

conditions under which vitamin A is stored have already been examined and the results suggest that much of this vitamin may be destroyed in the digestive tract.

The value of roots, tubers, leaves and

fruits is little understood. Fruitful field for research also lies in the direction of texture of foods, about which dentists are particularly concerned at present, and food allergy or sensitiveness.

Science News Letter, July 14, 1934



Monarda

NUTRITION

New Knowledge of Foods May Favor the Farmer

FARMERS will be helped by the new knowledge scientists have gained about food values, vitamins and the like. This new factor in agricultural aid was discussed by Prof. H. C. Sherman of Columbia University before the American Home Economics Association.

The importance of milk, fruit and vegetables in the diet is the specific discovery in nutrition which will aid the farmer. Knowledge of the value of these foods is gradually reaching the people and already is causing shifts in consumer demand among the different types of food.

"The net effect of these shifts is to favor the farm by furnishing a market for the product of a fuller and more up-to-date use of its acres and of the farmer's time and effort," Prof. Sherman stated.

"Such an evolution, wholesome alike from the standpoint of food production and food consumption, of agriculture and of consumer nutrition and health, we should not allow to be unduly retarded by the prejudice of general custom or the bias of any special group," he added.

"There is sound health reason for and no sound economic reason against the growing prominence of the protective foods in the general food supply."

The protective foods to which Prof. Sherman referred are milk, fruit, vegetables and eggs. They are called protective because their rich supply of vitamins and minerals will, if eaten in sufficient amounts, protect the consumer against the greatest dangers of dietary deficiency. Prominence of these foods in the diet also helps the body to protect itself against several kinds of infections, Prof. Sherman pointed out. He gave the following specific advice on diet:

"I think it is well to provide at least half of the needed calories in the form of the protective foods; and also that

at least half of the breadstuffs and cereals used be in the 'whole grain' or 'dark' or 'unskimmed' forms. These two simple suggestions take account of all known nutritional needs."

The place of eggs in the diet and the question of how much of the protective foods are needed to get the full benefit which they are capable of yielding are two points on which further research is needed, Prof. Sherman said. His two-point dietary advice is based on present knowledge of this last question.

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LANGUAGE

Science Takes Measure Of Roosevelt Vocabulary

WHEN President Roosevelt comes before the microphone to talk to the people about the affairs of the United States, he uses a vocabulary almost as simple as that of the famous Lincoln Gettysburg address.

This is the report of Dr. Richard S. Schultz of the Psychological Corporation in New York City, announced in the educational journal, *School and Society*.

Dr. Schultz was led to make a statistical study of President Roosevelt's radio vocabulary because choice of language is vitally important to any speaker who would mould public opinion.

Comparing President Roosevelt's inaugural address and a radio message on national conditions given October 23, 1933, with lists of the most common words in the language, Dr. Schultz found that 70 per cent. of the words used on these two occasions occur among the 500 most common words found in general reading material. President Lincoln spoke even more simply at Gettysburg. Over 77 per cent. of his words are among the 500 most common words.

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NOW is the year's high tide for the genus *Monarda*, a most interesting group of plants belonging to the mint family. Various species are popularly known as Oswego Tea, Horsemint, Wild Bergamot, and by other names. They are interesting and attractive plants, the commonest species with tousled blue heads of flowers, making a ragged but bright hedge beside the road, and straggling through open, sun-streaked woodland reaches.

The whole brotherhood is recognizable as of the mint tribe at a glance. They have the square stem that marks the mints, and their long-throated flowers divide yawningly at the top into the two-lipped irregular corolla that has given the mint family the general name of Labiateae. And if any doubt were left, one only needs to crush the leaves and smell them. The odor is not that of mint; it is stronger, and to most nostrils ranker, but its kinship is indubitable.

During the World War one species of this genus came in for a brief commercial exploitation. It contains the valuable drug thymol, but not enough of it to make extraction pay at usual prices. However, when the German supply was cut off the price went up, and several small establishments came into being for the duration of the war.

Although the color affected by most of the species is blue, one *Monarda*, from Texas, has crashed into our gardens with a bright red note. It is hard to find a place where this plant will harmonize with anything but white flowers, because it is one of the most impossible reds imaginable: a vivid, hot, screaming cerise. Nevertheless, the plant is much cultivated.

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