PLANNING THE FAMILY MEAL

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Meal planning requires now, what it required of the early savage tribes, namely: Someone to prepare the meal, a place for that preparation, equipment and a supply of foodstuffs and water. In the preparation of most meals, fuel is a necessity. Equipment may be simple or elaborate, both conditions presenting a problem. If the housewife has only a two-burner stove, she must necessarily plan her menu to include baked dishes or she must arrange some combination of kettles in order to have her various dishes cooking at the same time.

Elaborate equipment may or may not decrease the amount of work involved in planning a meal, much depending upon the system of the housewife in storing and using the equipment.

Until waterless cooking is more generally known and adopted than at the present time, an adequate water supply will be considered as one of the underlying helps in meal planning, taken for granted though it may be.

Stores of food supplies bear a direct relation to meal planning. Many practical women have said: "It is no task to plan meals when there is plenty in the pantry or plenty of money to fill the pantry." While that may be true in their case, it does not apply generally. With many women the difficulty lies in a lack of resourcefulness in thinking of new dishes or new ways of serving the old ones. Some women admit that they have fallen into this rut because of failure to get away from their homes to observe new ideas either from store displays or from their neighbors. Again, it may be because of their failure to read. Turning the pages of a household magazine or a cook book provides inspiration for variety in the menu.

A resourceful cook will substitute what she has for the ingredients which the recipe may call for, without changing the fundamentals of the recipe. A knowledge, then, of the principles of cookery and experience in applying them is a valuable aid in meal planning.

There is a vast difference between meals which "fill" one and meals which nourish one—a truth long ago accepted by successful livestock feeders. One may be fat yet poorly fed. With the ever-increasing knowledge of the health-giving and growth-promoting properties of foods, the housewife of today finds herself responsible for the health of her family in every meal she plans.
This bulletin is not intended for the cook who "has never seen the time she couldn't get up a meal" so much as it is for the mother who is anxious to spend her time and money for the best health interests of her family. It does not attempt to suggest that menus shall be made a year in advance or even six months. Rather, it is hoped to encourage planning for some fundamental foods that far in advance. Time, money, effort and confusion are saved, however, if menus can be made even one day in advance. When women consider their homemaking as a business, this will become a more common practice. It may not be possible at all times, especially in cases of illness, but it can be done, as many well-managed homes and all hospitals have proved.

MILK, GREENS AND GRAINS

Milk, greens and grains! Yes, fruits and eggs!

Meals planned around these as a basis cannot fail to give health and growth. In considering milk, green vegetables, whole grains, fruits and eggs, it is easy to see that meal planning begins when the home is first established and the decision made to have chickens, one or more cows, a garden, an orchard and grain crops. By his cooperation in making these possible, the father of the family aids very substantially in meal planning. A garden or canning budget is part of meal planning.

The city mother insists that it is all very well for the country mother who can raise these supplies right at her own doorway. They can, but too often, do not; unlimited acreage in pioneer country has seldom brought about crop variety or an interest in the family garden.

Whether one raises these supplies or buys them, they are the guide posts to meal planning. Selling all of the whole milk from the farm is not thrift, it is stealing from the children.

For the city parents to decrease their milk supply on a plea of economy is to admit ignorance of comparative values. Better more milk and less "stuffing" or bulk which may build fat but not tissues, bones and muscles.

One quart of milk per day for every child and one pint per day for every adult, either in food or as a beverage, should be the basis of all meal planning. Hand in hand, should go at least two vegetables other than potatoes each day, preferably green leafy vegetables including lettuce, cabbage, beet and turnip tops. Whole grains should be served frequently either as cereal or in bread. Fresh canned or dried fruit at least twice a week is another guide to meal planning. Fresh eggs should be used in generous amounts in daily cooking as well as for the main dish at
breakfast or supper. If these simple principles are kept in mind one may name the supplementary dishes to please the taste.

**SUITABLE COMBINATIONS**

In mentioning menus or suitable combinations this bulletin considers the necessary food requirement as well as the palatability and attractiveness of the dishes.

The following breakfast menus are intended for those engaged in manual labor. Office workers require less.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Poor</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whole wheat muffins</td>
<td>Pancakes, syrup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jam</td>
<td>Hot biscuit, butter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Butter</td>
<td>Fried potatoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacon and eggs</td>
<td>Coffee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee</td>
<td>Milk</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In the poorly planned breakfast one finds all starchy foods and the unnecessary duplication of effort in two types of bread, yet this menu is often seen in restaurants and in homes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Poor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orange or baked apple</td>
<td>Preserved peaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oatmeal, cream</td>
<td>Dry toast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sausage</td>
<td>Prepared cereal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolls</td>
<td>Sugar cookies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coffee</td>
<td>Milk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the well-planned breakfast the flavor of the fruit blends well with sausage—link sausage is often served with fried apple rings, the ring slipped over the sausage at special breakfasts. In contrast, the preserves in the poorly planned breakfast do not serve as an appetizer. The combination of the dry toast, dry cereal and dry cookies is not good.

**Special Breakfast.—**The simple, early morning breakfast planned as a social function generally includes fruit, a creamed dish, toast or toasted muffins, marmalade or jam, coffee or milk. If oranges or grapefruit are used they may be cut into cubes and served in stemmed glasses or they may be served in the skin of the fruit cut in basket shape or as the petals of a flower. Melons, thoroughly chilled, or sliced pineapple are also good. The creamed dish may be some form of meat or egg dish. Eggs a la goldenrod fit in nicely for a color scheme of gold and white. The whites of hard-cooked eggs are chopped into a well-seasoned cream gravy and the mixture poured over toast. On top of each piece of toast the hard-cooked yolks, run thru a potato ricer, are sprinkled to represent goldenrod.
In planning a luncheon the hostess must consider her supply of table linen, silverware and her seating space at the table. She must even consider the temperature of the room, for a luncheon is a leisurely affair at which everyone should be comfortable and happy. Then, too, if she has no help in serving she will wisely plan to limit the number of guests so that she can quickly, yet quietly, serve the cold dishes cold, and the hot dishes hot. Her planning may include an extra table for the kitchen serving or "dishing up," to be used later for dishes returned from the table.

The luncheon menu for a number of guests may be planned so that some of the food may be prepared a day in advance. The following menus suggest good and poor planning for the larger luncheon:

**LUNCHEON MENUS**

**Good**
- Consomme
- Lamb chop, mint sauce
- Peas in mashed-potato nest
- Rolls  Butter
- Olives
- Celery
- Perfection salad
- Ice cream
- Coffee

**Poor**
- Cream of celery soup
- Creamed chicken on toast
- Cauliflower
- Rolls  Butter
- Pickles
- Olives
- Banana salad
- Pineapple Bavarian cream

In the well-planned menu the consomme, or clear soup, is an appetizer rather than the main dish because of the substantial menu which follows it. The mint sauce, peas, olives, and salad all repeat the green color which gives interest to the table. In contrast, the poorly planned menu is neither all white nor all yellow—it does not appeal to the eye, even tho the food is good. Cream soup followed by a creamed dish is not the best of planning. The banana salad offers no special contrast to the other starchy foods. A stuffed tomato, stuffed beet or a carrot salad would have given color and flavor. Bavarian cream is delicious but not the best choice here on account of the two creamed dishes preceding it.

**Informal Luncheon.**—For the informal, and often impromptu, lunch, the possibilities are many, including soups, sandwiches (plain or toasted), escalloped dishes, salads, dessert and tea or coffee.

**Good**
- Chicken or veal croquettes
- Creamed potato
- Lettuce salad
- Rolls  Butter
- Gingerbread with whipped cream

**Poor**
- Veal croquettes
- French fried potatoes
- Egg salad
- Apple crullers
- Coffee
In the well-planned menu, the creamed vegetable provides a gravy for the croquette, the lettuce salad gives a green vegetable and the dessert is wholesome and simple. In the poorly planned menu it is obvious that the meal is too "greasy"—too many dishes fried in deep fat. The egg salad is more substantial than is needed for a simple lunch.

Other suitable combinations for luncheons are given here to suggest possibilities:

- Cream of tomato soup
- Ham omelet
- Whole wheat bread
- Butter
- Fruit
- Tapioca cream
- Tea or coffee
- Cold tongue
- Spinach salad
- Toasted muffins
- Jelly
- Prune whip
- Sponge drops
- Tea

PLANNING THE DINNER

The term "dinner," whether an evening meal or a noon meal, implies a substantial meal consisting of some hot foods and generally served in courses. The usual dinner menu consists of the soup course, the hot meal and vegetable course followed by salad and dessert. Salad may be served with the meat course. Fruit cups and oyster cocktails vie with soups for popularity for the first course in the informal dinner.

The most important part of any dinner is the good cheer which prevails. While pleasantry cannot conceal under-cooked food, it aids in the digestion of it. Confidence in cooking and serving, no matter how simple, puts the hostess at her ease.

Choice of Soups.—Clear soups are served with the formal dinner but cream soups may be served with the informal dinner provided the rest of the menu is not too rich. Cream soup with roast beef, brown gravy, dressing and two kinds of potatoes, is obviously poor planning. On the other hand, cream of lima bean soup may precede a dinner of roast duck, potatoes, and baked onions.

MEATS IN SUITABLE COMBINATIONS

- Roast pork
- Apple sauce or fresh apple butter or plum jelly
- Baked potato
- String beans
- Whole wheat rolls
- Fruit sherbet or gelatine
- Head lettuce salad
- Butter
- Cake

Note.—One green vegetable and one starchy vegetable is a safe basis for a pleasing variety. At certain seasons when green vegetables cannot be procured, a note of color is given the meal.
by carrots or buttered beets. A tomato, lettuce or combination salad is always splendid with root vegetables such as parsnips or turnips.

Roast beef
Perfection salad
Browned potatoes
Peas and carrots

Ice cream
Cake

Coffee

Leg of Lamb
Mint Jelly or Cherry Sherbet
Peas
Parsnips

Cabbage and Peanut Salad
Strawberry Shortcake

With chicken or turkey one may serve baked squash en casserole, baked onions, creamed cauliflower, or creamed turnips. Cranberry salad or celery and apple salad or other fruit salads are suitably served with fowl.

A little courage helps one to appreciate the inconsistency of following time-honored menus which are poorly balanced and unhealthful—holiday dinners, for instance. Why that heavy pudding and mince pie with all the rest? Why not have them with the meal of left-overs later in the week? And why both kinds of potato when so many green vegetables are available?