

On being a farm wife - And other hazards Joyce Bupp



By gosh, there's nothing like a good old fashioned blizzard to put life in perspective. While a foot of snow is ho-hum stuff to our neighbors a few counties north, we folks who live here on the state's southern border are more accustomed to coverings in the 2-to-6-inch range. With a heavy cloud cover dumping white stuff at the rate of an inch-plus an hour, suddenly a chocked-full schedule of pressing meetings, appointments and

errands loses its importance to a more immediate issue. Survival. Man against the elements. Brain against the brawn of Mother Nature. Point person in the blizzard survival battle is your favorite weather forecaster, issuing excited announcements of such phrases as "severe winter storm warning," meaning snow has started to fall. Or, there's a related phrase, "severe winter storm watch," which means we may,

perhaps, possibly, have snow or ice; on the other hand, the whole front could either fall apart or blow out to sea and be lost in the Bermuda Triangle. Response to such ominous announcements is totally predictable: a run to the local supermarket for survival rations. This is done regardless of whether the last food-stock-up trip occurred three weeks or 12 hours previous. Fascinating, wouldn't you say, that in this best fed country in the world, it is entirely possible upon warnings of an impending snow for a person to be crushed in the stampede to stock up on food. Indeed, a friend who stopped at the supermarket just before last week's big snow had to wait in line for a cart before she could get down to business. While blizzards may add excitement to day-to-day routine, they do create extra work out on the farm. Feed must come in and product must go out. Most of us dairy producers have some feed on hand, so getting the milk out is the major concern. A dairyman facing a tank of white liquid about to spill over the top while a herd of full-

uddered milkers bawls in the background is not a pretty sight. So the next scouts in the dairy farm blizzard survival battle are the milk haulers. There aren't enough words of praise for most of these veterans of ice, sleet, snow, blow and drifts, who routinely pull out at unspeakable hours in the dark of night or very early morning, making impossible runs in unpredictable weather. Then, more excitement in keeping a blowing blizzard at bay so the trucker can get from point A, a plowed road, to point B, your milkhouse. So, out of the shed roars the battle tanker, a diesel wrapped in a plow and cab or wind guard, or similarly equipped four-wheel-drive pickup. For at least the last couple generations with which I've been familiar, males in this family carry a genetically-heritable weakness for plowing snow. One such third-generation snowplower, who laments rolling out of a warm bed for a schoolbus, voluntarily

bounces out from a pileup of warm blankets to embrace weather that would frostbite a polar bear, so long as it means running the tractor and plow. Combine local milk truck routes with locations of nearby relatives and friends who need plowed out, and it means one kid who eagerly skips breakfast to disappear for hours on end, totally hypnotized by the motion of white snow rolling over the corner of a shiny blade. Back on the home front, blizzard survival equates to baking bread. (Never mind that there are a half-dozen loaves in the freezer.) Some primeval urge draws me to yeast and flour (or frozen bread dough) and the heavenly smell and cozy warmth of loaves browning in the oven. Frankly, in spite of the extra hassles, I suspect most of us enjoy the mini-break created by being temporarily blizzard-bound for a couple of hours. Think we could schedule one about mid-August?

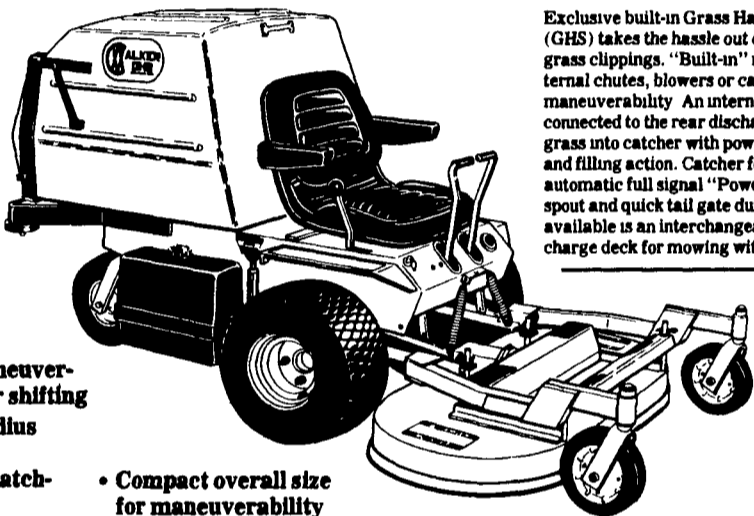
Students Don't Object To Reduced Sodium Diets, Study Shows

MEDIA - Although many people claim that reduced sodium meals mean reduced taste meals, those same people may not pass a taste test, according to a report in a recent issue of FDA Consumer. Recent studies in Louisiana and New Hampshire schools showed that most students didn't notice when the sodium content of school meals was decreased. Those who did notice a difference generally preferred the reduced sodium foods to their saltier counterpart. In the Louisiana elementary school study, sodium was progressively reduced from 25 to

75 percent in dinner rolls and other baked products. Students recognized no difference in quality and wasted no more food than they had when served the high sodium baked goods. The New Hampshire study involved monitoring the blood pressure of high school students in relation to dietary sodium. Although they are not ready to report clinical results, Maryetta Dorricott, Delaware County Cooperative Extension home economist, says both groups of researchers say it's not too early to conclude that students don't object to sodium reduced diets.

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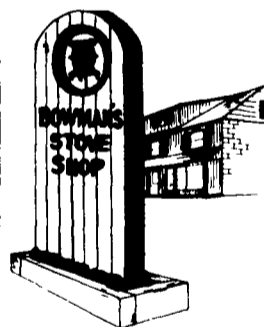
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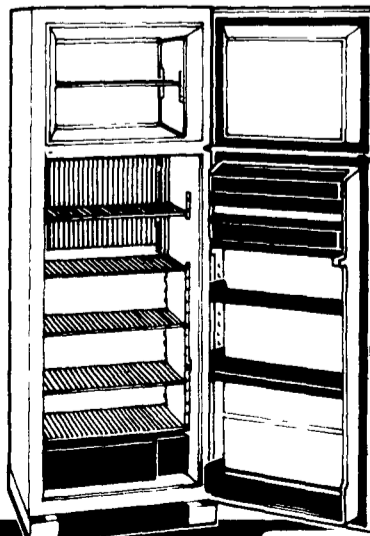
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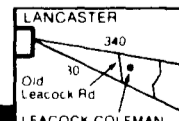
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