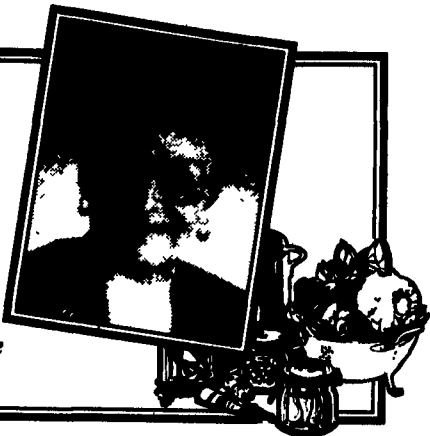


Consuming Thoughts

by
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Every smart shopper realizes that when buying food, wholesomeness—lack of foreign materials and absence of mold—is of primary importance. However, millions of dollars spent on grains, edible seeds and processed foods are lost each year because proper home storage techniques have been overlooked. After you obtain a high quality product, preserve its nutrition and palatability by considering the following points before you place it on the shelf.

•**Rotation:** A "first in/first out" rotation system reduces the chance of insect, rodent, or chemical spoilage.

•**Air:** Most foods contain some fat. Fat oxidizes when in contact with air, producing rancid odors and flavors. As a result, the nutritional value decreases, and the product may become slightly toxic. To slow the development of rancidity, fill storage containers, make them as airtight as possible and store them in a dark, cool place.

•**Light:** Sunlight bleaches food stored in clear packages, destroying the food's pigments, flavor, and texture. It can cause vitamins to lose their activity. Never store foods packaged in clear containers in a sunlit area, even if the sunlight hits them for only a few minutes a day.

•**Heat:** Heat speeds up chemical

reactions that destroy color, flavor, texture, and nutritional value in store foods. Shady, indoor, or underground storage reduces heat influence. Refrigeration is one of the easiest and best methods of food preservation.

•**Moisture:** A certain amount of moisture helps maintain the quality of many foods, but an increase in moisture facilitates insect, mold, and bacteria growth in packaged foods. A dry storage place and proper packaging will keep the right amount of moisture in and excess moisture out.

•**Storage containers:** The best containers are made of glass, metal or rigid plastic. Containers should retain natural moisture and food colors while keeping out insects, rodents, mold, dust, air, and light. Avoid wooden or paper containers where moisture is a problem. Use metal containers only in dry areas and store glass containers where they will be safe from breakage. Also remember that rodents and insects can penetrate wood, cardboard, and thin plastic.

Common household foods such as grains, cereals, packaged mixes, cookies, pasta, dried fruits and spices, red pepper, paprika and chili powder are highly attractive to insects and invite insect infestation. To ensure that these foods remain insect-free, consider the

following measures before storing them in your home.

•**Inspect food before you buy.** If you find evidence of insects, take the product to the grocer. This will prevent infestation of other packages.

•**Buy quantities that can be used quickly,** unless planning to repackage or freeze.

•**Transfer foods to glass or metal containers** that can't be penetrated by insects. Jars with screw-on lids are best.

•**Clean all grains and edible seeds to remove dust and broken seeds.** Fanning or sieving will remove most foreign materials. Store these foods in airtight containers, place in a cool, dry place and check periodically.

•**Keep storage and counter areas clean.** Do not allow food particles to accumulate on shelves or in cracks. Vacuum storage area with a crevice tool that reaches into cracks. If this is not possible, use a brush or cloth. Do not use soap and water. This will wash food particles into crevices and cracks where they can develop mold.

•**Clean under stoves, refrigerator and other large appliances regularly.**

•**Check dog, cat and bird food regularly.** These products may contain insects that will attract others into your home.

Berks Society 1

Berks County Society of Farm Women Group 1 enjoyed their annual Christmas party with dinner at the Stagecoach Stop Restaurant, Maiden Creek. Nine-

teen members and their guests attended.

Poinsettias and fruit baskets were distributed by Group 1 to various shut-ins during the holiday season.

Lancaster Society 8

Lancaster Society of Farm Women No. 8 met on December 13 at the home of Vernetta Wallander of Maytown. Carol Compton gave devotions. Hostesses were Elaine Fuhrman, Ruth Newcomer and Vernetta Wallander.

Jean Moyer was guest speaker. She gave an enjoyable talk of Christmas time legends. The next meeting will be on February 14, at St. Johns Lutheran Church in Maytown.

Berks Society 3

Groups 3 of the Berks County Society of Farm Women held its Christmas banquet for members and guests at Schaeffer's Family Restaurant, Boyertown. Secret pals were revealed and new ones selected.

Loeb; secretary Regina Moyer; treasurer Wendy Shane; corresponding secretary Lora Oswald.

Several members attended the annual state convention in Harrisburg on January 8.

The next meeting will be held at the home of Mary Hill, Fourth Street, Boyertown. The Society's constitution and by-laws will be reviewed.

Officer for 1996-1997 were installed following the business meeting. They are president Mayetta Shane; vice-president Joan

Berks Society 6

Members of the Berks County Society of Farm Women Group #6 held their November meeting in the home of Marian Gehris, Oley.

The members made Christmas favors for Meals on Wheels. Monetary donations were given to the Hamburg Center and Santa's Corner at Berks Heim.

Betty Naftzinger entertained members, husbands, and guests at the Christmas party held at Crys-

tals Springs Family Restaurant. Wendy Lingle, the county president installed the newly elected officers. State President Dorothy Stricker was also in attendance, and spoke to the group about her job and family. Gifts were exchanged and door prizes were given out.

The January 1996 meeting will be in the home of Barbara Kelnher, Oley.

York Society 26

York County Farm Women's Group 26 met at the residence of Martha Huston on December 12 for the annual Christmas party. Betty Bertolette was co-hostess. Each member brought a covered dish.

members making a total of 17.

The State Convention will be held on January 8 at the Forum in Harrisburg and the banquet will be held at the Radisson Penn Harris in Camp Hill. Incoming president Athena Beshore, Jan Sechler, and Susan Anthos will attend as delegates.

Outgoing president Doris Beshore conducted the business meeting.

Martha Huston gave the Bible reading.

The January meeting will be held on January 16. Members will go to the Casablanca Restaurant for lunch and then to Yocumtown Church for the business meeting.

There were 15 members attending and Susan Anthos and Doris Goodlander were sworn in as new

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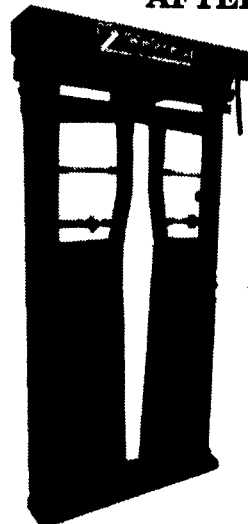
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