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Home Economics Research at Iowa State

Harriet C. Brigham
Iowa State College

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The Dishes Must Be Washed

by HARRIET C. BRIGHAM

Instructor, Household Equipment

"Dishes to Wash, Dishes to Wash! Again and again, Dishes to Wash!"

Are you one of those who dislike dishwashing? Being detested, let us face it; being drudgery, let us improve it, and being inevitable, let us accept it. Twenty-six and one-half million women in the United tSates are engaged in the profession of homemaking, according to the last census report. Just think of the effort and time which is spent on this one task in the households which they represent.

This job which we do three times a day (or do you do it once a day?) is in reality a battle we are waging, for our families, against disease. We remove the visible soil by washing and by a sterilizing rinse we get rid of the harmful bacteria or disease germs.

This sterilizing rinse simplifies the process. We no longer need to hand wipe each piece, but can leave the dishes in wire racks or dish-drainers until dry. Thus we reduce the laundering of dish-towels, at the same time effecting a saving of time and labor.

When using an electric or water-power dishwasher, a washing temperature of 130 degrees F. has been found to produce best results. This temperature is slightly higher than that used in the hand process. The rinsing temperature recommended is from 180 degrees to 212 degrees F.

The selection of the cleansing agent for use with the dishwasher is very important, especially in localities where hard water is prevalent. A water softener has been found superior to soap or soap powder for use in most dishwashers, because the resilliant effect of the soap bubbles. The tiny bubbles act as minute rubber balls or buffers, decreasing the force with which the water strikes the dish. It is the force of the water striking the dish at the correct angle which removes the soil.

In using a dishwasher, you, of course, wish to dry the dishes without hand-wiping. With hard or or softened water, minerals of the water are apt to deposit in white water spots on the dishes. These show to a greater or less degree depending on the reagents and methods used. They are apt to show more on glass and silverware if allowed to dry without wiping. Consequently it is better to dry them by hand.

One of the biggest factors in the dishwashing process is the cleansing of cooking utensils. This is one problem which has caused most comment by housewives and manufacturers, the one which is most difficult to solve. They do not stack easily in most machines. They lack uniformity of size and shape, are made of different materials and metals and have a variety of soils on them.

One way of solving the problem of dishwashing is to eliminate the process entirely by using cups, plates and other dishes made of such material that they may be discarded after use, much as our picnic-lunch sets are now disposed of. Waxed containers and plain paper containers are suggestions. The question of cost will enter into such a scheme.

A second suggestion is to have paper liners for the table service, much as those now in use at the soda fountain. These paper liners could be decorated with designs and colors so that varying color schemes could be carried out to suit the occasion. Can't you just picture a table set in this fashion? We now use lace paper doilies under fancy ice creams. Substitute for this the paper lined container neatly decorated and you have a beginning.

Whatever your reaction to these suggestions, remember there is a "Best Method" of doing each household task. Try to find the method best suited to your needs.

The problems confronting the homemaker are becoming more and more numerous and baffling yearly, but fortunately the opportunities for studying ways and means of meeting these problems successfully are also becoming more numerous with the promise of better households in the future.

Shrinkage and Carving Wastes in Large Quantity Meat

In a thesis prepared by Elsie McElhinney, M. S. '27, results were obtained which determines the number of servings obtainable from the choice cuts of meat and the shrinkage and carving wastes. The title of Miss McElhinney's thesis was "Shrinkage and Carving Wastes in Large Quantity Cookery."

Meat constitutes the main part in the planning of menus both for the small family group and the large service. The high nutritive value of meat and its palatability make it one of the most important articles of food in the diet of man. tI is one of the chief sources of protein and necessary minerals, especially phosphorus and iron, and contains fat in a highly digestible form. Man has been better able to maintain his body weight, his physical well being and greater efficiency on a mixed diet in which meat has formed a prominent part.

The palatability of meat is due to its nitrogenous extractives.

For these two reasons, nutritional value and palatability, meat is so important as a food.

The results of these experiments carried on by Miss McElhinney lead to the conclusion that the use of thermometers for large quantity meat cookery is practical and desirable. Oven thermometers for controlling external heat and meat thermometers for establishing interior temperatures insure a proper degree of doneness for the various cuts of meat with a minimum shrinkage.

Carving waste is determined by the degree of doneness of meat, by the size and shape of the bones, and by the skill of the carver. Overcooking is one of the causes of excessive carving waste—another argument in favor of using the meat thermometer. Skill in carving is developed by careful practice and its importance cannot be overemphasized.

Of the cuts of meat studied in this experiment, lamb is the most expensive to serve, followed in descending order by ham, pork loin, prime ribs of beef, and veal.

A HINT FOR THE THIN

Jump out of the attic window and you'll come down plump