Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Monday, September 23, 1935

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

SUBJECT: "APPLE ITEMS." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics and the Bureau of Plant Industry, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

--ooOoo--

This is the fall to get out all your favorite apple recipes and line them up ready to use. This is the fall to be glad you have your grandmother's "rule" for apple cobbler, and your neighbor's written directions for her fine apple jelly. For this is the time you can take advantage of an abundant apple crop. Apples are the staple fruit of these United States and we American housewives probably use them in more ways than we use any other fruit. So a good fall crop is the cue for any thrifty housewife to serve apple dishes frequently while they're in season, and also put up plenty for winter.

The only slur on the fair name of the apple that I ever heard was the Garden-of-Eden story. That story has been worrying me since childhood. I was always grieved to think Eve lost her Garden, and we got all our mortal woes as the result of one taste of an apple. So imagine how pleased I was to learn recently that the plant historians believe that Eve's apple was not the same fruit as our apple. You see, an early center of civilization and the traditional location of the Garden of Eden was the warm, moist country of southern Asia. But our northern apple would never thrive in any tropical country. Moreover, the early people of the East believed that the banana plant was the source of good and evil, and that the serpent/^{that}tempted Eve hid in a bunch of bananas. Up until the 16th century the banana went by the name of "apple of Paradise" or "fruit of Paradise," or "fruit of knowledge," or "Adam's fig."

Maybe that bit of plant lore makes you feel better about the apple. It did me.

We Americans have been singing the praise of the apple as a health fruit for years, even in our nursery rhymes--"An apple a day keeps the doctor away," and "To eat an apple on going to bed will make the doctor beg his bread," and "Six apples a day will keep headaches away."

But the nutrition people say these old rhymes are a little extreme. They say the popularity of the apple is its greatest virtue to us. Because we eat so many apples, their food value is important. Apples furnish a mild roughage which makes them mildly laxative. (This may be the foundation of the old rhyme about keeping headaches away.) And apples contain vitamins A and B and C, especially in the flesh just under the skin, and they have some carbohydrate and mineral value, but not enough to be very valuable if we ate apples rarely. But many a farm family have kept themselves in good health during the winter by eating apples around the fire every evening and thus providing themselves with vitamins and minerals that their diet lacked otherwise. We Americans consume well over two hundred million apples every year either as fresh fruit, raw or cooked; or as dried or canned fruit, as apple jelly or butter or in cider or vinegar.

You'll find apple trees on farms almost everywhere in the United States but the great commercial orchards are in the Pacific Northwest; and the northern tier

of States including Michigan, Ohio, New York and New England; the middle Atlantic area including Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Maryland; and the Ozark regions of Arkansas and Missouri.

Probably more varieties of apples now grow in this country than you could count. But as any apple expert will tell you, each one has its own special use. Some are best for eating raw, others for baking, others for pie, or sauce, or jelly. Some apple varieties like Grimes-Golden, Jonathan, Winesap, and Stayman-Winesap are general all-purpose apples wherever you find them. But most varieties are best when you use them to make the most of their special qualities.

Various states have rated their own apples for different uses. For example, take the question of the ideal apple for pie. When you realize the great American appetite for apple pie, you can see why apple experts in several states have given earnest thought to the question of which variety of apple makes the best pie. New York rates 3 of its varieties as "excellent" for pie -- the Maiden Blush, the Jonathan, and the Northern Spy. And it rates 4 as "good" or "very good" -- the Twenty-Ounce, McIntosh, Snow and Baldwin. On the other hand, Oregon gives 4 of its apples first place for pie -- the Maiden-Blush, Northern Spy, Rambo and Ribston-Pippin. It rates as "very good" the Jonathan, McIntosh, McMahan, Gano, Wagener, Ontario, Arkansas, Western-Beauty, Grimes-Golden and half a dozen more.

Speaking of apple pie reminds me once more of the collection of apple recipes that any housewife will find handy to have ready these days. Probably you have your own favorite way of making apple pie. Most good cooks have. But maybe you'd like to hear about a few apple-pie variations to add to your collection. Have you ever tried hot apple pie topped with melted cheese? That's a dessert most men will appreciate. After your pie is baked, lay thin slices of sharp cheese or grated sharp cheese over the top. Put the cheese-covered pie back in a very moderate oven just long enough to melt the cheese. Serve hot.

Deep-dish apple pie is often a favorite with people who like a pie that isn't too hearty. Deep-dish pie has only one crust, you know. The lower part is all apple.

Two other favorite variations of apple pie are turnovers and cumplings. I've always thought of apple turnovers as envelopes of crust with apple slices sealed inside like a letter. Dumplings are whole apples baked with a crust-jacket to cover them.

But wait a minute. I think I have time to give you the best recipe I know for apple turnovers. You won't need to write it down unless you want to. It's easy to remember. Roll out pastry dough into rounds about the size of a large saucer. On half of this pastry-round, arrange layers of thinly sliced "pie apples." Sprinkle with a mixture of sugar, cinnamon, and a little salt. Dot with butter. Moisten the rim of the pastry around the apples. Now fold the other half of the pastry over the apples. Press the two edges firmly together with the tines of a fork. Prick the top crust so the steam can escape. Bake in a moderately hot oven - 375 to 400 degrees F. - for about 20 minutes, or until the apples are tender.

Some day next week, we'll talk about good ways to put up apples for winter.