


**On being
a farm wife
- And other
hazards**

Joyce Bupp



Drink your milk. Eat your vegetables.

Yes, mother. Nag... nag... nag. A jumble of news clips accumulating in the pile-up on my desk suggests that mother was right all along in her admonishments about eating what is "good for you." (There for awhile, everything "good" was "bad").

Our family collectively gulps down about a gallon of milk a day - whole milk, tapped straight from our bulk milk tank. We've consumed that quantity for at least the last 20 years, along with what I

hope has been a fairly well-balanced diet. We're healthy - our sparse medical bills run toward stitches and X-rays for wrestling with bulls, falling off motorcycles, and slicing fingers on equipment.

News clips littering the desk reinforce the benefits of our collective milk-swilling habit.

One recounts a Cornell University study of a protein in cow's milk that stops the growth of human breast cancer cells. Prompting this study was the observation that mammary tumors are not an affliction suffered by

cows.

What researchers found was something they labeled MDGI - mammary-derived growth inhibitor - that stops udder cell growth and spurs milk production in cows. Testing showed MDGI halting the growth of human breast cancer cells. Projected research results are a range of possible treatments for human cancers.

Meanwhile, British researchers have, for ten years, been conducting a study of some 4,200 middle-aged men. According to study results, those who drank two cups of milk daily were 10 times less likely to suffer heart attacks than non-milk-drinkers.

And, the United Kingdom Medical Research Council-funded study also found that butter eaters had only half as many heart attacks as those who consumed margarine during the study.

Positive news for us milk and butter lovers in this June Dairy Month.

Similarly satisfying to me are study results showing that both

beef and chocolate (chocolate!) are better for us than some diet specialists have claimed in the past. Both contain stearic acid, which reportedly reduces the cholesterol effects we hear so much about.

At the same time, a whole host of other food research projects are beginning to relate "food as medicine," especially geared toward cancer prevention.

Broccoli (will the White House take note?) and related foods like cabbage, brussels sprouts, kale, etc., contain something called sulforaphane, a chemical believed to help protect against cancers.

Carrots, as well as other orange-colored and dark green vegetables, contain the beta carotene pigment. The body converts that to Vitamin A, believed to be a sort of antioxidant that helps cells resist cancerous invasions. Likewise citrus fruits, which some scientists think offer similar cancer resistance via their Vitamin C content. And since strawberries

are really high in Vitamin C, that's a great excuse for heavy sampling while I pick the patch.

Researchers suggest that garlic and onions may help reduce blood pressure and cholesterol levels, as well as provide some anti-cancer protection, especially stomach-related types. And keep germ-laden people at a distance.

Even spices are getting medical attention.

USDA researchers recently reported that insulin effectiveness is boosted by cinnamon, a finding that could help diabetics stabilize blood-sugar levels. Bay leaves and tumeric, both languishing on my overcrowded spice rack, offer similar results, but not as dramatically as cinnamon.

Just think. Some day, instead of prescribing pills, physicians might send us off with a list of curative foods.

Make mine a double-cheeseburger, tossed salad, and chocolate shake.

Hold the guilt.

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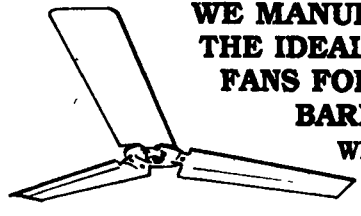

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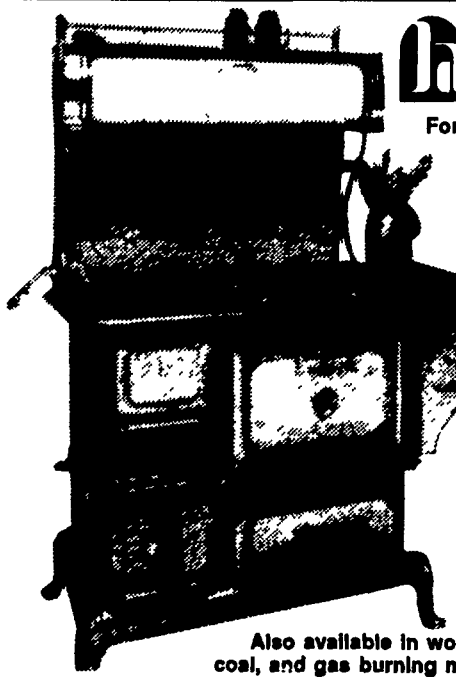
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