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This bulletin was prepared by Ruth N. Klippstein, formerly Extension Nutrition Specialist, Oregon State University. Art work by Robert Hostick.
Exploring the Seasoning Shelf

To be really fun, cooking must be creative. But the busy homemaker is often seen as the queen of the can opener and guardian of the food freezer. Every dinner is pictured as coming from a prepared, box or the "ready cooked" section of the corner grocery. Is creativity really dead? All the signs say, "No." More cookbooks are sold than ever before. The use of spices and herbs has skyrocketed. However, a product can achieve success without recipes or its use. It is still an honor to be the considered the best cook in the neighborhood. And recipe trading is a compliment to food that is deliciously different.

Convenience foods are new to the average homemaker. Using them skillfully is a learned process, not a born talent. Keeping up with new items requires imagination and careful selection with your family's preference in mind. But each homemaker can find some flavor aids that will save time, increase the family's enjoyment, and make cooking three meals a day a pleasure.
Spices become popular

Back in 1944 there were 11 spices carried by most grocery stores—black pepper, cinnamon, nutmeg, paprika, cloves, allspice, and ginger were the most important ones. Today the average store stocks at least 35 different spices and seasonings. And this does not count the many blends, sauces, and dip bases. It is no surprise that a survey made in 1959 showed that packaged spices and "spice-containing sauces" headed the list of fast-moving grocery items.

Why the new interest?

Extensive travel during and following World War II introduced many people to the delights of foreign cookery. Outdoor cookery, due to its simplicity, puts a premium on good flavoring. The current popularity of Chinese and Italian cooking has introduced new spices and sauces to us. Today soy sauce and oregano are as much at home on the American seasoning shelf as mustard and catsup.

Popular herb

Oregano (ore-egg-an-o) is the best example of the tremendous growth of a particular seasoning. Oregano is an herb rarely seen 15 years ago. Trade sources say there has been a 3,000% increase in the use of oregano in the past 10 years. This herb is an essential ingredient of the Italian pizza, and the pizza parlor is firmly established as one of the popular eating spots of America.

Even cookbooks change

A search of old cookbooks shows that the use of spices runs in cycles. In the early 1900s the Fannie Farmer Cookbook showed recipes using spices in 50% of the baked foods. By 1930 the amount had dwindled to 4%—mere 5%. Today's edition shows a real gain in the total number of recipes using and giving directions for seasonings.
Learning About Seasonings

Every cook needs to know something about the agents she (or he) uses to season foods. Spices are parts of aromatic plants grown in the tropics. A partial list includes cinnamon, pepper, cloves, paprika, mustard, ginger, allspice, turmeric, and saffron.

Herbs are the leaves of aromatic plants grown in a temperate zone. Some popular herbs are chives, parsley, oregano, sage, thyme, dill, marjoram, and rosemary.

Seeds are the fruit or seeds of any herb plant. The most popular are anise, caraway, celery, coriander, poppy, sesame, cardamon, cumin, mustard, and dill.

Salts may be dried garlic, onion, or celery finely ground and blended with pure dairy salt. Newer uses of salt to carry flavors are charcoal- and smoke-flavored salts.

Blends are big news in the spice trade. Master chefs have used a pinch of this and a bit of that to season foods for centuries. Now their skill has gone into putting just the right amounts of flavor ingredients into a blend for a specific purpose. The products available vary with the particular companies selling them. The ingredients featured and the proportions, of course, are different. Each cook will want to evaluate which seasoning blend she prefers for her family.

Blends may be made in two ways:
1) By simply mixing together two or more ingredients.
2) By actually crushing together the ingredients so that the resulting product is homogenous in appearance and every particle produces exactly the same flavor.

Foil lined packages capture the imagination of every cook. From the single dry soup mix of just a few years ago has grown a thriving business of “taste in a sack.” Many cooking sauces are packaged in dry form ready for quick
hydration. Spaghetti sauce is available in a matter of minutes. Today we add the tomatoes. Tomorrow the tomato will be added to the mix.

Salads take the spotlight in modern cooking. And the salad dressing shares the credit for their popularity. Dry mixes have added fun to salad making. A package of mix added to oil or sour cream, a quick stir or shake, and presto—a new flavor treat. Be sure to try all the different flavors—Italian, French, blue cheese, onion—you name it, and some company can supply it for you.

Where Do Our Seasonings Come From?

The hub of the spice import business is New York City. The spice cargo, usually in whole form, is inspected upon arrival in America for purity and wholesomeness by the Pure Food and Drug Administration. After passing inspection, spices are stored in warehouses until sold to grinding companies located throughout the United States.

These companies clean, sterilize, and process the raw materials according to the particular product desired. Different grinds are popular in different areas for different products. Screens of varying degrees of fineness separate the particles into just the right size. Spices are packaged in glass or tin. The size may run from a single ounce to 200 pounds. About 40% of the spice sold is used for manufactured products. Meat processors, bakeries, and pickle makers are among the biggest users.

Most grinding companies have recently expanded to market sauce, dip, and salad dressing mixes. They also feature special gourmet lines made up of less familiar seasonings for the imaginative cook.
How to Use Seasonings

If you are tired of the same old foods, there is no time like the present to start planning a dinner around one of the new flavor treats. Here are some general suggestions to give you the confidence to start. From then on you are on your own, for in seasoning foods, there are no fast rules. Creativity is the watchword and your family's praise is the reward.

- **Remember to use spices and seasonings with a light touch.** Be conservative. Start with just a pinch or $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon and increase. You should know that something has been added, but not what. If a flavor shouts at you, you have used too much!

- **Use fresh spices and seasonings.** A painter cannot create with dried up oils and you cannot achieve bright flavors with worn out spices. Flavors are due to the aromatic oils of a plant. Once these oils are lost in standing, the spice or seasoning is worthless. Protect the oils by keeping the jars or tins tightly closed and stored in a cool area. Be sure they are kept dry. When you can no longer detect aroma, discard the spice. Buy small containers of spices and replace more frequently.

- **Learn that two flavors are often better than one.** Try mixing a spice and a liquid flavoring. Lemon and vanilla go well together. Or use a nutmeg and cinnamon combination. Only half amounts naturally.

- **Introduce only one flavor at a time.** Most people prefer the familiar when it comes to choosing food. Do not overwhelm the palate with too many new flavors at once. A new salad dressing is enough for one meal. It would be unwise to press your luck by trying the herb meatloaf recipe and the dill flavored beans at the same time.
Study recipes for the best “go-togethers.”

Some flavor combinations are particularly pleasing: lamb with mint or orange; tomato and thyme; pork and ginger. Find out which ones your family enjoys.

Creating From Packages

The trend toward convenience has invaded the spice and seasoning shelf. No longer must we cook chili all afternoon—a package, a can or two; neat and water—presto, a family meal. Within minutes. Spaghetti sauce is another time saver. And so are the barbecue sauces and instant rice mixes available.

Most of the major spice companies market one or more seasoning mixes. Each package comes with easy to follow directions for use. Those who like mildly flavored foods may find that using half a package instead of the full amount suits their taste better. Others may want to add more “flavor” for additional accents of fad pepper, chili powder, or other favorite seasonings.

Creative cooks like the convenience of having the long cooking done. They just add ingredients and serve up a family meal. They have the fun of creative cooking without all of the work.

Try New Flavor Treats

The growth of interest in the spice shelf has outstripped the recipe printer’s speed. So a virgin field exists for those who like to experiment. Figure out how you can use the newest products. For instance: new powdered mushrooms. Could you use them in meat gravy? spaghetti sauce? a casserole dish? a salad dressing?...
No recipe? Use this guide for your first try, then adjust it according to your own preference. For mushroom flavored white sauce—use 1 teaspoon mushroom powder per cup of milk. Use 1/2 teaspoon mushroom powder per side for flavoring hamburgers, steaks, and chops.

Since no two families enjoy exactly the same foods, follow the recipes given below or the ones on the package the first time—then let your flavor fancy be your guide to seasoning foods the modern way.

Here are 15 new flavors to add to your seasoning shelf.

**Powdered mushrooms.** A new form of a popular flavor accent. Shake the fine powder on meats or add to white sauce for more flavor. The dry powder equals the flavor of 20 times the weight of fresh mushrooms or 2 times the weight of whole dry mushrooms. Try 1 teaspoon mushroom powder per cup of sauce or 1 tablespoon per pound of meat.

**Powdered horseradish.** For the person who likes a little extra zip to foods, but does not wish to keep fresh horseradish on hand. This is a fine white powder and has a freshly prepared flavor. Sprinkle lightly on chip dips or in salad dressing. Or allow it to soak in water or vinegar to reconstitute. Brings a new zest to cheese sauces.

**Liquid smoke.** Popular in meat marinates to give the outdoor taste indoors. Try a few drops in sauce made with equal parts of soya sauce and oil. Add to mild barbecue sauces. A drop in venison stew makes a hunter think he is back in camp.

**Beef flavor base.** One of the newest flavor helps. Concentrated beef base boosts the flavor of dishes using lean meats without raising calories. It peps up gravy and sauces and adds that missing something to canned beef dishes. Try 1 tablespoon base per cup of water for a flavor concentration equaling 1 can of undiluted
bouillon, or 1 teaspoon per cup of liquid as a flavor booster. This mix should be refrigerated after opening.

*Chicken flavor base.* Equally useful for adding flavor to chicken, turkey, and fish dishes. It can be added to biscuit mix or dumpling batter. Try 1 tablespoon per cup of water for a concentrated mixture and 1 teaspoon per cup of liquid for a flavor help.

*Charcoal seasoning.* A sprinkle-on flavoring that adds the smoked flavor. This is a very fine powder so use a light touch when sprinkling on oven broiled burgers or steaks.

*Savor salt.* Not to be confused with the herb savory. Savor salt is called various names by different companies. For example: season-all or seasoned salt. It is an all purpose blend of salt, herbs, and spices. Use it in place of common table salt for that different flavor.

*Powdered orange peel.* True flavored orange peel in a useful form. Sprinkle on fruit salads or desserts. Use it in place of grated orange peel or add to ham or sweet potato glazes. Powdered orange peel makes cinnamon toast party fare.

*Powdered lemon peel.* A jar with a hundred uses. It is easy to use to get a bit of flavor for frosting. Use it in baked products or sauces or add to salad dressings and marinates.

*Meat tenderizers.* Available in flavored or unflavored forms. Lower priced cuts of meat need not be tough if a tenderizer is used. The newest to be marketed is a liquid. Also appearing is an "instant tenderizer" which does not require waiting before the meat can be cooked.

*Sauce mixes.* "Long cooking" sauces ready in a few minutes. Italian spaghetti sauces, chili sauce, barbecue sauce, and Spanish-rice sauce are all available in sealed packets for the modern cook. Most major companies have one or more of these time-savers on the market; each differs slightly in flavors blended. Try them all to see which your family likes best.
Dip mixes. Gaining daily in popularity. Chips and dips have replaced fish and chips in the language of the kitchen. Dips are usually a sour cream, cream cheese, or cottage cheese base with tangy flavor accents. New dry mixes make a handy party treat at a minute's notice. Try olive-garlic, onion, or blue cheese dips. Look for more flavors as more people learn of their usefulness not only for dips, but as ingredients for cooking.

Salad dressing mixes. Numerous and exciting flavors. Salads have long been the place to experiment with different flavors. Flavor pouches of dry salad dressing mixes come in many different mixtures. Follow the recipes on the packets for the first time and then use the ingredients for other cooking uses. Experiment to your heart's content. Remember to keep track of what you do so that you may repeat combinations that are particularly interesting.
Flavor Treats From Soup to Nuts

Appetizers and dips

Although appetizers are no longer served before every guest meal, occasionally it is fun to revive the custom. Here are some flavor treats.

Broiled Ham Bites

\[ \frac{1}{2} \text{ cup soft butter} \quad 1 \text{ teaspoon dry horseradish powder} \]
\[ 2 \text{ tablespoons milk} \quad 1 \text{ can deviled ham} \]
\[ \frac{1}{2} \text{ cup finely chopped ham} \]

Beat butter at low speed in mixer until fluffy. Add milk slowly, continuing to beat. Add ham and horseradish powder. Serve on thin slices of cocktail rye bread or crackers. Broil until golden and bubbly brown before serving.

Liver Paté Dip

\[ \frac{1}{2} \text{ teaspoon horseradish powder} \quad 1 \text{ cup sour cream} \]
\[ 1 \text{ tablespoon milk} \quad 1 \text{ teaspoon prepared mustard} \]
\[ 1 \text{ can liver paté} \quad 1 \text{ teaspoon lemon juice} \]

Sprinkle horseradish powder on milk. Allow to stand 10 minutes. Combine all ingredients. Refrigerate and allow the flavors to blend for one hour before serving.

Cheese Dip

\[ 1 \text{ (8-ounce) package cream cheese} \quad \frac{1}{2} \text{ teaspoon celery salt} \]
\[ 3 \text{ tablespoons milk} \quad \frac{1}{2} \text{ teaspoon shredded green onion,} \]
\[ 1 \text{ tablespoon chicken seasoned stock base} \]

Serve as a dip with crackers or potato chips. Or on top of assorted crackers.

Hors D’oeuvre Spread

\[ \frac{1}{2} \text{ teaspoons chicken seasoned stock base} \quad \text{Dash white pepper} \]
\[ 2 \text{ tablespoons lemon juice} \quad 1 \text{ can } \text{tiny cleaned shrimp, drained} \]
\[ 2 \text{ tablespoons mayonnaise} \]

Spread on toast rounds or rye bread.
Packaged dry soups, canned and frozen, are available in many flavors. Or you can make your own soup using leftover meat and the new soup flavor bases. Try both the chicken and the beef flavors. Use the bases to add flavor to gravy or sauces. Refrigerate after opening.

**Chicken Soup Modern**

A family favorite making good use of the leftover backs and wings of frying chickens.

1 teaspoon dry onion flakes
1 teaspoon celery salt
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup diced celery
1 tablespoon chicken seasoned stock base

Cover chicken pieces with water. Add salt and onion flakes. Bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer until meat is tender. Do not boil.

Remove chicken meat from bones. Return meat to stock. Add chicken seasoned stock base and heat to boiling.

Serve immediately or add chicken dumplings and simmer covered till light and tender. Makes about 2 quarts of soup.

Note: Frying chickens do not have enough fat for tasty soup. The chicken stock supplies the flavor. Tender fryers need only a short cooking time; the meat will be tough if it is boiled.
Chicken Dumplings

Follow the recipe for dumplings on any biscuit mix package. Add 1 teaspoon chicken seasoning stock base for each cup of biscuit mix.

Speedy Vegetable Soup

1 can roast beef, broken into ½-inch pieces
2 quarts water
2 tablespoons salt
1 No. 2 can tomatoes or ½ can concentrated tomato juice (full can makes 1½ pints juice)
1 teaspoon onion flakes
1 teaspoon garlic salt
1 package (10-oz.) frozen mixed vegetables
2 tablespoons beef flavored seasoning base

Empty contents of canned beef into large kettle. Break beef into ½-inch pieces. Add salt, onion, and tomatoes. Bring to boil. Add mixed vegetables and seasoning base. Simmer until vegetables are tender and flavors well blended—about 15 minutes. Serve piping hot.

Note: This is an excellent way to use leftover roast, beef drippings, or vegetables.

So many packaged soups are on the market that there is a type for every taste. Look for the addition of bits of real chicken and beef, dried by the new freeze-dry process that rehydrates to resemble the freshly cooked product.

New methods for making tomato powders will make dry tomato soups taste fresher. Try using the dry soup for a flavor ingredient in sauces, meat loaves, and marinades for meat.

French Onion Soup

4 tablespoons butter
5 tablespoons toasted onions
4 cups water
3 tablespoons beef stock base
½ teaspoon worcestershire sauce
Dash cayenne pepper

Meat dishes

Quicky Spaghetti Dinner

A busy-day special for hungry families.

- 1 package Italian spaghetti sauce
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 (8-ounce) can of tomato sauce
- 1 No. 2 size can of tomatoes
- 1 cup diced celery
- 6 ounces spaghetti
- 1 teaspoon chili powder

Brown ground beef until it loses its red appearance. Add all other ingredients except spaghetti. Simmer for 25 minutes or until thick.

In the meantime cook 6 ounces spaghetti in 2 quarts water until just tender. Drain. Add sauce and simmer until flavors are well blended—about 10 minutes. Top with parmesan cheese if desired. Serve with large chunks of garlic French bread. Serves 4 hungry people.

Meat Balls

- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 envelope olive-garlic dip mix
- 1 cup rolled oats, uncooked
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups water

Ground Meat Mounds

Noodle cups
1 (5-ounce) can chow mein noodles
1 cup shredded cheddar cheese

Stir ingredients together to uniform consistency. Press mixture firmly into bottom and sides of medium muffin cups or small individual pie pans. Bake 300°—12-15 minutes. Remove from pan and fill with ground beef mixture.

Meat mixture
1 pound ground beef
1 teaspoon mushroom powder
1 teaspoon savor salt
1/2 teaspoon onion flakes
1/2 cup barbecue sauce
2 drops liquid smoke
(optional)

Place ground beef in heavy skillet; break apart with fork. Cook on low heat, stirring often until sufficient fat is rendered to prevent sticking. Add other ingredients and cook till meat is brown and flavors well blended. Spoon into noodle cups and garnish with a sprinkle of cheese. Serve immediately. Serves 6-8.

Note: Noodle cups are an interesting way to serve creamed fish, meat, or poultry.
Barbecued Pork Strips

2 pounds pork steak, cut in 1-inch strips
1 teaspoon salt
1 package barbecue sauce mix
Charcoal seasoning

Trim excess fat from steaks and discard. Cut meat into 1-inch strips. Sprinkle with salt and generous amounts of charcoal seasoning.

Prepare barbecue sauce according to directions on the package. Dilute ½ cup sauce with ¼ cup water. Pour sauce over steak strips. Allow to stand for at least 30 minutes.

Cook over low heat until the meat is well done, turning once. Add water to prevent sticking if necessary. Serve over steamed rice or freshly cooked egg noodles. Serves 6.
Cookies

Orange Cookies
Quickly cookies that go so fast you may want to double the recipe.

\[
\begin{align*}
\frac{1}{2} \text{ cup brown sugar} & \quad \frac{1}{4} \text{ cups sifted flour} \\
\frac{1}{2} \text{ cup oil} & \quad \frac{1}{2} \text{ teaspoon soda} \\
1 \text{ egg white} & \quad \frac{1}{2} \text{ teaspoon salt} \\
\frac{1}{2} \text{ cup orange juice} & \quad \frac{1}{4} \text{ teaspoon baking powder} \\
\frac{1}{2} \text{ teaspoon grated orange peel} & \\
\end{align*}
\]

Sift together flour, soda, salt, and baking powder. Mix brown sugar with oil. Add egg white, orange juice, and orange peel. Stir in flour mixture and blend well. Drop by teaspoonfuls on cookie sheet. Bake 350° for 6-8 minutes until light brown in color. Cool on racks before frosting.

Frosting

\[
\begin{align*}
\frac{1}{2} \text{ teaspoon powdered orange peel} & \quad 1 \text{ teaspoon oil} \\
2 \text{ tablespoons orange juice} & \quad \text{Pinch salt} \\
& \quad 1 \text{ cup powdered sugar} \\
& \quad \text{(approximately)} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Have orange juice at room temperature. Blend juice, orange peel, and oil. Add powdered sugar and pinch of salt. Blend in enough sugar to make icing the consistency to spread easily. Spread on cooled cookies. This recipe is a good one to use for experimenting with different flavors and seeds.

Try these variations:
- Add a few drops of banana extract along with \( \frac{1}{2} \) teaspoon crushed anise seed to the orange cookie recipe.
- Sprinkle the top generously with pumpkin pie spice mix before baking.
- Toast 1 tablespoon sesame seeds. Mix into batter or sprinkle on top.
General topping

Cinnamon sugar is such a useful item most families keep a shaker handy. Orange and lemon peels are delightful additions for adding flavor treats to the tops of cookies, coffee cakes, and the ever popular cinnamon toast. Try these proportions:

1 cup granulated sugar
1 tablespoon dried orange peel
1 tablespoon cinnamon (or more if desired)

Mix well. Store in shaker for easy using.
Costs and Effective Extension work in Agriculture and Monte Economics, F. E. Price, disc...