

Introduce solid foods gradually

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with your pediatrician if you notice allergic reactions such as a skin rash or diarrhea."

Take care to prepare baby food in a sanitary manner. Some parents like to feed their infants homemade foods. Snider cautions that appliances or utensils used to blend or mash the food to an appropriate texture must be clean to guard against contamination. She also advises parents to remove the baby's portion before salting the rest of the food.

"Salt added to family food is not tolerated by infants and may lead to kidney damage," she says. "Parents may prefer to use commercial baby foods. These

contain no salt and are relatively inexpensive."

Commercial baby foods may be dehydrated or in ready-to-eat form in jars. The advantage of the dehydrated form is that only the amount a baby will eat needs to be prepared. If using food from a jar, heat only the amount that you think your baby will consume. The rest should be refrigerated immediately in its original container. Uneaten food in a baby's dish should be discarded. It may be contaminated with bacteria, or saliva from the baby's mouth can cause the product to break down.

Babies will accept most foods, including strong-flavored vegetables such as turnips, broccoli and cauliflower, says Snider. But if your baby refuses a new food, don't insist. Try again a few days later. "Babies shouldn't be forced to eat," she says. "They generally know when they're hungry."

The specialist also cautions against feeding young infants honey. Bacterial spores found in

honey can grow in an infant's gastrointestinal tract and cause botulism—an illness that has been associated with sudden infant death syndrome. However, after babies are six or seven months old, they produce enough stomach acid to destroy the spores of this organism.

Elco Dairy Club

The Elco 4-H Dairy Club held its reorganizational meeting Feb. 21 at Christ Lutheran Church.

New officers for the coming year are: president, Angie Bollinger; vice president, Adam Sonnen; secretary, Stephanie Wagner; treasurer, Dean Nolt; and reporter, Becky Sonnen.

Three new members — Tracey Balsbaugh, Deanne Nolt, and Brett Lentz — were welcomed into the club.

Each member tried his luck on the Hoard's Dairyman Judging Contest. Last year's top scorer was Bruce Heilinger.

The next meeting will be March 14, when Adam Sonnen and Dean Nolt will give a demonstration. Each member will be asked to give a demonstration during the year.

On being a farm wife - And other hazards



Joyce Bupp

To laugh or to cry. That is the question. (With apologies to Shakespeare.)

This all began with a newsletter from a local organization, relating the need for volunteers and fund raising. Among the countless charitable groups, this particular one, at least to me, represents a critical need of communities and is most deserving.

And the sentence that sent me into this emotional mix was this: "All we ask is for several hours a month to help with our various projects."

I wish. How I wish there were just a couple of more hours in the month to offer.

"Calves, would you consider giving up eating an evening a week or so?" I asked the occupants of the nursery.

Twelve simultaneous bawling moos replied negatively to the suggestion, while the newest was too busy wriggling to her feet to answer, and the ornery weaning in the corner grabbed her water bucket by the edge and sent the contents over my foot.

So much for that department. Across the way in the old barn are Hulk and Bulk. Understand that these are descriptive titles for these 4-H heifers, not their official names.

"Hey, you two, how about fasting an evening a week. It would do your figures wonders," I suggested.

Hulk shot her tongue out to affectionately lick my cheek, the equivalent of being massaged with damp sandpaper. She then wrapped up the conversation with a blasting bawl in my ear, the decibel level of acid rock turned on

full speaker sound.

No cooperation for a couple of hours off from here, either.

Shall we try at the house? I ponder the thought, as I remove dusty sweaters and damp boots. Three soggy towels and a dirty sweatshirt fly down to the towering laundry stack from the bathroom drop, and four cruddy pairs of barn jeans wrap around my ankles to beg for a wash job.

The question never gets asked. It's buried instead under crisis pleas like "What's for supper?" — "Did you wash my gym suit?" — "Can you take me to 4-H?" — and "I need the car . . . bye."

No time to be spared here, for sure.

One look at the office leveled a final blow. Stacks of paper, checkbooks, record books, letters, notes, messages, bills and general miscellaneous stuff to sort. In the midst wait the telephone and the typewriter. In frantic moments of frustration I have threatened to strangle one with the cord from the other, rendering both useless. Visions of repair bills have thus far kept that maniacurge under wraps.

There just is no more time.

And our schedules are surely not unique. Such busy demands are repeated in households — farm and non-farm — across the country, as fathers, mothers, and children pound a frantic pace trying to respond to the demands of today.

A quote from University of Nebraska stress specialist Robert Eliot seems especially appropriate: "A woman is often expected to act like a lady, care like a mother, think like a man and work like a dog. It's too much for

many of them."

And not just women. Men — and our young people — are under the same demands.

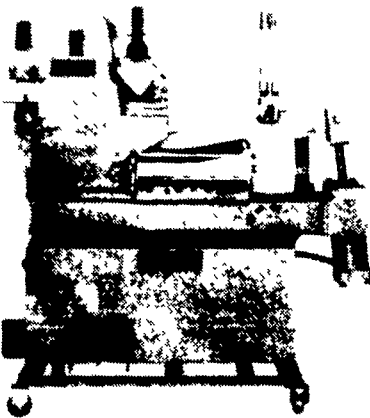
Sometimes there can be only one answer to one more request.

"No" gets easier to say with practice.

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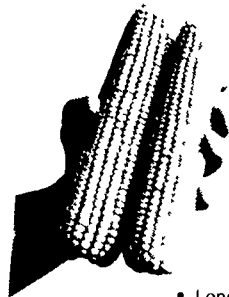
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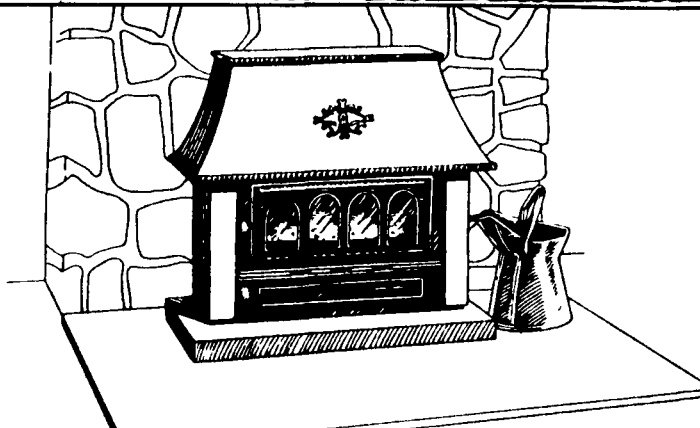
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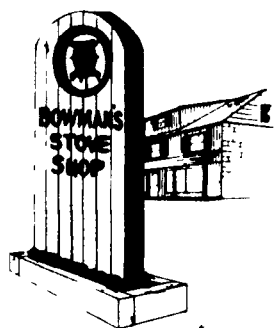
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