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A chief defect in Chinese diets is the lack of protein which is abundantly supplied by meat, eggs, milk and dairy products

Meal Planning—

Chinese Version

THE Chinese choice of food and methods of preparation are an interesting contrast to the American diet, according to C. L. Feng, a graduate student at Iowa State.

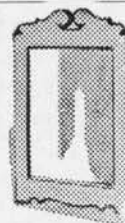
Mr. Feng, who arrived in the United States in July, is an agronomy graduate from the University of Nanking. "Chinese food is mainly starch," he comments, "and the chief defect in our dietary habits is the lack of protein. The quality and quantity of the food are both responsible for the nutritional deficiencies in China. Drought, flood, everything conspires against the farmer in my country."

The people of the North eat more fruits and vegetables because they are inexpensive and plentiful in that region. Melons, cucumbers, onions and fruits are available at low prices. The staple diet consists mainly of wheat flour; more bread is consumed than rice.

The provinces south of the Yangtze River receive few northern fruits and vegetables because of the lack of transportation facilities. In South China rice assumes a role of importance in the diet of the average citizen.

These dietary differences may be the main reason the northern Chinese is a larger person than the Southerner. In North China the people are relatively tall and heavy; many men average 5 feet 10 inches and weigh 150 pounds or more. In the South, the average height is 5 feet 3 or 4 inches, and the weight 120 pounds. Whenever wheat and cereals other than rice are the staple foods, the people grow larger and heavier.

The soybean has been developed to a remarkable



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extent in China. A soy beverage has been prepared which tastes much like cow's milk and has many of the same chemical properties and nutrients. This beverage is always used hot. The soybean curd is made into cheese.

The soybean, to a certain extent, substitutes for the dairy products which are almost unavailable in China. Dr. J. Heng Liu, Nanking Minister of Health says "It would be a good thing if the Chinese people as a whole could get the benefits of using milk products, but keeping in mind the dangers which may come from the use of milk improperly cared for, I think it will be many years before we should try to encourage milk drinking in China."

Chinese foods are prepared in an entirely different way from American methods. Instead of vegetables being side dishes, they are usually the main dish. They are chopped into little pieces and fried in a small amount of oil instead of being boiled in water. Sometimes small portions of meat and some soybean sauce are added to give a better flavor to the vegetable.

Meat consumption in China is small because it is too expensive to be served as roasts or steaks. The meat is not expensive according to American standards, but to the poverty-stricken Chinese the price is exorbitant.

Because the polished rice served in South China lacks vitamin B, there are many cases of beriberi and pellagra. The Northerner eats wheat and mixed cereals, so cases of these diseases are seldom seen in that section of the country. In the last few years, polishing of rice has been frowned upon by the Chinese government to discourage the disease. Chinese armies now are being supplied only with unpolished rice.

The Chinese have been dehydrating foods for many years, not in mechanically perfected machines, but in the sun. Dried meats, vegetables, shrimp, fish and fruits of all kinds are processed in this natural manner.

Other students who have come from China to continue their studies at Iowa State include P. K. Feng, S. T. Chow, and T. Y. Hsueh.—*Jean Larson*



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