

HOW TO SELECT FOODS

How the Housekeeper Can Provide the Food Substances the Body Needs Economically—Nutrition Specialists of the United States Department of Agriculture Show How to Plan a Ration That Will Give the Best Returns For the Money Spent.

Washington, D. C., June 29.—Adults and children must get several different substances from the food they eat or they will miss something which is essential to bodily efficiency and health, according to the nutrition specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The housewife, therefore, who plans her meals or attempts to save money on food without some knowledge of these substances and of the five simple groups of foods which supply them is very liable to omit from her meals some food essential for the growth of children or necessary to supply the family with the energy they need for their daily tasks. Attempted economy which entirely omits certain foods may well prove a very poor investment because of its ultimate effect on the well-being of the household. Price, individual preference for certain foods, and even the fact that hunger is satisfied after a meal, are not safe guides. Tomatoes at ten cents a piece in winter are no more nutritious than they are at five cents a quart in summer. A child might crave much more sugar than would be good for him. A bulky diet of potatoes or bananas might make a person feel he had eaten enough, but would not furnish him with the elements that his body needs.

To plan out meals in the interest of family efficiency and economy at the same time, the housewife fortunately does not need to elaborate sums in calories or to have any intimate understanding of such terms as protein and carbohydrates. All she needs to do is to classify the food she uses into five simple household groups laid down in recently issued Farmers' Bulletin 808, published by the office of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture. The purpose of the bulletin, which is the first of a series of simple pamphlets dealing with the economical use of foods, is to enable the average housewife to plan her meals effectively, even though she has no special training in chemistry or dietetics. The substances which the specialists find are needed in the daily diet to maintain the body may be grouped under seven heads: Mineral substances, protein, starches, sugars, fats, cellulose and certain little known but very important growth-stimulating substances.

That these essential substances are not difficult for the average housewife to provide is shown by the following combinations, which the specialists believe indicate the daily food requirements of normal individuals:

A man who does fairly hard muscular work would be likely to get the mood which his body needs if supplied daily with such a combination of foods as the following:

1 1/2 pounds of bread (having about the same food value as 1 pound of such cereal preparations as wheat or rye flour, oatmeal, corn meal, rice, etc.)

1 1/2 ounces of 1/4 cup of butter, oil, meat drippings, or other fat; 1/2 ounce, or 1/4 cup, of sugar; or 1-3 cup of honey, or sirup, or an equivalent amount of any sweet.

1 1/2 pounds of food from the following: Fresh fruits and fresh or root vegetables.

1 1/2 ounces of food from a class which may be called "meats and meat substitutes," that is, moderately fat meats, poultry, fish, eggs, dried legumes (beans, soy beans, peas, lentils, cowpeas and peanuts). Milk also belongs among these foods, but because of the large amount of water it contains, half a glass, or 4 ounces of it would be required to equal an ounce of any one of the others.

A man who works hard out of doors all day probably would need more food than this, and one who sits all day at his desk would need less. The amounts given are suitable for a man who, like a salesman in a store, walks about more or less and does more or less of such work as lifting.

A family consisting of a man and a woman, who do moderately hard muscular work, and three children—say, between 3 and 12 years of age—would get the food they require if supplied daily with:

4 1/2 pounds of bread, having about the same food value as 3 pounds of wheat or rye flour, oatmeal, corn meal, hominy or rice, or about 2 1/2 pounds of such cereals and 5 or 6 medium-sized potatoes.

3/4 cup of fat (butter or butter with oil, beef drippings, or other fat) —a weekly allowance of 2 1/2 to 3 pounds.

A little more than one cup of sugar, or a weekly allowance of 4 pounds; or an equivalent amount of some other sweet, such as 1 1/4 cups of sirup or honey a day, or 1/2 pound of dried figs or raisins a day.

4 pounds in all of fresh fruits and fresh or root vegetables.

One of the two following, the

choice depending on the age of the children:

3 quarts of milk and 1 pound of other foods taken from the meat and meat-substitute group.

2 quarts of milk and 1 1/2 pounds of other foods taken from the meat and meat-substitute group. In these combinations of food, it will be noted, bread and other preparations of cereal food are used as freely as they conveniently can be without making the ration one-sided or unattractive. A diet equal in nourishment might be planned with less cereal, but this would make it necessary to increase the amounts of more costly foods, such as meat, fruits and vegetables.

Cereals can be used freely without making the diet monotonous if they are interspersed in a variety of forms and combined with other nutritious or flavoring materials, such as meat, cheese, onions, celery, tomatoes and other vegetables and dried, cooked or fresh fruits.

Sample Meals for a Family
The food materials indicated as being required may be combined into three meals in many ways. The following meals are given not because they are recommended above many others that might be prepared, but simply to show that such foods can be combined into dishes commonly used in American homes. These meals supply during the day all of the eight essential substances and also provide flavorings and condiments which, while not important as sources of nourishment, add to the attractiveness of certain foods.

Breakfast
Fruit, 1 1/2 pounds of fresh fruit (equivalent to 3 medium-sized oranges, 5 small apples, or a quart-box of strawberries), or three or four ounces of dried fruit (equivalent to 10 or 12 dates or 4 or 5 figs).

Cereal breakfast food, 4 ounces before being cooked, or about 1 1/2 pints after it is cooked. The equivalent in food value in puffed or flaked, ready-to-eat cereals would be 5 or 6 cups.

Milk on cereal, 1/4 cup for each person.
Sugar on fruit, on cereal, or in coffee, 2 1/2 level tablespoons or 1 1/4 ounces.

Bread, 8 slices, or 8 ounces.
Butter, 1 1/4 ounces, or 2 1/2 cubic inches.

An egg, or 2 ounces of meat, fish, or poultry for each older person, and a glass of milk for each young child.

Dinner
Meat, or fish, 1/4 pound per grown person; or, for each child, an egg or a glass of milk.

Potatoes (5 medium sized) 1 1/2 pounds.
Another vegetable (turnips, spinach, corn, cauliflower or other), 1 pound.

Bread, 8 slices, or 8 ounces.
Butter, 1 1/4 ounces, or 2 1/2 cubic inches.

Steamed apple (or other fruit) pudding. (Ingredients: Two cups flour, 2 tablespoons butter, 1/4 cup milk, 4 apples, 1 tablespoon sugar).

Sauce. (Ingredients: One-half cup sugar, 1 1/2 tablespoons flour, 2 teaspoons butter, 1/4 cup water, flavoring.)

Supper
A gravy made out of 1 pint of skim milk, 1/4 cup flour, 2 level teaspoons butter and 4 ounces salt or smoked fish (just enough for flavor). To this can be added the egg yolk left from the frosting of the cake. (See below.)

Rice, 8 ounces, or 1 cup, measured before being cooked.
Bread, 8 slices, or 8 ounces.
Butter, 1 1/4 ounces, or 2 1/2 cubic inches.

One-half of a cake. (Ingredients for whole cake: One-fourth cup butter, 1/2 cup sugar, 1 egg, 1/2 cup milk, 1 1/2 cups flour, 2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder.) Frosting made with 1 egg white and 1/4 cup sugar.

Why the Various Substances are Important
The mineral substances, such as lime, salts, compounds of phosphorus, iron, and others are supplied largely by vegetables. They serve the body as building material, tend to counteract acidity in the body tissues and fluids and are useful in other ways. Vegetables and fruits, therefore, should not be neglected in the diet, especially as they supply also another substance, cellulose, the framework material of plants, which gives bulk to the diet and tends to prevent constipation.

Protein, a substance supplied by meat or meat substitutes, including milk, is a very important fuel and body-building material. It provides an element—nitrogen—needed to form body tissues, not only during growth in childhood but also to make good the wear and tear of use in persons of any age, thus keeping the body in repair. Absence of foods supplying protein would give a diet lacking in body-building materials.

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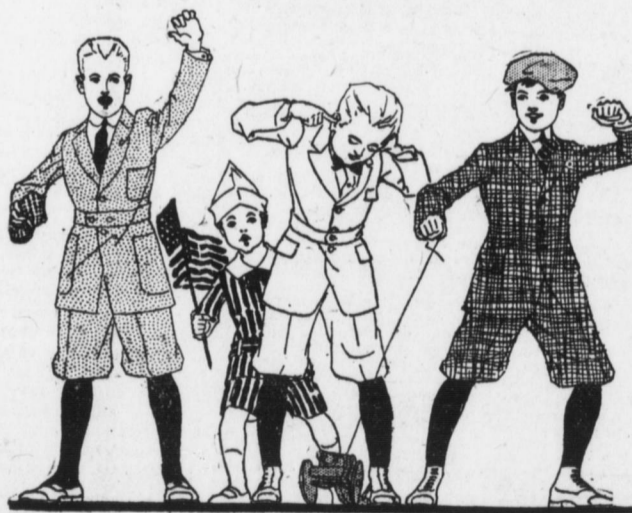
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