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Another Fuel---Bottled Gas

By FLORENCE FORBES

This is our second article in the series of "Home Equipment," the first number of which appeared in last month's issue. Succeeding numbers of the magazine will carry interesting and valuable articles which are the result of actual experiments carried on in the Home Equipment course at Iowa State. Don't miss any of the series!

In the experiments it has been found that the stove is easy to operate, easy to keep clean, and the flame does not form soot on pots and pans. The flame furnishes intense, uniform and steady heat. Bottled gas has been utilized when gas is "bottled." Bottled gas is one of the solutions to the problem of conservation of fuel. Of the hundreds of gas producing wells in the county, many do not yield a sufficient amount to warrant their development if gas is distributed by pipe lines only. In many of these cases this unusually rich gas has been allowed to escape as a total waste. Wells producing small amounts of gas may be utilized when gas is "bottled."

In communities where bottled gas is now in demand, the problem of the supply is handled by a local dealer. The drums are permanent property of the producer, so the customer obtaining the filled container returns the "empty" to the dealer, who in turn exchanges these with the manufacturer for filled ones. It is impossible to say how long one drum will last a family since the amount of fuel used varies. However, one manufacturer claims that if one burner is turned at proper height, a container will burn for four hundred and sixteen burner hours.

This fuel has been used in some experiments for the past few months at Iowa State College. Many types of food have been prepared. Vegetables and meats have been cooked on the top burner. Bread, cakes and pies have been baked in the oven, with thoroly satisfactory results. Meals have also been prepared with an efficiency comparable to other types of fuel.

The following meals were planned to test the usability of bottled gas in connection with various cooking processes. These meals do not necessarily represent the meals for one day, but are planned to determine whether bottled gas may be used satisfactorily for foods requiring different types of preparation. It will be noted that some of the foods are cooked quickly, some slowly, some in the oven and some on top of the stove.

| Breakfast for six | Min. Cost of Bottled Gas
|------------------|--------------------------
| Stewed rhubarb   | 10                       |
| Rolled oats      | 40                       |
| Bacon            | 10                       |
| Eggs             | 5                        |
| Toast            | 13                       |
| Coffee           | 12                       |
| Total            | 20                       |

| Lunchen for six  | Min. Cost of Bottled Gas
|------------------|--------------------------
| Clear tomato soup| 15                       |
| Crottons         | 30                       |
| Baked beans      | 25                       |
| Corn bread       | 20                       |
| Coffee           | 12                       |
| Total            | 70, 12.5 cts.            |

| Dinner for six   | Min. Cost of Bottled Gas
|------------------|--------------------------
| Swiss steak      | 85                       |
| Sallopped potatoes| 60                      |
| Spinach          | 20                       |
| Rice pudding     | 75                       |
| Coffee           | 12                       |
| Total            | 212, 6.5 cts.            |

To the homemaker who plans carefully to utilize fuel to the best advantage, it will be unnecessary to suggest that a meal so planned that it may be entirely prepared in the oven will reduce the cost of fuel noticeably; or that a nest of pans, so constructed that three fit over a single burner, will make it possible to prepare three foods with one-third the amount of fuel required ordinarily when three separate burners are used. From these suggestions it is evident at once that careful, thoughtful planning and skillful operation play a very important part in determining fuel costs.

It is further difficult to estimate accurately operation costs, since burners are not turned on to their fullest capacity throughout all processes. However, from tests made in the Home Equipment laboratories at Iowa State College, the average cost per burner hour would seem to be approximately two cents.

In the experiments it has been found that the stove is easy to operate, easy to keep clean, and the flame does not form soot on pots and pans. The flame furnishes intense, uniform and steady heat. Bottled gas has been utilized when gas is "bottled." Bottled gas is one of the solutions to the problem of conservation of fuel. Of the hundreds of gas producing wells in the county, many do not yield a sufficient amount to warrant their development if gas is distributed by pipe lines only. In many of these cases this unusually rich gas has been allowed to escape as a total waste. Wells producing small amounts of gas may be utilized when gas is "bottled."

The housewife today is gradually realizing the importance of improving standards in her workshop. Heretofore she has been inclined to "get along" with what she has and to look out for her improvement last. In many homes of the small town and country the old kitchen coal and wood range still holds forth, complicating the already full schedule of the homemaker by the time required for its care and operation. In a very small percent of these homes only are gas or electricity available. Bottled gas is one of the possible alternatives. It is a convenient, efficient, dependable fuel, an especially desirable fuel where natural gas is not available.

The teachers of Home Economics in Davenport, Sioux City and Burlington, the home economics staff at Iowa State Teachers College and the Home Economics Extension staff of Iowa State College are 100 percent members of the Iowa State Home Economics Association.

"The inexperienced teacher who wishes to organize such a project should secure the assistance of local health organizations and the cooperation of one of the child welfare centers at the University of Iowa or Iowa State College," says Miss Jacobson.

The baby clinics conducted by physicians from the Child Research Station at Iowa City and financed by the Sheppard-Towner appropriation are available in every community in Iowa.