

Hints for Gravy and Sponges

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I have noticed that a great many people seem to find it hard to make rich gravy without the aid of artificial colouring matter. I always put 1 teaspoon sugar and 1 tablespoon flour under the meat and put it down low in the oven with the bottom of the oven turned on to high for about 1/2 hour. I always get rich dark gravy this way. I also see that some of your correspondents are having trouble with sponges. I had lots of failures with them until I was told by someone to beat the eggs and sugar over boiling water. Stand the basin inside another containing water which has boiled. This shortens the beating time, so is particularly helpful to someone with no electric beater. I have never had a failure since. Of course the mixture must be all ready beforehand as speed is essential once the beating is over.

"E.M."

Mildew on Beans

Dear Aunt Daisy,

This year I put down ten half-gallon jars of beans in common dairy salt. After they had been down a week or so they began to form a mildew on top. Now they have a thick skin-like mould covered with a fine brown powder something like cocoa to look at. I am at a loss to understand it as I've never had it happen before. I was careful to pick them dry and have done them in my usual manner. Could you give me the reason and also tell me if they are fit for use. I am very disappointed as I had hoped to share them with my married daughter who is coming to live near me; and also with my son who is to be married as soon as a house is available.

"Ohura."

The problem of a brown mould forming on the top of beans put down in salt is quite a common one, unfortunately. But you will be thankful to know that it really doesn't spoil the beans, and that people simply skim off all the mould and wash the beans thoroughly before cooking. Every year I have such a large number of letters from people whose beans have gone mouldy on top; and an almost equal number from people who say, "just scrape off the mould and wash beans well." I do think this year's very wet season has caused much trouble. Next year you might like to try the "Salt and Sugar Method," which seems to be less liable to mould. Perhaps if you put a round of vinegar-soaked paper over the top of the beans—as many people do with their pots of jam—it might help. Vinegar does prevent mould. Here is the salt and sugar method: To 2 1/2 lb. beans allow 1 lb. salt and 1/2 lb. sugar. Cut beans as for the table, put in bowl. Mix the sugar and salt well, sprinkle over and through beans, and leave overnight. Next day pack into jars, cover with the brine which has formed. Keep in a cool place. Don't screw airtight. Wash and cook as usual.

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N.Z. LISTENER, JUNE 26, 1953.

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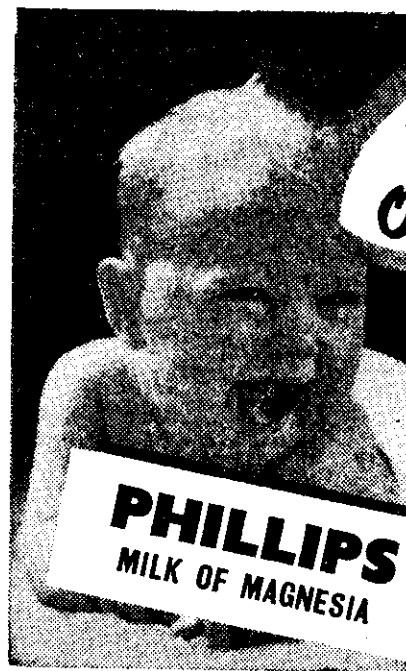
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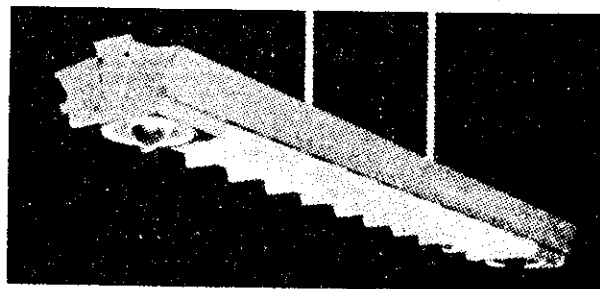
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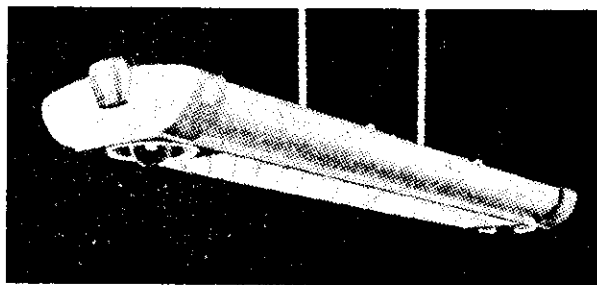
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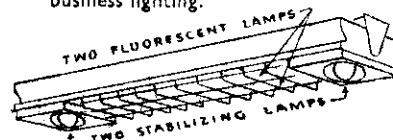


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