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Now the next thing is to "sugar" it. Put into an iron saucepan one tablespoon of butter; three tablespoons of water; and one cup of white sugar. Boil till ready to candy, then throw in the popped corn and stir briskly till the sugar is well distributed through the kernels. Take off the pan and stir till the syrup cools a little, and each popcorn is sugared. Then shake the popcorn into dry icing sugar, and store in tins.

#### From One Who Knows

Dear Aunt Daisy,

Please pardon me for "butting in" on your idea in *The Listener* for sending jam in tins overseas. I am afraid

### Sour Cream Cookies

To every cup of sour cream add  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of sugar, beat well, and add  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon bicarbonate of soda dissolved in a little cold water. Sift in  $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups flour, but don't stir. Add 1 cup raisins;  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup walnuts;  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon vanilla. Mix well, and put in teaspoon lots on cold greased tray. Bake in hot oven about fifteen minutes, till like biscuits. Vary the recipe by putting in just coconut, or peanuts and a dessertspoon cocoa. A very quick recipe, and successful.

the recipient would have to take his tin of jam to the regimental barber, that is if the jam was not bubbling over. Here is a good way, from an old campaigner. Any tin that is airtight, and strong, will do. Fill tin right up to the top with boiling jam, and whilst still hot, cover with neatly cut grease-proof paper, over the jam, and to fit inside the tin. Leave till absolutely cool; the jam will then have shrunk a trifle. Then pour over paraffin wax, filling the tin to its utmost capacity. Allow to harden before closing the tin, otherwise the jam may grow whiskers, or will bubble up.

If done this way, the jam is absolutely airtight, and the tin is full, so the inside contents can not shake about. Even a very small space is detrimental, owing no doubt, to the different climatic conditions it undergoes.

—"Old Campaigner."

Well, we should all be most grateful to "Old Campaigner" for giving us this most practical advice. Valuable proven hints such as these are deeply appreciated.

#### Home-Grown Haricot Beans

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I wonder if you could please help me, as you have helped so many others. I want to do some haricot beans, and

am wondering if you could tell me how to do them, and at what stage of maturity you pick them. I should be very grateful if you would please answer in your page in *The Listener* as I don't always get time to listen to your session. Hoping you will be able to help me.

—"Just Another Link" (N. Auckland).

You must buy the proper haricot bean for sowing, from a seedsman. Ordinary haricot beans from the grocer, such as we use for a vegetable, will not do for planting. Grow them like a Scarlet Runner, and leave them until thoroughly matured. Then pluck them up, roots and all, and hang them in a shed to dry. You can then shell the beans (or seeds) from the pods. They will be the "eating" haricot bean.

I believe that you can do Lima Beans in the same way.

#### Meringues—And Hens

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I first of all want to thank you for the enormous amount of assistance I have had from your page in *The Listener*. I have got from it no end of splendid recipes and useful hints.

I want to know now two things, and perhaps some of your readers could help me. First, why is it that only sometimes my meringues or Pavlova cakes are successful? So often, instead of rising and being crisp inside, and out, they don't rise at all, and the outside even is limp and sticky. I use an electric oven, and put them in at 200° with both elements off, and I never open the oven door until they have been in at least an hour and a half.

It is a far cry to my next question (and yet really the two are related, aren't they?) Although we live in a town, I have made up my mind to have a few hens of our own. Could any of your readers please tell me the proper quantities of foods for six hens? I can get plenty of vague information, but nothing really definite. Also, as the hens will have to be kept in an enclosed run (I mean a wire netting one attached to their house) will they need extra foods? I know lots of Wellington residents do keep a few hens in their very limited ground. So I thought they might be kind enough to give me some advice.

—"Tamaruvian."

I think you should write to the N.Z. Poultry Board about the best way to keep hens in a closed-in space. It is just as well to do things properly when you are starting from the beginning. I once saw an "intensive" poultry-run, in a small and beautifully kept garden, which was very successful. Of course, the fowls need scratching pens for exercise—the grain is scattered among deep straw, and so on, and has to be "worked for." Green food, too, must be provided.

As to your meringues, it does seem strange that the results vary if you are sure that you make them exactly the same way every time. Do you always beat the mixture enough? Meringues need very thorough beating. A Pavlova Cake really needs a little more heat to

start with than the meringues—say 290 for the meringues, with the heat turned off, and leave them in until the oven is cold. A pinch of alum is a trade secret in the making of meringues. try this recipe:—

Meringues.—1 cup ordinary sugar; 2 tablespoons boiling water; the white of 1 egg; a pinch of salt; and a pinch of powdered alum. Put all together in a basin. Stand the basin in a meatdish of boiling water, on the gas. Beat very well, while the water boils around the basin. The meringue comes up like snow. Put in teaspoon lots on grease-proof paper.

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