

A VEGETABLE DIET FOR SUMMER

Light Food Advised for Summer—Vegetables the Proper Food for Hot Weather—Appetizing Methods of Preparation Add to Their Value.

CHANGE of temperature enforces an immediate change of wearing apparel upon the average individual. but a great many people fail to take the next logical step and alter their diet. What is good for the human system during the cold weather is not the best summer food. Habit has made meat the basis of the American meal, winter and summer, yet from the standpoint of health and comfort, leaving economy out of the question, we are better off if we confine ourselves to lighter foods during the hot summer months.

Milk and eggs, of course, are the best of foods at all times. While supplying maximum nourishment they do not heat the blood. Vegetables, and particularly greens, are likewise good at all times, but nature has especially ordained them for summer eating. Now that we have devised many new ways of preparing them, they are taking their logical place as the staple summer dinner food on the average American table. In the restaurants there is a special vegetable platter on every menu.

It is in the rural home, however, that the vegetable dinner should be most popular, and for several reasons besides the chief one that it is the correct summer food. Primarily, the vegetables can be picked fresh from the garden, from which there is no more economical source of food supply. Again they are easy to cook, and the fire in the range can be dampened off quickly, which is an important consideration in those less fortunate rural houses where a carbide gas plant has not yet been installed, and there is no hot plate to take the place of the range during the summer months. Where a gas hot plate is available, the summer cooking problem is as simple in the country as in the city.

An ideal vegetable dinner may consist of the following: Creamed potatoes, green peas, asparagus, young carrots, spinach, and a poached egg. It may be preceded by cantaloupe, or berries and cream, and followed by a light tomato and lettuce salad. A bit of cream cheese completes a very tasty and nutritious meal, with either iced or hot tea to follow, and of the

two the hot tea is really more cooling.

This is a simple, healthful dinner, the chief ingredients of which are vegetables, but much depends upon the way in which it is served and the skill with which it is prepared. Vegetables often lose much of their value as well as their savour by improper preparation and cooking.

Green vegetables, for instance, should not be boiled for long periods. They should be immersed in rapidly boiling water, whose boiling point has been raised by the addition of salt, a tablespoonful to the quart, and cooked only until tender and edible. If boiled slowly and too long, they will lose color and flavor, as well as valuable vitamins. Some vegetables, spinach, cabbage and brussels sprouts, for instance, are improved if soaked in cold water before cooking. Others, like peas, beans of all kinds, and corn eggplant and cucumber, are harmed by this process.

In preparing the vegetable dinner suggested, the potatoes from a former meal may be used. They should be cut in cubes, covered with milk, seasoned well and cooked for a half hour over a slow fire. The peas, or beans if preferred, should be cooked in water adequate to cover them, to which salt has been added, for ten or fifteen minutes, then drained, and drenched with butter, pepper, salt and paprika. The butter and seasoning make or mar peas or beans, and of course they should not be overcooked.

After being rinsed thoroughly and the tough stems removed, spinach should be soaked in cold water, and then cooked in as little water as possible for ten minutes. Drain the water thoroughly, then chop fine, and add butter, pepper and salt, and a little vinegar. The dish may be further improved if sprinkled with the yolk of a hard-boiled egg. Scrape the carrots and slice them lengthwise and across, then place them over the fire with just enough water to prevent burning. After ten minutes the water will have been absorbed, then add butter generously, and season well, especially with paprika.

Asparagus should be cooked quickly in a small quantity of water, then

dressed with butter, pepper and salt, and a little lemon juice. Only about three inches of the stalk should be used, and the balance reserved for asparagus cream soup, which is one of the most delicious among all liquid foods.

When the vegetables are about ready, poach enough eggs for the family, and arrange on pieces of thin toast, buttered. Place the eggs in the center of a large platter, and group the vegetables around them, the carrots between the white potatoes and the green peas, and the asparagus between the peas and the spinach. Sprinkle the whole with salt, pepper and paprika, and garnish it with a few radishes or young onions. The result is a colorful dinner, excellent in taste and food values.

In serving lettuce and potato salad the average housewife uses a so-called French dressing, which is a colorless compound almost unknown in France. A much more tasty dressing is made of three parts olive oil, two parts vinegar, in which is mixed dry English mustard, pepper and salt, the whole stirred thoroughly and poured over the salad. In France, each person likes to prepare his own salad dressing, mixing the ingredients to suit his own tastes in a large tablespoon. The preparation and eating of food is a ceremonial among the French, and it is upon vegetable dishes they lavish their greatest skill. The results are invariably worth the trouble.

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RAW APPLES GOOD IN SALADS

Raw apples are good in salads as they add crispness and combine well with other ingredients. Diced apples, grated raw carrots and raisins are appetizing. Apple, celery and nuts or pineapple, celery and apples are good. Other favorites are diced apples, oranges and marshmallows; and apples, bananas and figs or dates.

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"Abie, your shirt tail is out."

"Out! Vere iss it out?"

"Out vere de vest begins."

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"I can't see how you can love her."

"You ought to see her in her Packard."