

FROM THE MAIL BAG

Cooking Salsify

Dear Aunt Daisy,

Only another mere man here! The lady who writes Your Garden and Mine in *The Listener*, last spring recommended salsify very highly. So I had a go at growing it, and now want to know how to cook it.—J.T.M. (Christchurch).

Warmest greetings to another man for contributing to our Page. Salsify is indeed very nice, and I'm sure you will be glad you planted it. Cook it just like a parsnip, either whole or cut lengthwise, or even in rings, when it will look, as well as taste, like oysters. You know it is called the oyster plant. Then, if it is boiled fairly soft, strain it; and have ready a really good white sauce, made with butter. Into this, put the rings or pieces of salsify, and leave it to finish cooking, and to flavour the sauce thoroughly. Some people like to put an asbestos mat under the pot, while others let it stand in a covered casserole in the warm oven. It is lovely with grilled steak! Here is another recipe:

Wash the salsify, cook it, then strain, cut into rounds, dip in batter and fry. It makes a good breakfast dish, and really does taste like oysters.

Another lady from Taihape said that salsify is very rich in health-giving vitamins, and gave one or two suggestions for using it. She also says, "never peel salsify, but just scrape it lightly. When making the white sauce, add a little of the water it was boiled in."

For a delicious tea dish, cook and cut into small pieces. Make a rich creamy sauce, thickened with wholemeal, stir in the salsify, and make very hot. Serve on buttered toast, and sprinkle a little finely chopped parsley on the top, and a speck of cayenne pepper.

Then again, she says, that salsify, having an oyster flavour, is nice made into fritters, especially if you add a little oyster flavoured soup powder to the batter. Make it just the same as oyster fritters, either chopping the cooked salsify into small bits or short pieces. Fry in boiling fat till a golden colour, and serve with chipped potatoes and lemon juice.

OYSTER PATTIES.—It is very nice used as a filling for oyster patties, made as follows: Melt 1 tablespoon of butter and stir in 2 tablespoons of flour (whole-

meal is good). Then add 1 teacup of milk, simmer gently 5 to 10 minutes, then season with salt and a little cayenne pepper, 1 tablespoon of lemon juice or vinegar, ¼ teaspoon sugar, a little finely chopped parsley. Add 1 cup of cooked salsify, which has been chopped into smallish pieces. Fill the patty case, and garnish with parsley. Sometimes I add a little oyster powder to the sauce, and it is hard to distinguish it from real oyster filling.

Shortening Locknit

Dear Aunt Daisy,

How do you shorten locknit articles? I have some, which are much too long.

Chinese Gooseberry Jam

This fruit is far bigger and better this year than usual.

(1) Cut the gooseberries in half and scoop out the pulp. Put into saucepan or preserving pan with just sufficient water to cover the bottom of the pan. Boil till thoroughly cooked. Then add ¾lb. of sugar to each pound of pulp, and boil till it sets when tried on a plate.

(2) Four and a-half pounds of Chinese Gooseberry Pulp; 4½lbs. of sugar; the juice and grated rind of eight oranges (sweet), and the rind and juice of two lemons. Boil all together until it sets.

If I machine them, they just fall into holes. I've heard that you can machine lace on to the cut edges, provided the lace has a solid edge, but surely there is a way without using lace?

—B.P. (Sydenham).

It is really quite a simple matter. All you do is to cut it to about quarter of an inch longer than you want it, and then take it to a firm which does "overlocking." Most of the inside seams of locknit garments are "overlocked"—it gives an edging which will stretch with the locknit. I expect the big drapers in Christchurch have a service for button-holing, hem-stitching, and overlocking, or you may know of some smaller firm which specialises in this work. There are usually one or two in the big cities. The cost is only a few pence per yard, and there is never very much to be done —

and then if you want to put some lace on, you can easily "whip" it on by hand.

Melon, Cape Gooseberry and Passionfruit Jam

Dear Aunt Daisy,

While out for lunch the other day I tasted some beautiful jam made from melon, cape gooseberry and passion fruit. I was told afterwards that it was one of your recipes; and I am wondering if you would be kind enough to send it to me.

—"Frances" (Wyndham).

Yes, this is a great favourite: Six pounds of melon, 1½lb. of cape gooseberries, 16 passion fruit, and 6lb. of sugar—either brewer's crystals or 1A sugar. Cut the melon into blocks and shell the gooseberries. Cover with sugar and stand 24 hours. Boil 2 to 3 hours. Put the passionfruit in when the jam boils.

Here is another tasty jam based on melon:

MELON AND GUAVA CONSERVE:

Clean the guavas, cut up roughly into the preserving pan, cover with cold water, bring to the boil, and simmer for two hours. Strain through butter muslin. Put back into the preserving pan, and to every cup of juice add 1 cup of sugar, stir thoroughly and boil briskly 20 minutes. Pour into basin, set aside till you have the following ready.

Prepare the pie melon as for jam, add ¾lb. sugar to each pound of melon. Bring quickly to the boil, boil about an hour, then add the guava jelly gradually. Try to keep the mixture boiling all the time. After a few minutes, test on a saucer. It should jelly immediately. Melon gives the guava the required consistency, but the flavour is that of guava, and melons are cheap to buy.

A DIFFERENT MELON JAM:

Eight pounds of melon diced into ½in. cubes, 6lb. of sugar, ½lb. of preserved ginger, 1 tin of crushed pineapple, 3 fairly large juicy oranges, 6 large juicy lemons. Sprinkle 3lb. of sugar over diced melon, and let stand for twenty-four hours. Put into a preserving pan with the other 3lb. of sugar, the pineapple, lemons and oranges thinly sliced and cut small. When the jam has been boiling about three-quarters of an hour, add the preserved ginger, also cut small. Boil until a deep amber colour, or until it jellies on a saucer.

Fish Soup (Cheap and Good)

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I am sending you my recipe for fish soup, which I am sure you will think very good. I like my family to have as much fish as they can, and of this soup I find I must make a large saucepanful, as I have eight children, and even the baby loves it! You can, of course, make a smaller quantity than this, but use the same proportions.

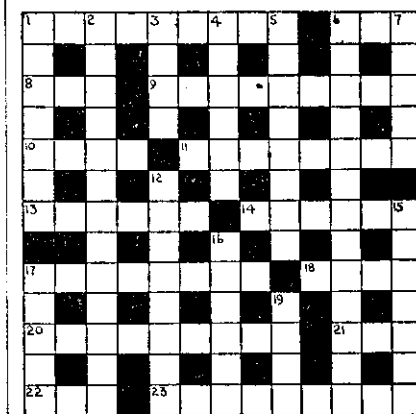
FISH SOUP: Eight fish heads — schnapper are good; 4 pints of water, 1 finely chopped onion, 2 pints of milk, 1 cup of vermicelli, 2 level teaspoons of cornflour. Put the fish heads into a salt or oatmeal bag, place in a saucepan and add the water and onion. I give it a good hard boiling, then remove the bag, and add the vermicelli; boil till it is cooked, add the milk, cornflour, salt and pepper to taste, and also a knob of butter and a handful of chopped parsley. Sometimes, just as I am going to dish it up, I add a carton of chopped oysters. The main thing is to put the fish heads in a bag.

—"Mother Hubbard" (Matamata).

THE LISTENER CROSSWORD

(No. 56)

(Constructed by R.W.C.)



Clues Across

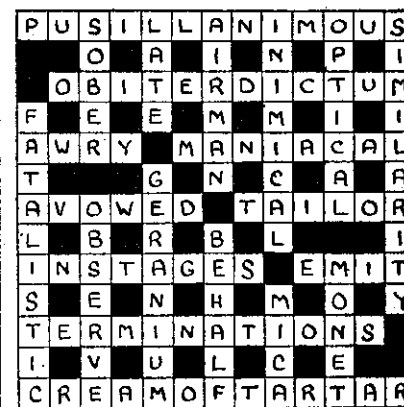
- There's more shape here, if you can decode it.
- Pawn.
- Peculiar.
- An antiseptic acid.
- Came to the point of perfection.
- Source of extreme mortification.
- Cause of high mortality among Indian widows.
- His best-seller was written in prison.
- Ten lions—they can afford to be contemptuous.
- One on the ear may be decoration or assault.
- W. H. Cameron provides cleaners.
- This station is heard from the ZB's.
- If you see this, count ten before you speak.
- Pepys said this is only indigestion.

Clues Down

- Highland war-cries.
- Proprietress of a famous wax-works.
- Refrain from bidding.
- Exclamation to direct someone's attention to a certain thing (2, 4).
- Formal praise.
- Inflammation of the grey matter of the spinal cord.
- Measured by steps.
- Apt to find rice in their luggage.
- Inflammable oil distilled from tar.
- Bitter feeling.
- Command to a mongrel to retire into its kennel?
- A hundred and one?

THE LISTENER CROSSWORD

(Answer to No. 55)



Monkeys, Not Machines!

Machines have flung many million human beings on the scrap heap in the Western Countries of the world. In the East, monkeys are employed to set the pace. Coconut-growers in Malaysia have trained the creatures for picking. They are merely held on a long leash and pick up to a thousand nuts per day—which is equivalent to the work of six natives.

**MUSTARD
MUST BE MIXED**
—COLMAN'S Mustard



M.18