

Things to Know About the School Lunch Basket

By MILLIE LERDALL and GRACE McILRATH

"UNDERWEIGHT!" That is what the county nurse said when she weighed little Jimmy White last week. "Listless and inattentive, especially in the afternoons." That is what Jimmy's teacher wrote in the "remarks" section of his monthly report card the other day.

Jimmy's mother couldn't understand it. Jimmy's father had been unusually stout when he was young and he had always been "bright in his books, too." Why should her son be underweight, listless, and inattentive? He didn't have tonsils or adenoids. He had plenty of fresh air; he slept ten hours every night; he had three good meals a day, or at least two good meals a day—a good breakfast and dinner. The school house was so far away from school and since they did not serve a hot lunch he took his noon lunch with him.

What did he take to school for his lunch every day? Well, mostly what happened to be in the cupboard. Maybe that was where the trouble lay.

After Mrs. Green thot the matter over a little she admitted that Jimmy had been lunching every school day on what foods had happened to be in the cupboard when his lunch basket was packed, fried meat, pie, cake and pickles usually. The more she thot about it the more she wondered how she could have spent so little time and thot on this noon lunch of Jimmy's. She went to see the county nurse and the next time she went to town she purchased a thermos bottle and a light weight market basket which was small in size and convenient to handle. After that all sorts of changes took place in that noon lunch of Jimmy's. He carried milk or hot cocoa to school every day. He forgot what pie tasted like. He ate pudding or custard at noon instead of cake. He discovered quite suddenly that he liked to eat noon lunch. His teacher discovered that he was no longer "listless and inattentive" in the afternoons.

This is a real story and Jimmy is a real boy who like many other boys and girls in this and other states have to carry their lunch to school.

Health is the first thing to be considered in planning the lunch basket. Bad food, even one bad meal a day, will steal your children's vitality as quickly as rats will steal your chickens. Too often the mother who does use care in preparing a child's lunch caters to his individual taste. Too many delicacies usually mean too little real food. Too many highly flavored dishes mean a falling off of the child's appetite. When the lunch basket comes home at night half full of food which has been scarcely touched, something is wrong with the child or the lunch.

For health's sake the lunch must contain as much of a variety of proper foods as a well balanced meal. These foods must be simple, must satisfy all of the needs of a growing body and must be doubly attractive to the child since they have the disadvantage of being cold.

No one food will completely satisfy the child's stomach during the middle part of the day. A mixed diet of carbohydrates, fats and proteins is necessary.

Too many sandwiches and too much

jam will cause fermentation of the stomach and will quickly produce a feeling of hunger. Yet the lunch must not lack sweets and starches. A ripe or cooked apple, a sweet cornstarch, or rice pudding, a custard, a cookie, a sweet sandwich, or a cup of cocoa will be sufficient. A few pieces of candy will add attractiveness to a lunch and may influence a child to eat something else which he does not like so well. Candy, contrary to popular belief, is a good food for children—if it is eaten in small amounts and at meal time. Eaten between meals it destroys the appetite for wholesome mineral foods at meal time. Neither does candy decay the teeth. Teeth decay because of lack of minerals in the diet. So slip a few pieces of candy into the lunch basket occasionally.

Starchy vegetables, green and cooked vegetables of any kind, and fresh or cooked fruits are usually easy to pack and are important as mineral containing foods.

Because fats retard digestion, small amounts will make a lunch more satisfying. Fats also give heat and energy which is particularly needed in the winter time. Use fats in the form of butter, whole milk and egg yolks rather than as fat meats, fried foods, pie and fritters.

Proteins stimulate heat production and give material for bodily tissue. Milk is probably the best protein containing food for the lunch basket. Eggs, gelatines and cereals are better than meats unless perhaps the meat is used for a sandwich filling or for the base of a soup. The growing child needs milk three times a day. If he likes it to drink put it into his lunch basket for his noon beverage. Otherwise make it up into junkets, custards, simple puddings or cocoa.

The mother who is not acquainted with the chemical composition of food or the different types of foodstuffs, will always be safe if she selects a varied menu of ripe fruits, vegetables, cereals and dairy products for the school lunch and avoids

fried foods, meat in any large quantity, pie, unripe fruits, pickles, and large amounts of cake and jam.

Besides the dietetic principles of food selection there are others to be considered in lunch planning. The same food must not be repeated in the one lunch as tomato soup and tomato salad. Have a nice balance between soft and solid or moist and dry, as a juicy fruit with a cookie. Do not have all acid or all sweet foods. Have something tart and something sweet.

Then there is the problem of a hot dish for the lunch basket. Where there is no hot lunch served in the school a thermos bottle is a paying investment in the long run. If several children from one family attend the same school a thermos bottle of hot cocoa or soup may form the main part of the noon meal. For one child a small thermos bottle may be purchased alone or fitted into a regular lunch box. A small wicker basket with strong handles and a lid which fastens down makes a convenient and inexpensive carrier for the lunch. Food may dry out more quickly in an open basket than it does in a closed lunch box but it does not get stale or absorb flavors so easily. Small glass containers with lids which screw on, and a quantity of waxed paper, are needed also. There are many expensive and inexpensive lunch boxes on the market, but in purchasing one, look to see that it is of a convenient shape and size for packing and that it affords some ventilation.

Here are some sample lunches which are simple and easy to prepare:

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|--------------|-----------------------|--|
| | 1 | |
| | One chicken sandwich | |
| | One jam sandwich | |
| One apple | One piece of cake | |
| | Glass of milk | |
| | 2 | |
| Ham sandwich | Fudge sandwich | |
| | Brown bread sandwich | |
| Apple sauce | Milk or soup | |
| | 3 | |
| | Graham bread sandwich | |



Baskets Packed and Ready to Pack
A Plain Wicker Basket is an Inexpensive and Serviceable One for Use Where Several Children Take Their Lunch Together

Cottage cheese sandwich
Celery Orange Nut-raisin cookies
Rice pudding
4
Minced ham sandwich Lettuce sandwich
Graham bread and butter sandwich
with celery
Baked custard Two apples
5
Chopped egg sandwich
Bread and butter sandwich
Stewed prunes stuffed with nuts
Milk
Graham has more mineral value than
white bread.

SANDWICHES FOR LUNCH

- (1) Bread and butter
- (2) Lettuce
- (3) Nut
- (4) Boston Brown Bread
- (5) Ribbon Bread

Cut the Boston brown bread and white bread into sandwich slices of uniform thickness. Spread with butter and alternate the brown and white until six slices are used. Trim off the crusts and slice as ordinary bread.

- (6) Date sandwiches

Make a filling of one-half cup of stoned dates, one-half cup of English walnuts,

chopped fine. Rub the two into a paste with one-half cup of sweet cream. Spread between slices of buttered bread.

- (7) Fudge sandwiches

Make fudge, beat until creamy. While soft, spread between thin slices of buttered bread.

- (8) Pimento cheese sandwiches

Make a filling of one-half cup of cream cheese and one-fourth cup chopped pimento. Add salad dressing.

- (9) Peanut butter sandwiches

(10) Chopped egg with salad dressing
(11) Chopped chicken or ham with salad dressing

Do You Know What's In a Can?

By BLANCHE INGERSOLL

MANY A company dinner has been spoiled by a can of peas.

It is most disconcerting to open a can of peas expecting to find nice juicy little peas and discover that it contains some so large that they look like big, green marbles. It is too late to send for more and Mrs. Brown always serves such lovely things when you go to her house—and so the dinner is totally ruined.

Of course the grocer is blamed. It never occurs to the housewife that it is her own fault and not the grocer's that she did not receive the kind of peas she wanted. The shelves of any grocery are filled with many brands, grades and sizes of canned goods and when a housewife orders "a can of peas" without stating definitely what variety, brand or size she wants, she can expect to get merely "a can of peas."

All canned goods are packed according to certain definite grades or standards of quality in the materials packed. They are also graded according to size and the quality of syrup used in packing. With a very little observation and study any housewife can learn what to expect from a certain grade or brand and can order intelligently just what she wants.

Fruits are usually packed in six different grades. In determining the standard for each grade, such things as size, shape, degree of ripeness, color, and thickness of syrup are considered. First grade apricots are large, firm and unbroken, of uniform size and color, and packed in a heavy sugar syrup. The syrup varies in the other grades, gradually becoming thinner until the water or pie grade contains no syrup at all but just the fruit packed in water.

The fruit in the lower grades is smaller and more uneven in size and color than in the first grade. In the lowest grade the fruit may be hard and partially green or mushy and over ripe. However, this mushy or over ripe fruit may have a better color and flavor than the more expensive goods.

Grading according to size varies with the different products. Peas no doubt stand first in the number of different sizes packed. They range in size from the very tiny "petit pois" sometimes called "superfine sifted" or "tiny peas"—up thru "sifted" and "early June," to "telephone"—the largest size. The sizes are stated on the label of the can. Anyone who buys a can of telephone peas

should not expect to find small peas when she opens the can.

The large peas may have a more highly developed flavor and more real nutritive value than the small size but the small peas have always been in greater demand because they are—as a rule—more tender and succulent.

The size of the peas does not indicate the quality. Peas—as all other vegetables—are packed in first, second, and third grades according to quality. Only three grades are in general use for vegetables, rather than the five or six grades which are used for fruits. The first grade consists of very tender, prime vegetables of uniform size and quality, carefully prepared and packed in a clear liquor. In the second grade the stock may be less uniform in size and of poorer quality and may be slightly mashed or broken. The third grade consists of wholesome and nutritious material that falls below the qualifications for the first and second grades. This means that first grade "telephone" peas are of much better quality than third grade "extra sifted" altho the former are much larger in size.

The price is not fixed according to the size of the peas but according to the quality or grade, and perhaps, the demand. For this reason the largest peas are not always the cheapest nor the smallest the most expensive. Altho the size of the peas is indicated on the can label, the quality is not indicated in any way except that A brand put out by X firm may mean the first grade packed by that firm.

The difference in price may be an indication of quality but it is not always to be depended upon. Any housewife knows that the most expensive foods are not always the best. This variation makes the purchase of canned goods a household problem which every housewife must solve for herself. A little care in collecting data on the different cans opened, will, in a very short time, give her some valuable information which will enable her to buy just the size and quality of fruit or vegetables that she wants, and to buy them more economical than before.

Canned goods can always be purchased at a great saving if there is a definite purpose planned for each can purchased. A much cheaper grade of peas can be purchased for creamed peas, pea timbles, soup or for any dish in which other materials are

used to improve appearance and flavor. The saving of five or ten cents on the cheaper can might be used to purchase the very fine "petit pois" for use at a company dinner.

Buying with a definite purpose in mind results not only in a saving of money but in a greater satisfaction. Mrs. Jones prefers the flavor of a cheap grade of apricots because the syrup is not so heavy and the fruit has more of the real apricot flavor than does the fruit in the expensive cans. This cheap grade of apricots would not do to serve for a dessert because of the poor appearance but Mrs. Jones has found that she can save twenty-five cents and have a much better dish by using them in sherbets, gelatine dishes and other places where their poor condition is not noticeable.

For escalloped corn and fritters most people prefer the "whole grain" corn which has separate and distinct kernels, rather than the "cream corn" which has a heavy creamy stock. A small amount of high grade corn is packed on the cob and is nice to use on special occasions.

It is very much worth while to know certain varieties and to ask for "Golden Bantam" corn if you prefer that to the white variety or for "Sweet Wrinkled" peas if your family is partial to the sweet or sugar pea.

Many women who carefully estimate the number of pounds of steak or roast to buy for their particular family pay little attention to the different sized cans of peaches or tomatoes which they purchase. A can of tomatoes may contain too much for one serving for the family but not enough for two. In that case it would be better to buy a larger size which would contain enough for two meals.

The most common sizes of cans for fruit and vegetables are the 1, 2, 2½, and 3 cans. The exact measure of the contents of the different cans varies somewhat but is found to be approximately:

- 1 cupful in a number 1 can.
- 2 cupfuls in a number 2 can.
- 3 cupfuls in a number 2½ can.
- 4 cupfuls in a number 3 can.

In other words a number 2 can contains approximately a pint and a number 3 can a quart. With these general measures in mind it should not be hard to determine the best size to buy for the number to be served.