

FROM THE MAILBAG

Wood-Lice or Slaters

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I have two queries for you. First, I had the misfortune to break one of my good dinner knives—one of a set! It broke right off at the top of the handle. Can it be fixed, and if so, how?

Also, can you give me a cure for slaters in the house? They come in under the skirting boards, etc. I have tried D.D.T. powder and also fly and pest sprays, right on top of these Takani slaters; but they just get up and crawl away! Can you help me? You already have done so lots of times over the radio and I find your sessions most helpful and full of interest. "Takanini."

I'm afraid nothing can be done with the knife. If the knife-part had simply loosened and come out of the handle whole and in one piece, as sometimes does happen, especially with big cooking forks and knives, it could have quite easily been stuck into the handle again with a certain plastic wood, the name of which I can give to anyone in this predicament on receipt of a stamped and addressed envelope. But as it has broken right off, I'm afraid that is the end of it. As for the slaters, you have my warmest sympathy. A sure cure has been given me by a gardener. Buy 1/4 lb. of Paris Green at a seedsman's shop—it is quite cheap—and 4 to 6 lb. of bran. Mix these together with a little sugar, and moisten the whole with hot water mixed with treacle. Make the mixture into little balls and put them freely about close to your skirting-boards, and underneath bits of wood or little boxes all round the outside of the house as well as their inside entry, just everywhere you think the slaters may come from.

Do let me know how you get on.

Tomatoes Preserved Whole

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I am a most interested reader of your columns in the *Listener*, and with the tomato season in full swing, I am wondering if you, or perhaps one of your "Links," can help me.

When I was in hospital last year, I read in an English weekly, the name of which I have forgotten, of a method of bottling tomatoes. By this method (which used squares of flannel over the jars) the tomatoes, when left under running water for two or three minutes, became just as firm as fresh tomatoes. Now, the point is, that I cannot remember the method. I know this is all rather vague; but I should be so grateful if someone could help me, as I prefer firm tomatoes to the soft ones from the bottles.

Thanking you for your hints and recipes.

"C.E.L." Nelson.

I think this is the method you mean, but I must tell you that two Links in the Daisy Chain found the tomatoes thus preserved tasted very vinegary

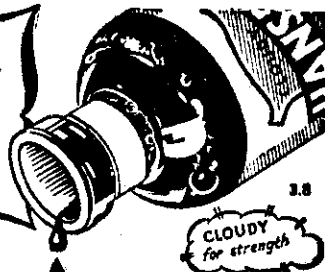
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and sour. No other complaints have been received, however, and since only half vinegar and half water is specified, it should be all right. I have not used it myself. It is recommended by many as a good recipe.

Wipe the tomatoes clean and dry, and place a layer in a large crock. Sprinkle with brown sugar, and a few cloves. Continue till the crock is almost filled. Boil equal quantities of vinegar and water. Let get really cold, and pour over the tomatoes. Take a clean piece of old flannel, put it over the top of the jar, allowing it to dip well into the liquid. This collects any mildew that forms. Cover over with strong brown paper, and tie up with string. Can be used as needed, provided flannel is kept dipped in liquid to collect mildew.

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