go

shopping and often had lunch out on shopping day. Here are a few tips to make your shopping trip more fun for everyone:

- Measure children before shopping. That way you will know what size is likely to fit best.
- Make a list together of clothing needed for school, play, and special occasions. Check last year's wardrobe for useable items.
- Take your list along so you can target your efforts.
- Let your child express opinions about colors and styles; children are alert to what other children are wearing, and are more apt to enjoy clothing that looks like that of their friends.
- Select a few items, any of which would fit into the child's wardrobe; then let the child select from these to practice decision-making skills. Be generous with praise when the child selects clothing. This reinforces positive feelings in making choices.
- When you get home, review the clothing you bought and show the child how nice it looks with other clothing. Discuss which outfits are for school and for play.

I remember that our school shopping trip was not over when we returned home. Last year's wardrobe items that still fit were brought out of the closet and the new items were arranged to show the many mix and match possibilities. The shopping trip was complete after my father had a chance to see the new purchases and express his approval.

Clothing is important to each one of us. Planning and selecting a satisfactory wardrobe does not have to involve a lot of new purchases. A few good purchases will be more economical and easier to care for. Besides, if there are too many items to choose from, there are more decisions to make in the morning before the school bus arrives. It's good that I don't have to meet a school bus any longer. I'd probably miss it because I was back inside changing my wardrobe!

## Freeze your own mixed vegetables

**YORK** — Packaged mixed frozen vegetables in supermarkets come in a variety of combinations, and those with broccoli and cauliflower generally command the highest price.

These vegetable combinations are not only pleasing to the eye but appeal to the tastes of many families. So, it's not surprising that many home freeze owners want to freeze their own vegetable combinations.

It's easy to do. The essential ingredient for individually quick freezing vegetables at home, sometimes called tray freezing, is patience.

Following are some general directions:

• Decide on the mix. Most commercially frozen products combine 3 to 4 different vegetables.

• Prepare vegetables for freezing.

- Cut, slice or dice vegetables into appropriate sized pieces.
- Blanch, chill and drain.
- Spread vegetables on a tray making sure pieces do not touch one another.

• Place tray in rapid freeze section of the freezer. If pieces are small, vegetables will freeze in 1 to 2 hours.

• Package and label mixed vegetables. Store at 0 degrees or lower in home freezer.

This method is also excellent for freezing onion and pepper discs, rings or strips. Store in large freezer bags or other resealable containers. Remove only the number of items you need for casseroles and other dishes. Reseal bags and return to the freezer immediately.

# Know your beef basics when shopping and cooking

BY SUZANNE KEENE

**LANCASTER** — Have you ever been overwhelmed by indecision at the supermarket meat counter? Do all those neatly labeled packages of meat lined up for your inspection make you wonder if you're really a vegetarian at heart?

The meat counter doesn't have to be the end of you — or your budget. When armed with knowledge of the different cuts of meat and methods for preparing them, you can conquer your fears of the meat counter and bring home a wide variety of meats to suit your needs and budget.

To help Lancaster County cooks better understand purchasing and preparing meats, Extension intern Duff George and Lancaster County Extension home economist Doris Thomas conducted a meats workshop at the Farm and Home Center Tuesday.

Under the law, George explained, all meat must pass inspection for wholesomeness. This guarantees the consumer that all meat at the counter is from healthy animals that were slaughtered under sanitary conditions and is

suitable for consumption.

While this is reassuring, you probably would like to get the best quality meat for your money. Quality, in meat, refers to palatability of the lean, including tenderness, juiciness and flavor, George defined.

When meats are graded, it's easier for the consumer to make an educated decision. USDA grading is an option open to packers, but is not required by law. Firms opting to have their meat graded pay trained specialists employed by USDA to evaluate their meat.

The top three quality grades for beef are prime, choice and good, with choice being the most abundant grade available, George explained. These grades are usually available in retail stores and come from young, well-fed animals usually less than two years old.

The quality grade takes into account marbling, the flecks of white fat throughout the lean; texture, the firmness of the muscle fibers; and color.

Prime beef contains the most marbling and is generally sold in fine restaurants, while choice

grade contains sufficient marbling for good taste, but is less expensive than prime. Beef with a good grade is still lower priced and has less marbling than choice. It is good eating and just as nutritious as other grades but is less tender, George noted.

Once you know the grade, you'll want to take a closer look at the individual piece of meat you are considering. In beef, the color of the lean should be bright to deep red and should have small flecks of fat or marbling throughout. The fat covering should be 1/2 to one inch thick and should be chalky white in color, George said.

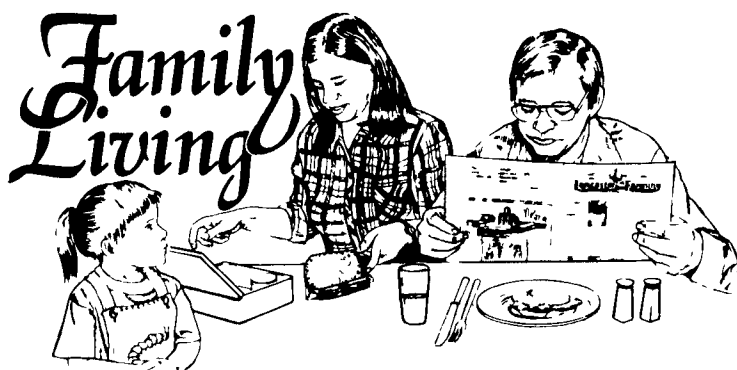
"The less tender cuts of beef are in the areas that contain more muscles," George explained. The chuck and the round are less tender than the rib and the loin, he continued.

The filet or tenderloin steak is one of the tenderest cuts of beef with just one muscle present. This cut is one of the most expensive because is of limited quantity in the animal, he noted.

If you're still confused about which cut to buy, you can rely on the label on the meat. Many retail stores have adopted a meat labeling program for all red meats that will tell you the kind of meat — beef, pork, lamb or veal, the wholesale cut — chuck, rib, loin or round, and the retail cut — such as blade roast, round steak or short ribs.

When purchasing ground beef, you usually have three varieties to select from, Lancaster Extension home economist Doris Thomas explained. Hamburger is ground beef that contains not less than 70

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# Beef

• RETAIL CUTS •  
WHERE THEY COME FROM  
HOW TO COOK THEM

**ROUND**

- Round Steak (Braise, Panfry)
- Top Round Roast (Roast)
- Top Round Steak (Broil, Panbroil, Panfry)
- Boneless Rump Roast (Roast, Braise)
- Bottom Round Roast (Braise, Roast)
- Tip Roast, Cap Off (Roast, Braise)
- Eye Round Roast (Braise, Roast)
- Tip Steak (Broil, Panbroil, Panfry)

**SIRLOIN**

- Sirloin Steak, Flat Bone (Broil, Panbroil, Panfry)
- Sirloin Steak, Round Bone (Broil, Panbroil, Panfry)
- Top Sirloin Steak (Broil, Panbroil, Panfry)

**FORE SHANK & BRISKET**

- Shank Cross Cut (Braise, Cook in Liquid)
- Brisket, Whole (Braise, Cook in Liquid)
- Corned Brisket, Point Half (Braise, Cook in Liquid)
- Brisket, Flat Half (Braise)

**CHUCK**

- Chuck Eye Roast (Braise, Roast)
- Boneless Top Blade Steak (Braise, Panfry)
- Arm Pot Roast (Braise)
- Boneless Shoulder Pot Roast (Braise)
- Cross Rib Pot Roast (Braise)
- Mock Tender (Braise)
- Blade Roast (Braise)
- Under Blade Pot Roast (Braise, Roast)
- Short Ribs (Braise, Cook in Liquid)
- 7-Bone Pot Roast (Braise)
- Flanken-Style Ribs (Braise, Cook in Liquid)

**RIB**

- Rib Roast, Large End (Roast)
- Rib Roast, Small End (Roast)
- Rib Steak, Small End (Broil, Panbroil, Panfry)
- Rib Eye Roast (Roast)
- Rib Eye Steak (Broil, Panbroil, Panfry)
- Back Ribs (Braise, Cook in Liquid, Roast)

**FLANK & SHORT PLATE**

- Flank Steak (Broil, Braise, Panfry)
- Flank Steak Rolls (Braise, Broil, Panbroil, Panfry)
- Skirt Steak (Braise, Broil, Panbroil, Panfry)

**OTHER CUTS**

- Ground Beef (Broil, Panfry, Panbroil, Roast (Bake))
- Cubed Steak (Panfry, Braise)
- Beef for Stew (Braise, Cook in Liquid)
- Cubes for Kabobs (Broil, Braise)

THIS CHART APPROVED BY NATIONAL LIVE STOCK & MEAT BOARD