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Housekeepers' Chat

Release Tuesday, October 30, 1928.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Subject: "Storing Fruits and Vegetables in the Home." Program includes suggestions as to the best methods of storing fruits and vegetables for relatively short periods, under home conditions. Information from W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry. Recipe for doughnuts from Bureau of Home Economics.

Bulletins available: "Home Storage of Vegetables." Can be secured from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., for five cents in coin. "Home Baking," free.

--ooOoo--

"Say!" I called down the cellar to W. R. B. the other morning.

"Say what?" came from the depths of the cellar, where the Garden Specialist was storing potatoes.

"Say, how would you like to write me a rattling good talk on "Storing Fruits and Vegetables in the Home?"

My friend came to the stairway, with an empty potato sack in his hand.

"Oh, I might find time to write your talk," he said. "Tell you what I'll do. My wife wants to have a few people in Wednesday night, for doughnuts and cider, and she's been hunting all over the place for her doughnut recipe. Suppose you run over home, and get your recipe for her. Then you might help her fry the doughnuts, if you don't mind, while I see what shape my speech-making typewriter is in this morning."

I went home for the doughnut recipe, which I'm going to give you today, and while his wife and I made doughnuts, W.R.B. wrote this talk. I shall read it just as he wrote it. The title is:

"Storing Fruits and Vegetables in the Home."

The other day I heard Mrs. Brown talking with her grocer, in a sort of complaining way, about the price she was paying for potatoes, and other vegetables.

"Why don't you buy a sack of potatoes," suggested the grocer, "and get them much cheaper than by ordering a peck at a time?"

"I'm afraid I have no suitable place to keep them", replied Mrs. Brown, "Come to think of it, I believe I could have a small room partitioned off, in the coolest corner of the cellar, and keep all sorts of vegetables in it."

"Fine," said the grocer. "I'll be very glad to supply you, not only with potatoes, but with beets, carrots, onions, cabbage, and a number of other fall vegetables, giving you the benefit of the present prices, if you buy them in quantities."

"Good", said Mrs. Brown, "I'll think about it, and let you know. You see I used to live on a farm, where we grew everything of that kind right on the place, and all we had to do at dinner time was to go down cellar and get anything we needed in the way of fruits and vegetables. I never could get into the habit of ordering in small quantities. Even now I let a good many things spoil, because I do not have a suitable storage cellar to keep them in."

Mrs. Brown's experience is similar to that of many other housekeepers who live in homes built to sell, where no thought has been given to things as important as the storage of fruits and vegetables.

With the present development of mechanical refrigeration, we may look forward to the day when every modern home, equipped with electricity, will be provided not only with a refrigerated cabinet in the cellar, but also with a refrigerated moth storage closet for winter clothing, on the second floor, or somewhere else in the house. Even now, by having a large mechanically cooled refrigerator, it is often possible to buy such perishable fruits as peaches, in bushel or half bushel quantities, and keep them until used.

While it might not pay to store apples under refrigeration in the home, except in small quantities, it does pay to store the more perishable fruits, like peaches, in the refrigerator.

What most people are interested in, however, is a practical method of storing fruits and vegetables in the ordinary home. For most products, a relatively low temperature, and freedom from excessive moisture, are the essentials of good storage. It goes without saying that ventilation must be provided in the natural storage where mechanical refrigeration is not used.

I once knew a family, and there are many others like them, who moved into a new house. In their country home they had had a cellar like the one Mrs. Brown wanted, and in which they kept everything for winter use. In the new home, there was no storage room. So a carpenter was called in, and in one day's time he partitioned off the coolest corner of the cellar. This small storage room had a window on the north side, for the admission of fresh air. Shelves were constructed along two sides of the room, with several bins made of 1 by 3 inch slats, built underneath the shelves. In these bins were stored potatoes, turnips, cabbage, carrots, parsnips, and onions. The bins containing the beets, parsnips, and carrots were lined on the sides with heavy water-proof paper, and clean moist sand was poured over these vegetables to keep them from drying out too rapidly.

The onions were stored in a place where they would have the most air, while the potatoes were placed back in the corner, where they would keep cool, and fairly moist. On the shelves were stored the canned fruits, put up during the summer. When the room was completed, the lady of the house took a survey of the new storage cellar and said to her husband, "There now, I won't have to run to the grocer every time I want fruits or vegetables for a meal."

A thermometer was hung in the cellar, and the north window was kept open. By the way, this window was covered with a double screen, one of ordinary fly screen wire, and the other a coarser and heavier wire screen to protect the lighter screen. The window was hinged at the top, and fitted with a cord and pulley so that it could be raised to the full height, or supported part way, in order to get the necessary amount of ventilation.

Two heater pipes that ran through the room were covered completely with asbestos pipe covering. It was soon found that two openings for ventilation would be better than one, so a small hole was cut in the side of the room opposite the window, and a piece of 6-inch pipe inserted in the foundation. This was also screened, and provided with a cap, so that it could be closed on the inside in extremely cold weather. To complete the job, and make the cellar more attractive, the walls were given a coating of whitewash; and the shelves were painted. This wasn't all done in a day, but over a period of several weeks. However, so far as the storage of fruits and vegetables for home use was concerned, the storage room was a success from the day it was built.

A storage cellar of this kind, whether in the country or in the city, will greatly aid in the keeping of fresh fruits and vegetables, and at the same time make it possible for the family to purchase in fairly large quantities. It is a mistake, however, to buy too many apples, or any of the more perishable fruits at one time.

This concludes W.R.B.'s talk on "Storing Fruits and Vegetables at Home." If you have any questions, please send them to me, and I'll pass them on to him.

Now take your pencils, and let's write the recipe for doughnuts. Forty doughnuts, this makes. Nine ingredients, for these 40 doughnuts:

1 cup milk	1 cup sugar
4 $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups sifted soft-wheat flour	2 teaspoons salt
2 teaspoons fat	$1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cinnamon, and
2 eggs	$1\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon nutmeg
5 teaspoons baking powder	

Does everybody have nine ingredients? I'll check them for you: (Repeat).

Mix the ingredients just as you would for a butter cake. That is, place the fat in a warm place, until it becomes soft, though not melted. Then combine it with the sugar. This is just as satisfactory, and much quicker, than the old-fashioned method of creaming cold fat and sugar together. After the fat and sugar have been thoroughly combined, stir in the beaten egg yolks. Then add, alternately, the liquid, and the dry ingredients, which have been mixed and sifted together. At the start, add only a small quantity of the liquid. If you add too much, it will dissolve the sugar. Fold in the well-beaten egg whites. Roll out the dough, about one-third inch thick. Don't handle the dough any more than necessary. Cut out the doughnuts, and fry them in deep fat. The fat should be hot enough to make a doughnut rise to the surface quickly, and to brown each side, in about one minute. If you have a thermometer, see that it registers about 375 degrees Fahrenheit, when you test the fat.

Tomorrow be ready to take another menu, and a new recipe.

