

**By Edith Anderson  
Town of Albion Historian**

**HELP WANTED:** The shortage of farm help in Orleans County in 1942 was serious as a result of which hundreds of tons of tomatoes would be rotting in the fields. Early apples were dropping heavily. County residents, business and professional personnel were needed to come to the rescue by helping pick tomatoes and apples.

Farmers were paying high prices to those who were picking tomatoes and apples. One's income could be increased as well as performing a patriotic duty. The Orleans County Farm Bureau set up a registration center at its office on Platt Street in Albion. Individuals, who could help out in this emergency, were requested to register immediately.

Friends Packing Company, West Avenue, Albion was advertising for workers. Delmar Farms, Inc., Point Breeze, wanted pickers to start work on Monday, a few days after the ad appeared. There were large apple crops, good picking and all bushel work.

The picture accompanying this article is of an orchard belonging to Albert Mason, Spring 1942.

On 16 July 1942, Orleans County Cherry Grower's Association members decided to pay one cent per lb. to pickers with a one-quarter cent bonus to all pickers who remained until the harvest was completed.

On 20 August 1942, The Friends Packing Company, Inc., 401 West Avenue, Albion, ran an ad in a local newspaper thanking all those employees who participated in the cherry pack. They, also, wanted it to be known that all previous employees, and, new ones, could now register for employment for the fall pack of tomatoes, beets, carrots, and apples.

Snider Packing Corp. was advertising for additional workers.

27 August 1942, Balcom Bros. were buying Bartlett and Seckel pears for their storage.

On 03 September 1942, it was stated that persons who will aid in the picking of peaches, and other crops, would be able to receive extra gasoline to drive to the farms and orchards. Labor situation was acute.

Picking bags and buckets were available from Ross Hardware for \$1.75-\$2.25 each.

Niagara Hudson held a training school called "Easy Meals for Busy Homemakers" at their building in December 1942.

Orleans Dairy, East Bank Street, Albion, ran the following ad in the local weekly paper: "NOTICE—Please put out bottles daily or there will be a charge. There is a shortage of glass and we need to refill them."

Early in 1943, the homemaker was reminded that the welfare of her family should be deepest in her heart. The homemaker faced a new and more difficult task in the management of her home. She needed to make a little do where there had been an abundance before. The satisfying preparation of meals out of her share of what was available was a challenge! She was urged to often prepare and serve healthful foods such as crisp vegetables from a "Victory Garden" and fresh ripe fruits. A local store advertised tomatoes, 5 cents per lb.; potatoes, 33 cents for 15 lbs.; green peppers, 33 cents per dozen; US #1 yellow onions, 39 cents for 10 lbs.

With so much emphasis on nutrition as a part of the defense program, it was a wise homemaker who studied menus even more carefully than usual to be sure her family was receiving a balanced diet. "The Nutrition-for-Defense Merchandising" campaign emphasized the use of Empire State farm produce. Free demonstrations on canning fruits, vegetables and meats were given in the Albion High School cafeteria.

To relieve warehouses bulging with wheat, the Department of Agriculture urged American homemakers to use lots of flour. The Department, also, advocated using more milk and dairy products to provide nourishment lost through "short" or rationed foods. Wheat yields in Orleans County were larger in 1942 than in 1941.

In 1942, sugar was given to organizations who sponsored benefit parties. This sugar was to be

used in preparation and serving of the meal. It did not include preparation and service separately, or in combination with alcoholic or non-alcoholic beverages, candy, cookies, prepared soda fountain mixtures, milk, milk drinks, and ice cream prepared as soda, sundae or otherwise. There were other foods included in this category. The Orleans County War Price and Rationing Board called attention to the month of June 1942 allotments of sugar distributed for home canning. This distribution was made on a basis covering the entire canning season. A printed notice to this effect was enclosed with each sugar purchase certificate. It, also, stated that additional allowances for sugar would not be granted.

With the announcement, during the last week of December 1942, of the widespread rationing of canned goods, the much-joked about housewife whose sole tool in preparing dinner was a can opener, would become a marvel in the future - if she could still get away with it!

Meats were scarce. One pound of ground beef served 4 or 5 and that took 7 ration points; one pound porterhouse served 2 or 3 and took 12 ration points. Other meats were available for ration points. It was a challenge to extend the available meats. Family members were served meats which were of a new variety.

Federal and State regulations for eggs varied. For breakfast, a top grade egg was best. A smaller egg, from a lower grade, was used for cooking, and, for baking, it was suggested measuring the yolk and white to get the correct amount called for in a recipe.

Cheese, a milk food with the same high quality protein as meat, took fewer ration points. A very versatile food.

A quart of milk each day for each child and 2 cups a day for each adult was recommended. If in a short supply, women and children came first. Growing children had priority.

"Spread the butter thin" was necessary so that butter would be available for many uses. To extend butter, 2 teaspoons gelatin and ¼ cup of milk was dissolved over hot water. Then 1½ cups milk was added and, gradually, this mixture was beaten into 1 pound of butter which had softened at room temperature. Margarine, lard, bacon or poultry fat were used in general cooking or baking.

To retain color, texture, and food value of vegetables, preparing them just before time to cook them, cooking just until tender and serving as soon as cooked, was necessary. Liquid remaining after cooking vegetables was saved and used in soups and gravies. To make these foods more appealing, new combinations of those served was suggested. Different toppings, seasonings, sauces, and shapes were incorporated into the meal.

Canned fruits required "blue" ration stamps. The use of fresh fruits in season when abundant, and at their best, was necessary. Dried fruits were used to replace the serving of canned fruits. Ideas of how to store, cook, and serve palatable fruits and fruit dishes were provided by the food industry.

Cereal foods became a large part of the daily diet because they were not restricted and were available in many delightful forms. Baked foods made from finely milled flour or from whole grain flour; breakfast cereals to be cooked or all prepared - ready to eat; macaroni, spaghetti, noodle dishes; rice dishes from white, brown, or wild rice furnished carbohydrates for energy-yielding, proteins for body-building, Vitamin B, iron and niacin.

When ample amounts of sugar were available, it was preferable for best baking results. Light or dark corn syrup, honey, or molasses served as substitutes when sugar was in short supply. Some jams, jellies, whipped cream, or meringue might have been used in the place of icing/frosting.

The following menu suggestions for Sunday dinner were based upon income and locally available foods which required few ration points.

Low Cost  
Deviled Frankfurters  
Scalloped Noodles  
Lettuce and Tomato Salad  
Bread and Butter  
Orange Sherbert  
Hot or Iced Tea