Nutrition: and ideas for mutton dishes

Department of Agriculture, Western Australia
THERE are five food groups in good nutrition.

One is the milk foods and milk, two is meat, fish, cheese, poultry, eggs—the animal proteins, and the vegetable proteins like dried beans, peas and nuts, the protein-rich foods which vegetarians eat and which you should eat more of than the animal proteins. Group three is fruit and vegetables and fruit juices, especially citrus fruits.

Group four is bread and cereal foods.

Group five is the fats—butter and margarine.

You include some from each group at each of the main meals every day.

You get into trouble with nutrition when you try to do more complicated arithmetic like counting calories and valuing vitamins, deciding that silver beet isn’t valuable because of something you read a few years back about Popeye’s spinach being a myth. Or adding up the amount of riboflavin there is in grilled steak and deciding that mutton doesn’t measure up.

The simple sum works if you buy fresh food, don’t keep it too long before cooking, and choose your foods in great variety. It is better for busy women, less worrisome and makes food more enjoyable.

For instance, mutton. It does get dull if you roast the leg on Sunday, have it cold on Monday, stew on Tuesday, roast the shoulder on Wednesday, always cooked the same way—dependable but dull.

Pauline Holden, a well-known young Australian home economist, prepared a youth’s-eye-view on sheep eating which might give you some fresh inspiration.

LAMB PAPRIKA

Ingredients

1 1/2 lb. chump chops.
1 tablespoon butter.
1 finely chopped onion.
1 1/2 cups chopped tomatoes.
Pinch herbs.
1 tablespoon chopped parsley.
1 teaspoon paprika.
Salt and pepper.
1 small diced carrot.
1 tablespoon white wine.
2 tablespoons flour.
1/3 cup undiluted evaporated milk.

Method

Trim excess fat from chops. Melt butter and fry chops lightly on both sides. Remove from pan and place in casserole. Fry onion until beginning to brown. Add tomatoes, herbs, parsley, paprika, salt, pepper and carrot. Cook two minutes longer and pour over chops in casserole. Add a little water if necessary to just cover chops. Place lid on casserole and bake in a moderate oven for one hour. Add the wine and cook half an hour longer. Blend flour with evaporated milk and add to casserole. Bring to simmering point. Serve sprinkled with chopped parsley and buttered noodles.

FRICASSEED SHEEPS’ TONGUES

Ingredients

2 sheep’s tongues.
Cold water.
1/2 teaspoon salt.
1/2 pint white sauce.
Chopped parsley.
Method
Wash tongues well and place in saucepan. Cover with cold water. Bring to boil. Simmer two to three hours or until cooked. Remove skin and bones and cut in half lengthwise. Make white sauce. Add tongues and season to taste. Serve on toast garnished with chopped parsley.

WHITE SAUCE
Ingredients
1 tablespoon butter.
2 tablespoons flour.
½ cup undiluted evaporated milk.
½ cup water.
½ teaspoon salt.
Pinch cayenne.

Method
Melt butter in saucepan. Mix in flour away from fire. Cook one minute. Blend in the evaporated milk and water a little at a time and stir constantly until mixture boils and thickens. Cook about two minutes. Season with salt and cayenne. This sauce may be thinned down with extra evaporated milk if desired.

NUTRITION
When choosing lamb or mutton for the family you should know what to look for in the choice cuts. The flesh should be light red in colour and firm with a fair proportion of creamy white solid fat. Two-toothed mutton is obtained from the young sheep and is a tender, good meat. Lamb is the carcase up to the age of two-toothed. Spring lamb is very young lamb.

General Preparation of Meat for Cooking
(1) Trim and remove any surplus fat and sinews, etc.
(2) Wipe over with a damp cloth.
(3) Tie and skewer into shape or cut up as desired.
(4) Weigh the joint.

Roasting
Cuts for roasting are leg, shoulder, loin—rib end and short loin.

Roasting or baking is a method of cooking by radiant heat. Meat develops pleasant flavours and the heat softens connective tissues in the inner part of the joint, while the outside is rendered brown and crisp.

Sprigs of rosemary or parsley inserted into the flesh with a sharp knife give a good flavour. Other ways of serving a tasty joint are to add slivers of garlic or pieces of fat streaky bacon in the same manner. Lamb basted with a little wine during cooking is simply delicious.

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