

Health Notes for the Farm

Contributed by the Department of Health

Clean Food in Clean Homes

DIRT is a danger to health, and in no case is the danger greater than in the case of dirty food. Just as the engine needs fuel to enable it to run, so the body requires food to enable it to work and live. This fuel we call food. Just as inferior fuel will hamper the working of an engine, so will unclean food endanger the efficiency of the body and cause disease.

All housewives are particularly concerned in this question of clean or dirty food for the following reasons. They purchase the provisions, and are responsible for the care of the food in the home and for its cooking. In purchasing their provisions they should buy their food at clean shops where it is served by clean assistants, and in these days there is no difficulty in doing this. Many years ago the sanitation of shops had by no means attained the high standard of today. Then much of the stock in the average grocery shop was piled on the floor;

vegetables and fruit and cereals in bulk, when stocked, were not protected from contamination. Cheese was seldom covered, milk was kept in open containers from which small quantities were dipped by a ladle, bulk butter was piled high in yellow mass on the counter. Such gross violations of the first principles of sanitation are fortunately rarely encountered today. Credit is also due to manufacturers, who have realised the importance of packaging, so that in very many places it is now possible to buy sweets, biscuits, bread, and other foodstuffs in sealed containers.

However, the careful housewife is exacting in such matters, as is the one in the following rhyme:—

When Mum and I go shopping,
We shop with greatest care,
Of some shops in our district,
We know we must beware.

For instance, there's a baker's
Which has no covered carts;
The bread exposed to drifting dust,
So are the cakes and tarts.

We watched some people buying,
The bags blown open were,
When Mum and I go shopping,
We never shop in there!

A pound of cheese we're wanting,
One hates the cheese one buys
To be without a cover—
A playground for the flies.

Now homeward we must hurry,
We're thinking with delight,
Of eating up our shopping,
With such good appetite.

Then comes the problem of care of the food in the home. The most perishable foods, such as milk, cream, butter, fresh meat, fish, etc., are those which require the greatest care. In many cases house facilities for proper storage are rudimentary or absent. An intelligently planned house, even though it be small, is always provided with a well-ventilated safe with a cool aspect. Ice boxes or refrigerators are, of course, very useful, but even without these assets, by the exercise of



a little care and forethought, much can be done to protect food from contamination and keep it in a cool condition.

Protecting Milk

Milk is one of the most valuable foods, but because of the very nature of its composition it requires most careful handling. Indeed, the evidence is strong that, as milk may be a vehicle of disease, the home is probably the most dangerous place of infection. Fortunately, the principles

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