



Ida's Notebook

Ida Risser

The gardens are finally planted. First it is too wet to work the ground and next it is too dry. We have two gardens at our home and two on the dairy farm and that does not count the sweet corn patch. Every year I like to try something new. Sometimes the plants that come in the mail are so tiny compared to the six foot ones pictured in the catalog.

I'm still amazed that I could grow such nice cotton plants last year. Even their flowers are pretty and the cotton is so very soft. The safflower from the heirloom catalog gave orange-red flowers and is a substitute for expensive saffron. This year I'm trying black salsify and I'm told that the second year it

will bear large daisy-like yellow flowers. If you plant Job's Tears, to make into necklaces, be prepared for it to spread in following years. My New Zealand spinach reseeds itself from year to year and this gives me early spinach.

My red and blue braided wool rug is finally finished. This is a rather small one as I need more time to work outside and also time to freeze the asparagus that my husband brings from his plot. When one of the 11 grandchildren reaches 12 years of age, I tell them to pick one of the dozen rugs for themselves. While I basted strips for the rug, I watched some tapes from our son's family in Virginia. These make me feel as though I

Butter Sales Reach 15-Year High

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Butter, long considered by many to be the "gold standard" of spreads, is enjoying a remarkable comeback. Its popularity is continuing to increase as consumers discover it's taste, value, and versatility.

"In 1992, the commercial disappearance of butter reached a

15-year high of 944 million pounds or 4.5 percent above 1991 levels," reports Scott Higgins, general manager, Mid East United Dairy Industry Association. "For 1993, retail sales figures are up 10.2 percent for the first 11 months of the year."

Quality/Value Equation

Why are more and more American consumers buying butter these days? Several factors are contributing to butter's newfound popularity according to market watchers: Improved price/value perceptions, health concerns and a growing trend among adult consumers to value the "quality of life."

Since 1989, the average price of butter has dropped 30 cents a pound, from \$1.79 in 1989 to \$1.40 in 1992. During the same time period, average margarine prices declined only 4 cents, from 63 cents per pound to 59 cents per pound. Industry watchers agree that in these days of tighter purse strings and with the growing importance of value pricing, butter's new economy has contributed to sales increases.

Margarine No Longer a Better Alternative

Many observers believe that recent medical studies linking trans-fatty acids contained in margarine to certain health risks have also been a factor in butter sales. A June 1993 Wall Street Journal article reported that several studies have shown the hydrogenated vegetable fats in margarine and vegetable shortening actually raise the risk of cardiovascular disease. Some consumers who switched to margarine because of health concerns are now turning back to butter as result of these findings.

One of Life's Little Luxuries

The "pleasure principle" provides a more emotional explanation for butter's growing popularity. Futurists point to mounting evidence that consumers today are concerned with enriching the quality of their lives in often small, but meaningful ways. Butter is one of the "common sense luxuries" that consumers have discovered in their quest for the finer things in life.

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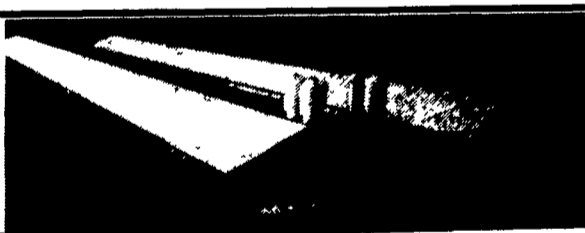


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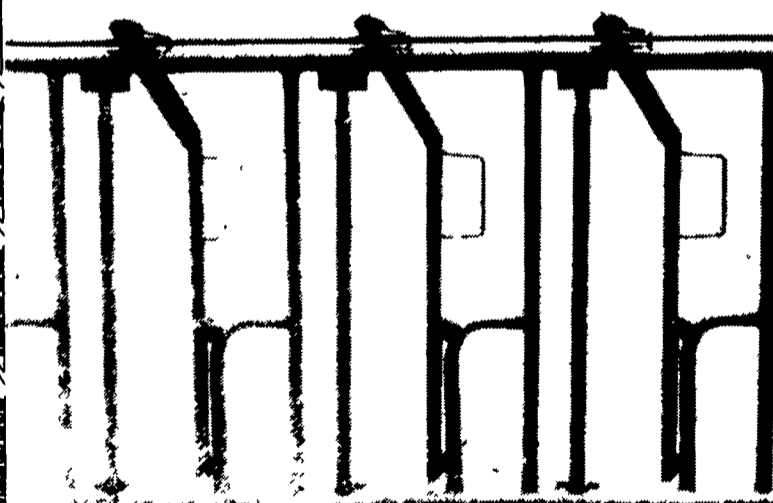
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