

TECHNIQUES OF FOOD WRITING

by

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INTRODUCTION

Study of the Techniques of Foods Writing was undertaken when the author realized that although there was an increasingly large demand for young women with a knowledge of both foods and journalism that nowhere was there any printed or assembled information on how to write about food.

Readers long have protested that much food information was apt to be "inaccurate and sloppy", yet that of the trained home economist was apt to be "stodgy, preachy, wordy and dull". The answer seems to be to teach the home economist how to popularize her writing.

No matter how much the food editor may know of food chemistry, according to one foods authority,¹ "unless she can make a roast leg of lamb sound exciting in print, she should get herself a job in a food testing laboratory. Being able to write timely, interesting copy is essential."

The demand for such writers is evident from the attention vocational advisers give to the field of food writing. Its importance is emphasized in books and articles about careers.

Helen Hostetter, editor of the Journal of Home Economics, says that many home economics graduates might be earning at least \$1,000 more a year if they could write.

"Better nutrition for the American family is a peacetime objective," Miss Hostetter says.² "Behind the newspaper food columns and magazine articles are nutrition pamphleteers, food

¹Florence Kathryn MacDonald, "News and the Handling of Such News on the Women's Page". Thesis, Northwestern University, 1939. p. 185.

²Polly Weaver, "Cooking with Words". Mademoiselle, March, 1945. p. 152-153.

market reporters, recipe broadcasters and cooking schools of the air, food package label writers and product promoters of the food and equipment companies."

"In public services, there must be nutrition advisers in federal, city and state departments of health, extension service, welfare organizations - women who can break down food prejudices and build up better eating habits through lectures, classes, writing articles and radio talks with housewives," Miss Hostetter pointed out.

"Because meal making is a perennial task, women are eager to read about foods and are grateful for any guidance they can get. Reader interest surveys of women's magazines almost invariably show the food material scoring at the top," says another food authority.¹

In the women's field, at least seven magazines with a circulation of more than one and a half million readers each, devote regular space to foods information. Four farm publications with more than one million circulation each and two home magazines with more than two and a half million readers each do the same thing. As the smaller publications follow the lead of the larger ones, material on foods appearing in these publications is influencing a tremendous number of homes in the United States.

The larger newspapers either employ food writers or subscribe to syndicates which supply foods articles. These publications attempt to employ the finest editors to uphold their responsibility for well-fed families of their readers.

¹Charnley and Converse, Magazine Writing and Editing (New York, c. 1938), p. 199.

In the retail advertising field, the largest amount spent in newspapers of the nation was for groceries, approximately 33 million dollars in 1939 compared to 26½ million, the amount spent for its next competing type of products.¹

"Editors today quite frankly face the fact that their articles on homemaking constitute the best of all possible lures for the advertising of big manufacturers of foods, homemaking equipment and a thousand and one other commodities of the home," says one other editor.² "The homemaking editors, therefore, must present articles which rate high not only in interest and appearance but in scientific accuracy and authoritativeness."

A demand for trained home economics journalism students with a knowledge of food comes from the large manufacturers of food and of household equipment, from the advertising agencies who handle publicity, promotion and advertising for all types of food concerns.

Kansas State College and other schools and universities which offer home economics and journalism courses have been able to fill only a small portion of the demand for young women with this specialized training. As a result, many are being employed who have neither knowledge of how to present food information nor reference material available to them.

To meet these demands, the author has studied widely-read newspapers and magazines in an attempt to determine and assemble the techniques of food writing.

¹"The Newspaper As an Advertising Medium", American Newspapers Association (New York, 1939), p. 76.

²Frances Maule, "Careers for the Home Economist" (New York, 1943), p. 211

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

It was about the turn of the Twentieth Century. In a spotless New England kitchen, a small girl was among several children listening to an instructor - a young woman who limped about the platform, her "red hair vivid" above her floor-length white uniform.¹

The cooking teacher, instructing the children to use a heaping spoonful of baking powder, explained:

"Remember, Marcia, make it as rounding as the spoon hollows."

"But it will come out different every time," the small girl protested. "Can't I use two LEVEL spoonfuls?"

From that incident came the first of the modern techniques in foods writing, for the instructor, Miss Fanny Farmer, considered the youngster's idea to be a sound one. From that time on, both in her cook books and in her articles for the *Woman's Home Companion* (she conducted the magazine's cooking department from 1905 to 1915), Miss Farmer used level measurements.

Other cook book and magazine writers followed her lead. As a result, much of the guess work in writing recipes has been eliminated.

This was decided progress over the "rhymed receipts" in the *Godey's Lady's Book*, edited by Sarah Josepha Hale, which was considered an essential in every well-ordered American home during the 1800's. Along with exquisite sketches of the latest fashions

¹"Fanny Farmer and Her Cook Book," *Zulma Steele*. The American Mercury. July, 1944. Vol. LIX, No. 247. p. 66-67.

in gowns or side by side with instructions for crocheting a hot water bottle cover would be "receipts" on the order of this one:

Sauce for Maige Plum Pudding¹

"Get five ounces of butter, and melt it with care
In the Usual Way, and as soon as complete
Put in one glass of brandy and one ounce of white
Sugar, pounded; and when you have mixed it all right
It is ready to use. Well, then sit down and eat."

In 1885 the woman's page in the daily newspapers was beginning its long journey toward becoming a recognized institution. That year, a man, S. S. McClure, syndicated 30,000 words a week to American newspapers and included among them cooking recipes. He wrote them himself under the name of Patience Winthrop.² Men even now are writing food material and syndicating it. Today, however, they are retaining their own identity - George Reector and Gaynor Mattox.

Cooking recipes began to be found grouped with articles on fashions and society news in women's departments or in women's pages. With the rise of evening and Sunday papers and the increase of display advertising, the importance of making special appeals to women readers was more fully appreciated by newspaper editors and publishers.

Today, although circulation of magazines and newspapers brings foods news and information to millions of readers, little has been published to aid foods writers in effectively assembling and presenting their material.

¹Literature for Ladies. Elizabeth Davis, Kansas State College Bulletin, 14 No. 12, December 15, 1930, p. 26.

²Willard G. Bleyer, History of American Journalism (Boston, New York, 1927), p. 339.

In her book¹ on opportunities in the special lines for women writers, Genevieve Jackson Boughner emphasized that food writing is as much for the inexperienced as for the experienced; that direction should be given in as few words as possible without too technical expressions; and that material should be accurate.

She speaks of a "recipe article", a compilation under a general inclusive head or tied together with a general lead. She advises that the writer should conform to the publication's practice in presentation of the recipe, and that the syndicate article be usable in every part of the country.

Conclusions following a study of "Reader-Interest in Articles Concerning Foods in the Ames Daily Tribune" by Elizabeth Ann Dickinson² were that locally written articles had more reader appeal than the ones submitted by syndicates or by out-of-town commercial writers; that illustrated articles were much better read than those without illustrations; and that more older women than young ones read the recipes.

Frances Maule in her book, "Careers for the Home Economist,"³ suggests that preparation for foods writing includes knowledge of typography, because the article "must be styled for the printer, marked up with directions in regard to the size and style of type for the headlines, subheadings and captions, and fitted to the art director's lay-out.

¹Genevieve Jackson Boughner, *Women in Journalism* (New York, 1937), p. 77.

²Elizabeth Ann Dickinson, "Reader-Interest in Articles Concerning Foods in the Ames Daily Tribune". Thesis, Iowa State College, 1939.

³Frances Maule, "Careers for the Home Economist" (New York, 1943), p. 211.

"Writing of the kind required for articles on homemaking, the Pegasus of Inspiration, must be bitted and curbed and made to trot docilely along certain well-defined roads. Flights of fancy are approved but only if they are accessory to forthright exposition of facts,"¹ Miss Maule advised young home economists. "Ability to collect, evaluate, analyze, organize, interpret and present information comes first. The presentation must be made, first of all, with a directness and lucidity which enables the readers to grasp its meaning with an irreducible minimum of mental effort. If it can also be made entertaining, so much the better."

In her thesis, "News and the Handling of Such News on the Woman's Page,"² Florence Kathryn MacDonald gave her personal opinion that the foods columns on woman's pages in Chicago were apt to be "dull" and "stodgy" with "long, rambling leads". Four of the Chicago papers, she says, "deal too much in generalities, are apt to be condescending or ingratiating and the copy lacks punch and color."³ Miss MacDonald, however, pays tribute to the regular daily attention to foods material and to the high readership of the columns.

Mrs. Florence Riddick Boys, the first woman to syndicate an entire woman's page,⁴ advises young writers:

"Do not strain; but write as you talk, as the neighbors chat over the back fence, but usefully as you would advise your younger sister."

¹loc. cit.

²Florence Kathryn MacDonald, "News and the Handling of Such News on the Woman's Page". Thesis, Northwestern University, 1939.

³All except the Chicago Times.

⁴Boughner, op. cit. p. 285.

"The copy can be scholarly, something educated women will enjoy; worthwhile thoughts and news from which all women can learn something; above commonplaces and the frivolous and wishy-washy. People enjoy a certain amount of solid reading matter, if interestingly put. Do not be afraid to write for the intellectual woman.

"The reading should be interesting, homey, strong, human, cheery and decent.

"I like to picture the home at the close of the day. The woman of the house is tired, heavy, sodden perhaps, as I have been. The evening paper comes. She reads, is strengthened and gets up singing as she sets the tea on the table and calls the family to supper.

"Let your writing be as if the sun burst out and shone into the house on a cloudy day."

METHOD

In a field in which little research has been published, obviously several sources of information must be used to reveal a comprehensive picture. Six were chosen. They included: (1) A detailed comparative analysis of five national magazines, four issues of each publication; (2) detailed comparative analysis of food columns of two metropolitan daily newspapers over a month's time; (3) analysis of foods articles in certain newspapers and magazines to determine general usage of certain techniques; (4) interviews with foods writers or those associated with foods publicity or advertising; (5) study of material sent out by commer-

cial foods companies for use of newspaper and magazine directors; (6) reading in allied fields such as fashion writing, advertising, feature writing and women's page writing to confirm information obtained from the study of the foods articles themselves.

Two other possible sources, cook books and booklets issued by commercial companies, were eliminated because of their variable factors. Both had special problems of production and of reader interest.

To determine methods used in reaching the greatest number of readers, high circulation magazines were analyzed and compared. Ladies' Home Journal, Woman's Home Companion, Good Housekeeping, Country Gentleman and Farm Journal with a total of more than 15,000,000 circulation were studied in detail. To be certain that subject matter was comparable, issues of similar months were selected: July, September and November, 1944, and November, 1945.

The second source, an analysis of a month's issues of two metropolitan papers, was determined upon in order to compare material reaching larger numbers of women in the same trade territory but with different incomes. The February, 1945, issues of the New York Herald Tribune and of the New York World-Telegram were studied. The former, a morning paper, has a circulation of 296,197; the latter, an evening paper, 389,257.

To determine general usage of certain of the techniques, study was made of both metropolitan and small town newspapers and of widely read magazines which included foods articles.

Among the newspapers were: New York Times, New York Daily News, New York Post, Chicago Tribune, Chicago Sun, Chicago Herald American, Chicago Daily Times, the Los Angeles Times, Kansas City Star, Miami Herald, St. Louis Post Dispatch, Los Angeles Herald-Examiner, the Christian Science Monitor, the Miami News, Topeka Daily Capital, Manhattan Mercury-Chronicle, Manhattan Tribune-News, Selina Journal, Hutchinson News-Herald, Wall Street Journal, American Weekly, Daily Oklahoman, Denver Post and Omaha World-Herald.

Magazines checked for specific information included: McCall's, Journal of Home Economics, Editor and Publisher, Tide, Saturday Evening Post, Household Magazine, What's New in Home Economics, Successful Farming, Parent's Magazine, Capper's Farmer, Capper's Weekly, Kansas Farmer, Nutrition Reviews, American Home, Better Homes and Gardens, Sunset, Gourmet, Woman's Day, Family Circle, Mademoiselle and Vogue.

For interviews with foods writers or those associated with foods publicity or advertising, appointments were made at the publication office itself when possible; otherwise, interviews were held when persons were visiting the Kansas State College campus.

Each person was questioned concerning the special problems of her field of writing and, in addition, was asked about slanting, policy, use of recipes and menus, subject matter treated, opportunities in writing, illustrations, recommendations, word usage, taboos and methods of presenting material.

Interviewed were: Dr. Martha Pittman, editor of "Practical

Cookery and Etiquette of the Table", Manhattan; Miss Esther Latzke and Miss Margaret Hill, of Armour and Company, Chicago; Mrs. Dorothy Sweet, of the Miami Herald, Miami; Miss Grace Mary Gustafson, of General Foods, New York; Mrs. Hester Smith, of Gardner Advertising Agency and Pet Milk, St. Louis; Miss Ruth Atwater of What's New in Home Economics, Chicago; Miss Mary Ellen Henderson, of Kansas City Gas Company, Kansas City, Mo.; Mrs. Ida Migliario, of the Household Magazine, Topeka; Miss Constance Van Natta and Mr. George Bolz, of the Topeka Daily Capital, Topeka; Mrs. Louise Roote, of Capper's Weekly, Topeka; Mrs. Ruth Botz Jones, former assistant extension editor, KSAC, and formerly with the Spry Testing Kitchen, Boston; Miss Jean Wain-scott, of Successful Farming, Manhattan; Miss Alice Nichols, former editor of Pathfinder and liaison person between foods editors and War Production Board, Washington, D. C.

The material sent out by commercial foods editors came principally from Swift and Company, Armour and Company, Kellogg Company, National Biscuit Company. Others were examined also.

These releases were checked to determine methods of presenting recipes, ways of varying copy for interest and types of information used.

In allied fields, articles which might appeal to the same readers and which were used by the same publications were studied to determine similar approaches to the presentation of foods material.

RESULTS

Selecting the Information

How does the food writer select her information? What subjects does she write about for her newspaper column or for her elaborate magazine food page?

Whatever women chat about on their way to market or over a cup of tea is timely material for the editor's typewriter, a study of periodicals reveals. To select the current interests of the largest number of women readers of the publication is the writer's objective. Women want news; they want background information; they want to know how to be better cooks, hostesses and homemakers. They are influenced by economic conditions, by community customs and by specific needs of their own homes and families. Consequently, they want assistance and inspiration in meeting these individual problems.

The food writer has a wide choice of subject matter and may use timely and interesting information from the following:

Food news

Nutrition news

Food or nutrition organization news

Methods of preparing food and recipes ("how"
copy)

Meal planning and menus

Etiquette and entertaining

Marketing

Meal service

Reasons for methods of preparing foods ("why"
copy)

Budgeting

Care and storage of food

Food preservation

Special diets

Kitchen equipment

Periodicals vary in the emphasis placed on this subject matter, some concentrate on the how-to-do-it story and recipes; others divide responsibility for budgeting and equipment and entertaining among several writers; but many leave the choice up to the editor herself.

For example:

To the better foods and equipment division of one home magazine¹ goes everything dealing with the preparation and serving of food; recipes, menus and food planning. Also kitchen utensils, tableware, linens and care of refrigerators.²

Practical information is the type recommended to writers by several typical representatives of foods concerns.

"Among best bets are ways to use plentiful foods, ways to stretch scarce foods, seasonal recipes, foods for children and ways to make them eat them, holiday fare, economical foods and nutrition information in simple terms," one home economist with a foods concern suggests.³

"Think in terms of giving readers practical information

¹Better Homes and Gardens.

²Charnley and Converse, op. cit.

³Loggans of Kellogg Company, quoted by George Brandenburg, Editor and Publisher, :14, November 24, 1945.

about good solid food and avoid 'swanky' recipes. Supplement stories and recipes with tempting food pictures which attract the busy housewife," the majority of a group interviewed says:¹

"Simple, practical cooking suggestions with short cuts and new ideas," a representative of a food company advocates.² He suggested that food editors offer practical information on vitamin values expressed in the simplest of terms, especially with reference to the use of fresh vegetables. He recommended more stories on nutrition, stressing the necessity for balanced diets and - reduced to readable terms - data resulting from nutritional studies conducted at various universities and research institutes. As an added flavor, he suggested menus and practical recipes using particularly seasonable foods.

"Market news concerning 'best buys' is helpful," according to the representative of one of the largest food institutes.³

"During recent years, the average customer has learned a lot about food and nutrition, and our feeling is that many people now consider the nutritional value of foods along with its ease of preparation, taste, and acceptability to the family. This suggests that perhaps even more attention be paid to simply stated nutritional facts."

Emphasis has been placed by some company representatives on the fact that a "new crop of brides" appears every year and will be particularly numerous when servicemen start keeping house with their brides. To many of these girls, old information

¹Ibid.

²Crooks of Kroger Grocery and Baking Company, *ibid.*

³Draper, American Meat Institute, *ibid.*

dressed up will be particularly valuable.¹

"Food pages should be a medium of educating the housewives not only to the correct preparation and cooking of foods but also should act as a medium of education in the mechanics of operating a home," the representative of a cereal company declares.²

The gourmet approach is of primary interest to the editor of the home economics association magazine.³ She believes that home economists and nutritionists are most successful when they write from this point of view.⁴

Food stories should never feature foods that are scarce or relatively high in price, in the opinion of the representative of a food institute.⁵

A widely syndicated food column written by a man⁶ is based on the premise that food is one of the greatest pleasures of life, but shouldn't be one of life's greatest tasks.

To encourage good eating and leisure, he believes his columns should predetermine the necessary nutrients and unobtrusively build them into appetizing menus and should prevalue all new foods and time-savers so that the menus will require a minimum of his reader's time.⁷

His attitude is that women and men should not be told nutri-

¹Brandenburg, *ibid.*

²Dougherty, Ralston Purina Co., Brandenburg, *ibid.*

³Helen Hostetter.

⁴Helen Crane, "Serving Nation's Home Economists", *The Matrix*, 31:10-11, October-November, 1945.

⁵Brandenburg, *ibid.*

⁶Gaynor Mettux.

⁷Helen Stanton, "Food Should Be Fun", Editor and Publisher, 78: 50, December 22, 1945.

tion details except as he 'siphons them off' into recipes.

"Food is not primarily a woman's concern," he says. "After all, fifty percent of the eaters are men."

Obtaining the Information

Food articles may be prepared for publication by three methods. First, the food editor may either write it herself or assign a member of her staff to do so. Second, she may purchase it from a free-lance writer. Third, she may utilize any of the clip-sheets or other read-to-use material which comes to her desk from commercial concerns, food associations, subscription syndicates such as the Associated Press, United Press, International News Service, King Features, NEA, Western Newspaper Union or any of the specialized women's page syndicates.

The news syndicates issue two types of material. Important news of food may be carried on the wire service. Women's page features or "time" material may include food copy in the form of clip-sheets, often accompanied by mats of illustrations.

The commercial concerns and food associations send out either clip-sheets or mimeographed stories ready to be headlined and sent to the linotype. Often glossy prints or mats of illustrations either accompany many of these or are available upon request. There is no charge for any of this service, as the commercial concerns are eager to have their information used.

Although the concerns are most pleased when their trade names are used, nevertheless, the mention of a certain item of food which it prepares more than repays them for their time, effort and expense.¹ For example, if a meat packing company re-
¹Interviews, Margaret Hill, Armour and Company.

leases a story about little pig sausages and if the story is used, a great many persons will be reminded of the dish and will immediately use it. The commercial company, as a result, will receive a portion of the increased demand for that item, depending upon its brand acceptance and distribution.

The various food associations such as the American Meat Institute, the Wheat Flour Institute, the Citrus Association, the National Dairy Association and others send out educational information in the form of news features, endeavoring to increase the acceptance and demand for the specialized products of their individual groups.

In addition to the general feature services, numerous cooking schools and home pages provide specialized services or material. Among them are:¹ Cooking and Homemaking Shops, Elizabeth K. Casey, St. Paul, Minn.; The Creole Kitchen, Virginia M. Cooper, New Orleans, La.; DeBoth Home Makers Schools, Jessie M. DeBoth, New York; General Features Corporation, G. V. Smith, New York; Homemakers' Service, Laura E. Weilsapp, Chicago, Ill.; and Our Family Food, Jessie A. Knox, New York.

Sources of information and material used by the foods editor and her staff are:

1. Personal experiences
2. Testing kitchen
3. Interviews with authorities and specialists
4. Government bulletins and college extension bulletins or feature material

¹Editor and Publisher Yearbook, 78:218, 1945.

5. Booklets and other material compiled and released by commercial foods companies or foods associations
6. Research material in association or scientific publications
7. Business papers
8. Local markets, commission houses, wholesale houses
9. Contests, conducted for recipes or suggestions
10. Homemakers' letters

On some newspapers and magazines,¹ the woman's editor, with or without an assistant, must be a jill-of-all-knowledge, for she must write articles on fashions, child welfare, society, clubs, and news of general interest to women as well as those of food.

On the large papers and magazines² which have elaborate women's sections, home economists are employed to assist in a testing kitchen and to give demonstrations and hold cooking schools for organizations. The home economist either writes her own information for the publication or supplies material to be written in popular form by a newspaper woman.

When kitchens are available, most recipes are tested before they are printed. One large metropolitan newspaper even marks all those tested as T-T.³ The women's magazines test recipes and develop new ones to submit to the readers. The newspaper and magazine kitchens differ from those maintained by the foods processors in that the latter are interested primarily in originating

¹Kansas City (Mo.) Star; Kansas Farmer.

²Better Homes and Gardens and others.

³New York Times.

"fool-proof" formulas for their own products. In these, the young home economists often must learn as much as possible about the products before they are permitted to write a line of copy.¹ In addition, they interview workers in the plants, homemakers and others about the qualities of the products themselves.²

The trained newspaper woman finds that interviewing authorities or specialists is both a practical and an effective method of obtaining news and feature type food information. She decides on a general topic of timely interest, does some background reading so that she can ask pertinent questions and then arranges for an interview. At times she is interested in having her information confirmed so that she may use quotations. Again, she obtains additional information. Sometimes, if she is lucky, she finds that for which she hopes, striking new information of wide interest - spot news material.

Government bulletins and state college Extension bulletins and other releases are recognized as fine sources of information. Although none of these is copyrighted, the foods writer usually is courteous in giving credit to the publication. She utilizes the portion of the information which is pertinent to her reader audience and which is suitable for her publication.

To obtain government bulletins, she writes to the Division of Publications, Office of Information, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. In addition to requesting bulletins, "Popular Publications for the Farmer and Homemaker," she may find valuable background knowledge in "Consumer's Guide"

¹Lever Brothers, Boston, Mass.

²Armour and Company, Chicago.

which she obtains from the Marketing Reports Division of the United States Department of Agriculture.

For more local material, the foods editor often asks to be placed on the mailing list for releases from the publicity office of the Extension Division of her state college. From this, she will find in her mail, straight news stories, features and bulletins. Smaller papers may obtain stories direct from the county Home Demonstration agent.

Research laboratories and testing kitchens for large food processors or equipment manufacturers are perhaps the most prolific source of background information. Many of these companies, institutes or associations have elaborate facilities for research. Not only do they utilize their findings in their own products but they also make these available to foods writers and editors.

Leading firms have the reputation of sending out fine scientific material. Much of this commercial information is prepared for educational distribution, for home economics instructors, for women's study clubs, for professional groups and for the publications interested in food. This great amount of information is released at no cost to the recipient. Some customer relations groups popularize the information. Others present it as scientific reports. Two meat processors,¹ in particular, have large mailing lists of research information released every month.

Usually a request written to the widely known firms is enough to place a writer's name on a mailing list for years, although one

¹Swift and Company; Armour and Company, Chicago.

company¹ checks its list every January.

Most companies welcome specific letters of request about their own products or their new research.

Business or technical publications include a wealth of background information or news of the food industry which might well be read carefully by foods writers. Many are pertinent to special sections of the country or to certain items. Among those with largest circulations are:²

Food Mart News, Chicago, Ill.; Food Retailing and Butchers Gazette, Chicago, Ill.; National Food Distributors Journal, Chicago, Ill.; Commercial Bulletin, Los Angeles, Calif.; Locker Patron, Des Moines, Iowa; Kansas Grocer and Food Dealers Magazine, Kansas City, Kan.; Retail Food Merchandiser, Minneapolis, Minn.; Food Field Reporter, New York; Gourmet Magazine, New York; Kosher Food Guide, New York; Oklahoma Food Dealer, Oklahoma City, Okla.; Co-operative Merchandiser, Chicago, Ill.; Successful Grover, Chicago, Ill.; Wholesale Grocer News, Chicago, Ill.; New England Grocery and Market Magazine, Boston, Mass.; Independent Grocer, New York; Self-Service Grocer, New York; Spice Mill, New York; Grocer's Bulletin, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Southwestern Food Journal, Dallas, Texas; National News, Toronto, Canada; Fruit Products Journal and American Food Manufacturer, New York; American Fruit Grower, Cleveland, Ohio; Better Fruit, Portland, Ore.; Meat, Chicago, Ill.; Meat Merchandising, St.

¹Armour and Company.

²N. W. Ayer and Son, Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals (Philadelphia, 1944), p. 1230, 1231, 1232, 1235, 1250.

Louis, Mo.; Southern Fisherman, New Orleans, La.; and Atlantic Fisherman, Goffstown, N. H.

Ways the editor may handle information obtained from research reports or accounts of business and advertising activities include:

Rewrite the information into "popular" language as news or a news feature.

Rewrite into "popular" language and add interpretation.

Use the information as a "news peg" to give a reason for presenting supplementary material, such as "timeliness", to a group of recipes.

Add to features as explanatory material.

Commercial material available to foods writers sometimes is not suitable because it is cluttered with irrelevant material or too much brand advertising.

Recognition of the need of evaluating commercial material is expressed by the report of the Committee on Educational Use of Commercial Material of the American Home Economics Association.¹ It has released a check sheet designed to direct attention to the less desirable features of such material used for education and information.

This check sheet, with additions, might well be used by the foods writer in evaluating her own material.

- I. Accuracy of subject matter
 - Free from half-truths
 - Free from exaggerated statements
 - Backed by standard laboratory tests

¹ American Home Economics Association, Bulletin Series 23, No. 1, September, 1940.

Backed by recognized authorities
 Backed by signature of author and his professional title
 Backed by name of firm or organization publishing it

II. Timeliness of subject matter
 Furnishes the most recent information
 Gives date of publication
 Meets the needs of the times
 Adds information to that available in most textbooks

III. Method of presentation
 Factual, not cluttered with irrelevant material
 Well organized
 Simple, clear, brief
 Attractive in format
 Durable
 Graphic, well illustrated
 Easy to read, sight-saving
 Appropriate for group for which it is intended

IV. Subject matter unbiased
 Clear-cut educational purpose
 Information about products in general rather than promotion of specific brands
 Free from advertising in text
 Posters and charts free from advertising

As more and more research is done, methods of food preparation and knowledge of nutrition constantly change. Consequently, only an editor who hopes for quick retirement will allow herself to offer old or outmoded material to her readers. The easiest and most practical way of keeping up with changing ideas is to read the publications of the scientific groups. Among them are:

Journal of Home Economics, Nutrition Reviews, The Journal of Nutrition, The Journal of the American Dietetic Association, The Journal of the American Medical Association, American Cookery.

Not so technical but designed for high school home economics teachers and therefore alert to new ideas are: What's New in Home Economics, Forecast, Practical Home Economics.

Science Service, a syndicate which popularizes technical ma-

terial, often includes information on nutrition. Foods editors may confer with the feature editor of the paper to have such material routed to her desk.

More useful as a news source to the foods writer for the radio than for the newspaper or magazine, perhaps, is the local market. The appearance of the various fruits and vegetables which are brought to the central market early in the mornings is not timed for publication deadlines.

The market itself or local commission house, however, is one of the best idea sources for the food writer. Items which are plentiful, in good condition and priced economically are always "news pegs" for stories. For example, if large shipments of cabbages arrived, the foods editor would immediately use menus and recipes including cabbage as well as information on how to prepare it. If seasonable foods were scarce, it would be her clue to write about food alternates as she did so often during wartime rationing. Unusual or exotic foods are worth mention.

Some of the foods editors carry a column each weekday on "best buys" in fruits and vegetables.¹ Others carry at least one long column each week based on a trip through the market.²

The market editor on one large publication always checks with the foods editor to give her the latest information each day.³

The local specialty shops are the basis for many stories for metropolitan papers.⁴ The foods editor will sniff out the appe-

¹New York Times.

²New York Herald Tribune.

³Chicago Tribune.

⁴New York Herald Tribune.

tizing fragrances of a bakery, will sample the tangy cheeses in the little Italian shop, examine the dozens of varieties of fresh fish in the fish market, and sample the tidbits of the delicatessen. All these she will combine in her stories, vicarious shopping trips for her readers.

The foods writer for a small newspaper checks both the commission houses and the local grocery stores and markets. She attempts to quote an average price, for she will find that costs vary from store to store and with the quality of the product.

An American trait of wanting to win the prize has been capitalized upon by the editors. To stimulate interest and to secure new ideas, as well as new readers, they employ contests.

The editors win as much as the readers, for they receive thousands of recipes, great quantities of food to be judged or ideas for improving their pages. One metropolitan newspaper¹ offered a cook book award for suggestions of interesting specialty shops to be described. Small town papers have pie-making contests, with accompanying recipes which are printed in the news columns along with pictures of the winners.²

Magazines often use contests to create interest. One which continues regularly is the Endorsed Recipe.³ Homemakers receive six printed copies of the recipe tested. The best ones are printed in the magazine credited to the contributor. More than 2,000 readers a month send in recipes.

Not only are the ideas, recipes and contributions glist for

¹New York Herald Tribune.

²Hutchinson (Kan.) News-Herald.

³Better Homes and Gardens.

the foods editors' mill, but the continuing story of the contest itself and the announcement of the winners also are excellent material.

Letters from homemakers to the editor requesting information, enclosing stamped envelopes or nickels and dimes for booklets and pamphlets, are a valuable weathervane. Some newspapers test the pulling power of the page by the number and type of requests.¹ Some papers receive hundreds a day.

Food trends as represented by these reader requests should be considered a guide, in the opinion of home economics writers for various commercial food concerns. This is considered so important by some companies that answering letters is the first assignment given to beginners.²

One group of three Eastern newspapers³ advertised recently that it had just begun a "home grown food column" with requests that readers send in favorite recipes. "A flood of recipes flowed in."⁴

Presenting the Information

The foods editor of either a newspaper or a magazine has a variety of forms available to her in presenting material. She endeavors to select the most effective way in telling the story, attracting attention and pleasing her readers. Sometimes she may employ a combination of several methods. She may make her

¹Los Angeles Times.

²Pet Milk Company, St. Louis, Mo.

³Philadelphia Suburban Newspapers, Inc., Ardmore, Pa.

⁴Editor and Publisher, 78:38, December 22, 1945.

choice from among the following forms:

News
 Column
 Feature
 Filler paragraph
 Tables or charts
 Recipes
 Menus
 Letters from readers
 Booklets or leaflets
 Illustration

News. News of food and nutrition is usually presented in the straight news story form, impersonally written, concise, and built in the inverted pyramid style. The most important, unusual or striking information is told in the first unit or lead, with additional facts or explanation composing the body of the story. The news story lead answers such questions as the who, what, when, where, why and how, gives the authority for the information and identifies persons, organizations and places. It is important for the food writer to remember that comment must be credited to an authority and that the story is written in the third person as a rule.

Material of immediate interest is presented easily in this manner. Some interviews on the food situation or on the local markets are written with either direct or indirect quotations. Information about nutrition meetings, lectures, cooking schools, new processes, conventions and new products is effective as

straight news.

The news of food in the woman's pages studied was written almost exclusively by reporters or was obtained from the news services copy. One reason for this may be that many foods writers have not had training in handling the news story form. The business papers and some of the news magazines often use the straight news form.

Column. The column is the most favored method of presenting foods material if the amount of space devoted by both newspapers and magazines is a criterion.

This is the easiest to handle as it has a flexible form. The writer can please herself as long as she makes the information interesting. As a result, analyzing some columns is similar to analyzing a vegetable salad. Some of the writers have tried to include too many flavors. The more successful ones retain one point of view and one subject. Some, however, talk casually about "we," "I," "he," "she," and "it" and several subjects, all in the same column, until the result is confusing.

The chief advantages of the column's looseness are that it can have a chatty you-and-I approach, be full of editorial comment, special likes and dislikes, and that it is not required to have any particular news value.

Most of the foods columns examined, however, are careful to emphasize reasonableness whether or not they include any news. Many include recipes.

Advantages to the column writer are the facts that she rates a by-line, because she is the authority, and that most columns

have a regularly scheduled appearance. These build prestige and continuing interest.

Most of the columns printed in large newspapers average about a half column in length unless they are supplemented with recipes or illustrations.

Long, rambling leads which wander into a morass of words often typify the columns of beginning foods writers or of those who have had no journalistic training. This was one of the chief criticisms of certain columns studied for a thesis. Livelier writers utilize the rules for good features.

Feature. Although all of the feature forms are available to the food writer, the study reveals that certain ones are better adapted and more often used than others.

The feature story or article, whether it is used for newspaper or magazine, is designed to relate facts, give additional information or to entertain. The foods writer uses it primarily to impart information.

As such, she has two main choices. Either the material may be presented impersonally or it may have the chatty "you-and-I" approach.

If the impersonal, she usually selects the news feature. This may have a by-line or not, according to the decision of the editor. If no by-line is given, however, the writer should be careful to credit all opinion or unconfirmed information to an authority and may use direct and indirect quotations. If the by-line is used, she may have greater freedom in opinion, for in this case, she herself may be considered the authority.

This form usually starts with a striking or unusual statement, just as the news story does; however, any of the news or feature leads may be used.

It must have a definite reason for being of interest at the time it is printed. This reason is called the "news peg" and should be introduced early in the story. The "news peg" most often utilized by the food writer is the season of the year or special days or holidays which demand certain types of foods. The arrival on the market of certain foods, such as the first strawberries, or the abundance of others may be used. The "news peg" is effective if hung on a local event or news of general interest.

The third person experience article, another impersonally written type, is often used by magazines. This has the advantage of helping the reader identify himself with experiences and certain procedures without being told directly to do this or do that. One editor¹ insists upon this type article, for he believes that "people do not like to be told or bossed".

One large woman's magazine has made a fine reputation for itself by using this form for most of its homemaking information. A different type of family is chosen each time. Its living conditions, budget, family relations, clothing and food are all included.

The personal type most often used for food stories may be a form of the utility article. The writer attempts to set up the you-and-I attitude in the lead or soon after the lead. The pro-

¹Nelson Antrim Crawford, The Household Magazine.

noun "you" is stressed throughout the story, and directions are given with emphasis on the "you".

Although it is the easier form to use and is much preferred by many editors, because of its friendliness, it must be watched lest it become preachy or juvenile.

The writer herself may be the authority and may include her own opinions. Some writers both quote authorities and use their own comments. In any event, if the word "you" is employed, the article should carry the writer's by-line.

Not all magazines follow this style, however, especially when grouping recipes under a lead.

Another personal way is the first person experience type of story, more often used by magazines than newspapers. One large metropolitan newspaper writer¹ uses it almost entirely in taking her readers on a tour of the markets and stores and in reporting on the testing kitchen's experiences.

This again has the advantage of not seeming to be "boasy". Pronouns "I" or "we" are used. In the event that the article is written around experiences of the specialists of the magazine or newspaper, the pronoun "we" is more often used. If the material is written on assignment by someone who has had certain experiences desired, the "this-is-how-I-did-it" attitude is effective.

One large commercial company² insists that all its material contain the pronoun "we" in an attempt to be "friendly without being intimate".

¹ Clementine Paddleford, New York Herald Tribune.

² General Mills.

The first person experience story, obviously, carries the "by-line".

Recipes. The highest compliment a woman can pay another's cooking is to ask for her recipe. The highest compliment a reader can pay a foods editor is her eager, confident acceptance of the publication's recipes.

Recipes are so important in reader appeal that they form the bulk of the information in many foods columns and pages.

They are presented in three ways: by themselves, either in a form to be clipped by the reader or in a separate paragraph with a small title; grouped together with a short lead or introductory paragraphs; or added to a foods story to supplement or complete its information.

In newspapers, single recipes are often used as "filler" paragraphs; other times, as in magazines,¹ they are set up in single or double column forms so that they can be cut out and pasted onto cards for a recipe file. In either case, there is no explanation of what the recipe is or why it is presented. A short title is the only identification.

A number of larger newspapers which print a daily menu will include the recipe for the unusual dish in that menu. This recipe will often be presented in a paragraph or two by itself.

The form often used by newspaper writers is the grouping of the recipes of one type or those for one occasion or meal. This study revealed none which had been selected hit or miss. All had a definite pattern. The introductory paragraph or lead, for ex-

¹ American Home.

ample, might explain that cranberries were on the market for the Christmas season. Short explanation might be made of their festiveness, their history, their food values, costs, or how they might be used with a menu for Christmas dinner. Any or all of these types of information might be included briefly. The recipes for cranberries would follow, either with or without transition paragraphs.

The third method is used both by newspapers and magazines. The foods information is written as a regular feature. The recipes illustrate principles or methods of foods preparation or are added to give a complete story. For example, the article might tell of a certain method of cooking fish. Recipes would not only show how it was done but would aid the reader who followed them in remembering the method. Again, an article might explain the development of a new type of vegetable. Recipes following would show how the food could be prepared, a necessary part of the story itself.

Single recipes sometimes are illustrated with a photograph. If so, the recipe itself is part of the outlines or captions. In one magazine¹ the photograph of the finished product is placed beside a double column recipe which may be clipped to fit a recipe file.

Recipes with attractive art work are tops in reader interest where food pages are concerned, in the opinion of the representative of one of the largest commercial food concerns.²

¹Better Homes and Gardens.

²Storm, H. J. Heinz Company, Brandenburg, *ibid.*

The information of greatest interest in food pages is a series of timely recipes prefaced by the description of the finished product or dish, according to another representative.¹ These recipes should be easy to follow and composed of food products that are comparatively easy to obtain and that make outstandingly tasty dishes.

In checking to see that a recipe is complete, the foods writer should be sure that the following things are included:

Every recipe should have a name. Even if its name is invented at the time, it should have "a handle."

All ingredients should be double checked to avoid omission and errors in amounts.

Amounts should be written out rather than abbreviated. Some writers still use the abbreviations to save space, but confusion in amounts is easy. One newspaper² had to placate irate readers when the abbreviation for teaspoon of soda in the recipe was inadvertently changed to read "one tablespoon of soda".

Instructions should be complete, simple and clear.

The yield should be given, according to recommendation of the American Home Economics Association. Bakery items are given in number and size. Amounts should be stated in number of servings rather than number of persons served. Other types are given as "four servings", not "serve four people".³ The latter is confusing because it doesn't tell the size of the portion or take into consideration the appetite of the persons. The number

¹Beebe, Procter and Gamble Co., Brandenburg, *ibid*.

²Topeka Daily Capital.

³Armour and Company.

of servings, however, lets the homemaker know approximately what amount to plan on. When alternate ingredients are used and their equivalents vary, the amounts of the alternate should be included.

Baking or roasting temperatures should be stated. For practical purposes, they are given in degrees Fahrenheit. Often the heat of the oven is also given as a "slow oven" or "hot oven". However, authorities differ as to what constitutes ranges of temperatures. A helpful touch added by one writer¹ is that of interpreting pounds into cups and quarts into cups. This material is enclosed in parentheses.

One homemaker² suggested that it would be helpful to have cooking time mentioned for various size pans. For example, a cake recipe baked as a pound cake would take longer than the same one used as layers or even as cup cakes. She suggests that in basic recipes such variations be given.

Recipes should not carry over from one column to another, is the advice of a commercial foods writer.³ This is because many homemakers make a practice of clipping recipes for future use. Consequently, the most convenient way for clipping purposes should be presented.

Another important reason for not letting the recipe and its instructions run over to another column is because of the possibility that the reader might not read the complete material. The result might be an unhappy family for one meal.

The printing of recipes asked for by her readers is a popular

¹Prudence Fanny, Chicago Herald-American.

²Mrs. Robert W. Conover, Manhattan, Kansas.

³Brandenburg, *ibid.*

approach used by one newspaper food editor.¹ She uses the names of those making the request.

The technique of good food preparation so valuable to the recipe is often incomplete before the information is cut to fit a given space. As a result, the recipe frequently is of little value, warns the representative of a large appliance company.²

Homemakers are more interested in the elementary step by step type of information. Such information should be in simple language and illustrated with good pictures, she said.

For the foods writer who does not originate her own recipes or test those she uses, one editor³ stresses the importance of careful records on each recipe printed. Her experience has taught her that a cross index of the day published and of the subject is most valuable. When readers telephone or write asking for a specific recipe, such as the tomato soup the paper used a couple of weeks ago, the information is quickly available. It also provides a check against repeating recipes within a short time.

Recipes are printed in two forms. One, the ingredients are listed in tabular form, followed by a paragraph of instructions. This is the popular usage by newspapers and by many of the magazines.

¹Oma's World-Herald.

²Peters, Frigidaire, Brandenburg, *ibid.*

³Margaret Boast, Kansas City Star.

For example, one from a large newspaper is used thus:¹

Breakfast Puffs
(Makes 12)

5 tablespoons shortening
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of sugar
 1 egg, well beaten
 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons baking powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon nutmeg
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of milk
 6 tablespoons butter, melted
 1 teaspoon cinnamon

Cream shortening until soft and smooth; gradually adding sugar, creaming until fluffy; beat in egg. Add sifted dry ingredients alternately with milk, beating until smooth after each addition. Turn into greased muffin pans and bake in a moderate oven, 350 degrees, for about 25 minutes. When baked, roll each muffin quickly in melted butter and then in sifted sugar and cinnamon. Serves warm.

The ingredients are set in a "run-in" style in the second method. This is used by a number of the large magazines² and in some columns and filler paragraphs in newspapers.³

For example:⁴

Mince-meat Cake

Cream together $\frac{1}{2}$ cup corn syrup and 1 cup brown sugar. Add 1 egg and 1 cup mince-meat. Beat well. Sift together 2 cups sifted enriched flour, 3 teaspoons baking powder, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cinnamon, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cloves. Add alternately with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of milk to mince-meat mixture. Fold in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped nuts and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped candied fruits.

Bake in greased, paper-lined loaf pan ($4\frac{1}{2}$ by $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches) in moderate oven (350 degrees) for $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Yield: one loaf.

The words of the title of the recipe may be set in bold face type, in Italics, or in body type, but usually they are set in capital letters, although apparently there is no rule to this

¹Chicago Tribune.

²Woman's Home Companion.

³Kansas City Star.

⁴Kansas City Star.

effect.

Within the recipe itself, the names of all other recipes which might be included are capitalized, such as "Add Butter-scotch Sauces".

When using the tabular form, editors often use figures rather than spell out the amounts, such as "1 cup" rather than "one cup". However, this is a matter of publication style.

No punctuation of any kind is used after the name of the ingredient in the tabular form.

An interesting variation of the typographical arrangement of a recipe is used by a metropolitan food writer.¹

After the title of the recipe, brief directions will be given in six point bold face type, followed by the ingredients in tabular form, Italics. Directions again are given in the small, dark type. It is difficult to read but aids in creating an interesting appearing page.

For example:

String Beans with Mushrooms

Wash vegetables, slice and combine -

2 lbs.	stringbeans, cut in inch pieces
$\frac{1}{2}$ lb.	fresh mushrooms, sliced
1 cup	minced onions
$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon	salt
$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	water
3 tablespoons	salad oil, butter or margarine
$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon	sugar

Cover tightly. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and cook over low heat until tender, about 20 minutes. Add

Dash of pepper
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ cup top milk or cream

¹Chicago Sun.

Heat well and serve to 6 or 8.

One magazine of large circulation¹ first lists the menu, then in one solid paragraph tells the time of preparation of entire menu and the cost for four persons. Preparations for the meal are given in detail and order thus:²

"This dinner takes 1 hour in a moderately slow oven, 325° F., and costs about \$1.15 to serve four. Hard winter pears will take the most time to bake so they are put in the oven first. Peel, halve and core 4 pears; put in baking dish and add 1 cup grape juice and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup orange juice; bake in moderately slow oven, 325° F., about 1 hour or until tender, turning once. (Apples may be baked in the same way.) The Cheese Spoon Bread is a main dish made in very much the same way as a regular spoon bread. Mix $\frac{1}{2}$ cup corn meal, 1 teaspoon salt, dash of pepper, 1 cup water and 1 cup milk in saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until thick and boiling. Remove from heat and add $\frac{1}{2}$ pound sliced process cheese, reserving a few slices of cheese to put on top of mixture before baking; stir until cheese melts. Add another 1 cup milk and 3 beaten eggs. Pour into $1\frac{1}{2}$ -quart baking dish; put slices of cheese on top and bake in moderately slow oven, 325° F., about 50 minutes until almost set. Have the tomatoes ready to go into the oven with the cheese dish; pour a No. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ can of drained tomatoes into 1-quart casserole; add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup each minced onion, celery and green pepper, 1 teaspoon salt and a dash of cayenne. Cover and bake 50 minutes."

This was one of two oven dinners printed in a 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide column in small type. Beside each menu and method of preparation was a photograph of the completed products. The headline was the only introduction. It stated simply "Oven Dinners" with a deck reading

"These inexpensive meals are planned for 4 people and aim to make the best possible use of an oven of average size."

Typical of the commercial articles³ sent to foods writers are those with recipes written by the following rules:

¹Woman's Day.

²Woman's Day.

³Armour and Company.

1. List all ingredients in order of use (except branded items for main dishes which should be listed first).
2. List alternate ingredients where the use of recipe is general rather than specific. Example: National Ad or Educational Ad is general - a Lard booklet specific.
3. Give approximate weight as well as measure of meat cuts.
4. Use these abbreviations: lb., pound; C., cup; tbsp., tablespoon; tsp., teaspoon. (Note: Abbreviations are used only on file cards - never in published recipes.)
5. Use consistent method of listing ingredients. Example: (1) $\frac{1}{2}$ C. chopped onion, not onion, chopped; (2) 4 lamb rib chops (approximately $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb.); (3) 2 C. sifted, all-purpose flour.
6. Specify quantities of salt and other seasonings. (Never state "pinch of" or "to taste".)
7. Specify type of flour - i. e., all-purpose, cake, pastry, etc.
8. Specify temperature for baking: (a) Very low oven, 250° F. to 275° F.; (b) low oven 300° F. to 325° F.; (c) moderate oven 350° F. to 375° F.; (d) moderately hot oven, 400° F.; (e) hot oven, 425° F. to 450° F.; (f) very hot oven, 475° F. to 500° F.
9. Specify size of pan or casserole where possible.
10. Always give number of servings or quantity produced by recipe.
11. Explain fully, but without excess words, the method of mixing. Do not leave anything to the imagination. Write for less experienced cooks.

Menu. Apparently the food writer appreciates the homemaker's daily dilemma of "What shall I serve for dinner?" Practically all of the newspapers and magazines studied included a menu either for one meal or for a day's meals.

Typographically, some were set in boxes; others were run-in style, but most of them followed the standard method of writing a

menu.¹ The rules for this are:

"Use capitals for all words except prepositions and conjunctions."

"Arrange food in order of service."

"Write the main dish of each course across the center of the sheet. If only one accompaniment is served, it appears on the line below at the right, or, if preferred, in the center. If two accompaniments are served, one appears at the right; one at the left."

"If beverage is served all through the meal, it may be written at the bottom of the menu or with the course in which it is to be served first."

"Unless it is to be used by the maid or cook, the accompaniments, as cream and sugar, are not included."

Cream of Tomato Soup

Croutons

Roast Beef

Browned Potatoes

Yorkshire Pudding

Buttered Asparagus

Creamed Cauliflower

Brown Gravy

Cake

Apricot Sherbet

Coffee

Condensed so that it can be enclosed in a one column by three inch box is the daily menu used by one of the outstanding

¹ Practical Cookery and Etiquette and Service of the Table, Department of Food Economics and Nutrition, Kansas State College, Manhattan. 1939. p. 424.

processes.¹ Another uses a few lines of information on nutrition.

One editor² recommends that "time filler copy", those items which are not dated, should be more carefully selected and edited, that a definite program of utilizing such space might well be worked out. Too often, the material is allowed to become out of date, unseasonable and even ludicrous, especially the recipes used by smaller papers.

Tables and Charts. Tables and charts are utilized when the editor needs to simplify a large amount of detailed information. Magazines use them oftener than newspapers, probably because the former have more time and money at their disposal.

For example, instead of filling pages with details on times the length for processing canned fruits and vegetables, a comparatively small amount of space will contain a chart showing this information.

Charts and tables are advantageous to the reader, also, because the material is easily and quickly read and understood. Such material can also be clipped easily for later reference.

Letters from Readers. Printing of letters to the editor concerning foods is used as the basis of a personal experience article.

"Household hints" concerning preparation or storage of food are presented effectively in this manner. The name of the contributor is often placed at the end of the information.³ Some

¹Copper's Weekly.

²Topska Daily Capital.

³Copper's Weekly

publications merely use initials and the home county or state; others use complete name and address.

Editors consider that this material builds friendships for the publication and gives readers a sense of participation which is valuable.

Booklets or Leaflets. Booklets, pamphlets and leaflets are often written by the magazine or newspaper foods writer in order to utilize certain material which will not fit into the limited space at her disposal.

The newspaper writers usually call attention to these at the end of a column or feature.¹ Sometimes, however, they use a small boxed announcement that such material is available.² The magazine editor usually groups her booklets with a list of those available on all types of homemaking.

The subject matter of these ranges from "How to Bake Cookies," and "The Basic Seven in the Everyday Diet," to "How to Give a Hallowe'en Party for Youngsters."

To obtain a copy, the reader is asked to send a self-addressed stamped envelope, or the envelope enclosed with a nickel, dime or even a quarter, depending upon the elaborateness of the publication. Most of them are mimeographed, some are "off-set" and some are printed.

Hundreds of requests a day are received by the larger papers and magazines.

The same rules and techniques used in the publication pages

¹Los Angeles Times.

²New York Herald Tribune.

are used in these booklets or leaflets. Many of them, however, may appear to be more informal.

The business offices of the publications are not entirely altruistic in distributing this extra information. From the requests, they judge the "pulling power" or readership of the foods information. They use these results to impress advertisers with the importance of the paper as an advertising medium. It is a practical method, however, in determining both who the readers are and what their interests are. This information is valuable in aiding the writer to better her presentation.

Food Illustration Illustration not only stands out as the prime attention-getter, far outranking all headlines, but it also serves to make the message clear at a glance.

This adage of the advertising world has long been recognized both by those who write of foods and by those who seek to influence homemakers to use specific products.

An example of consumer acceptance was the survey made at Ames, Iowa, for a master's thesis¹ on reader attention. It reported that homemakers in all walks of life gave foods articles much more attention if they were accompanied by illustrations.

Today's casual reader is impressed by the number and appearance of pictures of delectable foods which appear in newspapers and magazines. Nutrition committees seeking to publicize the basic seven foods have resorted to lavish use of illustrations. Foods companies question prospective employees on their knowledge of photography for advertising.

¹Dickinson, *ibid.*

Because this spotlight of attention is focused so strongly on the subject, a study of current illustration of food seemed valuable. However, as reading material on the subject was not available here, it appeared that all information must be gleaned from the illustrations themselves. The study was made, not so much from the standpoint of evaluation and emotional appeal, as from the angle of what is now being done and what technicalities of assisting in preparing foods illustrations might be observed.

The problem, a broad one, was narrowed down to a study of typical publications. Considered to be in a class by themselves for future study were illustrations in cook books which are among the most beautiful. This discrimination was made because illustrations in cook books compete only with each other for attention and because their reproduction on better grades of paper eliminates many of the problems which must be met by newspapers and magazines.

In addition to material gathered from studying the illustrations themselves, information was gathered from interviews with persons experienced in the field and from scattered comments in publications on art, photography, foods and advertising.

Illustrations in both magazines and newspapers were studied from the separate viewpoints of advertising and editorial matter, for each presented individual problems or advantages.

In the larger newspapers, such as the New York Times, the New York Herald Tribune, Miami Herald, Los Angeles Times, This Week Sunday supplement and others used foods illustrations on the women's pages made under the direction of the newspaper staff.

Other papers used reproductions from mats or cuts supplied by news syndicates or by advertising departments of large food companies.

Kansas papers, however, showed a complete lack of interest in food pictures as editorial matter. A study¹ in 1942 of 14 selected Kansas newspapers revealed that only an occasional NEA or AF cut was used and that as "filler" during a month's tabulation of quantity.

The syndicated material, as well as that from the food companies, usually measures two columns wide and from three to four inches high, a total of approximately 12 to 16 inches. As a result of this small space, if several food items are shown - and with often poor reproduction because of newsprint and inferior presses - the resulting illustrations are often muddy and demand close inspection to determine subject matter.

On the other hand, the Miami Herald sometimes uses a four-column, eight-inch cut of a single salad or an artistically arranged table. With this size, detail is easily seen and the result is attractive.

On newsprint, cuts picturing a single dish with distinct outline, reproduced well. Those picturing such items as mashed potatoes, chopped salads or vegetables with soft appearing textures often were unrecognizable. In pictures showing steps in preparation of foods, action of hands and forearms included gave an illusion of life and ease.

Farm publications, of obviously low subscription rates,

¹ Jane Rockwell Koefed, Kansas State College.

found the same problems of reproduction as did the smaller newspapers. However, these magazines occasionally used even coarser paper and devoted even smaller editorial or advertising space. Consequently, appearance of such food pictures was often unattractive and not clear.

In the large circulation magazines for women, color in food photography predominates. Widely known photographers and illustrators are using their skill to quicken interest in foods and to glorify American taste. Both in editorial and advertising matter, the color illustration predominates.

This may be so because, with less paper available, magazines are concentrating on making limited space do maximum duty and are expending much time and thought on presentation of their material. It may be that with improved color processes and methods of reproduction that color is easier to handle than before. Cost of the space of a four-color advertisement is approximately four times that of the black and white, yet often it is many times worth the cost,¹ as color attracts more attention and usually outpulls the black and white illustration. Psychologists say that color in foods determines appetite appeal. This may be another reason for the attention color is achieving.

Evaluation of emotional appeals and attention value, important as they are, is left to be studied in another problem, for each presents its own attitudes.

In advertising, illustrations are competing against other brands of similar foods and against other foods themselves, both

¹ Edgar T. Keith, Kansas State College.

for attention value and for acceptance. If the consumer selects - for example - a cheese dish of a certain brand, he is discerning not only other brands but perhaps a meat, bean or egg dish as well. Shortening for pie pastry must compete not only against other brands but against jello, ice cream, chocolate cookies, fruit, cookies or gingerbread. Consequently, infinite pains must be taken in bringing out both the appeal of the food itself and its importance in the menu. To be effective, it must not only be attractive, it also must sell.

On the other hand, the food illustrations of editorial matter must compete for reader attention and interest, but not necessarily for acceptance. Therefore, they can be more experimental and the editor is freer to use new ideas, to include more variety of dishes and to strive to inspire the readers. The editor may include definite menus, limited only by consideration of reader appeal.

Competition with other pictures varies in magazines and newspapers in that the average reader has more leisure for the magazine and often clips and studies the pictures.

An example of the prominence of pictures in food advertising is the November, 1944, issue of The Ladies' Home Journal, selected as typical of the women's magazines. This showed a total of 46 food advertisements: 32 of them in color, 12 with black and white photographs or drawings and only two with no illustration of any kind. The color advertisements usually were one quarter to one half page. A number were full page.

The editorial section, always an outstanding one, included

three quarters of a double page depicting a Thanksgiving dinner, with turkey and trimmings, rich in the colors of the season.

The Good Housekeeping Magazine of the same date carried 48 food advertisements, although because of the format, space devoted was smaller. Almost half of these were black and whites, although many of the same colored advertisements were used. However, Good Housekeeping carried more color photographs in its editorial pages than did the Journal. Three full pages were used: one devoted to roast chickens, one to hot brands and one to large glasses of marmalade.

Types of illustrations for both advertisements and editorial matter might be divided into two groups: photographs and drawings. Both may be subdivided into action or still life. Because of the relative sizes of foods and persons, seldom are the two used in the same picture. When this is done, the effect is usually to create an impression of usage of the dish rather than to give details of its appearance.

Happy children surrounding a birthday cake; a gracious lady holding a teacup; a smiling father at the breakfast table, these are various types of human interest pictures used in connection with the foods themselves. As such, they are used to whet the appetite and to give character to the occasion. This attitude of acceptance of a product is often gained through the combination of large illustrations of the foods themselves accompanied by small sketches of persons depicting pleasure.

An illusion of action is created by photographing hands preparing or serving foods. This permits the reader to identify

himself with the picture, yet allows for size and detail in the dish itself. Photographers are careful, in using this idea, to select persons with beautiful hands as models. Size makes no difference, but fingers must be smooth, nails well kept, and joints of fingers unobtrusive.

Illustrations used as editorial material in the magazines studied were found to be photographs. In advertising, photography predominated but was often accompanied by drawings. Such items as cheese and milk dishes were usually in color from drawings.

In the pictures themselves, approximately 90 percent of the space is devoted to subject matter, only 10 percent being white space, or in foods, backgrounds and tablecloths.

The camera is usually placed so that the completed picture gives an impression of naturalness - the angle from which persons usually see a table; that is, looking down. Often tables themselves are slanted to give perspective and interest.

Trends now are for life size pastries and breads. Whether or not this is experimental will probably be shown later. However, lack of paper may be a determining factor. To show texture and methods of preparation in these life size pictures, pies and cakes are usually cut to include both a slice and the remainder of the product.

In color illustrations, yellow predominated. Yellow is a color that color film glorifies. Yellow creates a sunny feeling and a quality of richness. Yellow is a color which predominates in the foods themselves: golden browns of pastries and breads,

of butter, fruits, cream, the yellow green of lettuce, the yellow reds of meats, and the various tones of yellow garnishes.

Also, printers have long known that yellow was an eye-attracting color and one easily read when used with printing. Yellow has a wide range of tones and values, ones easily reproduced. All of these reasons add up to the extensive use of color in food illustrations.

Red through the pink scale is equally satisfactory for color film and reproduction. Red is an interesting garnish note when used as cherries or radishes.

Until the past year, blue has been considered taboo by certain photographers who specialize in food illustration.¹ Only a small amount of the color should even be used in the decorations. This was shown in a study of 1944 magazines. However, later issues² experimented with the lavish use of blue for backgrounds - solid tablecloths, heavy china and decorations - in all shades from deep navy to pastel.

Color is used to create atmosphere. Winter months which need warmth and a feeling of hospitality use rich red and green backgrounds, even asserting the traditional white to give a holiday feel to the material. January backgrounds and tablecloths are white or pastels, some including the shades of blue for the first time. Spring and summer issues concentrate on the cool colors, chiefly pastels, with amusing designs and less formal table settings. Late summer shows darker colors suggestive of shade and autumn shows the orange and greens, often backgrounds

¹Interview with Ruth Botz Jones.

²January and February, 1945.

of interlaced fall leaves.

Atmosphere is created also by the use of table settings or suggestions of settings. Amusing or unusual salt and pepper shakers, breakfast china and simple garden flowers in novelty holders create pictures of cheery breakfasts. Crystal, ornate silver and elaborate centerpieces suggest formality and lavishness. One effective illustration created an atmosphere of formality by including beside the dish of food a pair of tall silver candle holders and a silver peacock. One well-recognized advertisement now seeks to give party atmosphere to winners by placing them on a delicately set table with roses as a centerpiece. The coffee-maker is coming out of the kitchen by glamorizing it in the advertisements. In these, beautifully groomed hands, with fine rings, hold the coffee cups. The settings are obviously homes of formality.

Symbols of the season also aid in this creation of atmosphere: valentines, pine cones, Maypoles, wedding cakes, footballs and others combine subtly to tell the story of the season or occasion.

For background contrast in black and white pictures, cloths with patterns are used. These give a semblance of texture and do away with the feeling of blank space which otherwise might arise. Often cardboard, heavy mats or composition board is used in place of the cloth. White is avoided for these backgrounds because of reflections. Grayed material or pastels is better.

Subtle shadings are made possible by deliberate choices of a

one-color scale that produces an exquisite still life

In color photography, subtle colors become more subtle in the reproduction. Many become dull and flat. Therefore, it is well to include at least one spot of brilliant color in the composition, says an editorial comment in *Printing Art*.

Pictures printed on papers usually are surrounded by the everyday competing elements, thus reducing their own brilliance. One must employ all brilliance to color photography so that after its tones have been reduced by reproduction, it will still make a colorful picture. Pictures must be sharp and crisp.

One food writer¹ reports that all food photographs she has worked with have been retouched. Some of this is obvious in newspaper. Magazine material usually needs careful examination to detect outlines added or emphasized.

In black and white, care must be taken to have a film which will distinguish truthfully between the various hues and tones. Otherwise, persons may not see the correct relative intensity of color. The average person sees blue darkest, green less dark and red bright when they are reduced to the monochromatic tone. Although Panchromatic film approaches the natural eye, the green is almost the same as the red and the blue is too light. This would be a serious handicap in an attempt to obtain a lifelike picture of certain foods. Panchromatic film with a yellow filter is an excellent choice, for its tones are almost identical with the natural ones.

¹Interview with Ruth Botz Jones.

It's important to use a filter if different types of fruits are used together. Otherwise, tones blend too much.

Victor Keppler¹ advises that Eastman Portrait Pan is the best film to use in black and white still lifes. He says it gives the best color rendering for most colors, except green, which appears darker. To compensate, use a filter or more light on the green area. Medium red is almost identical in tone with medium grey. One must light red objects so that they are separated from a grey background.

Fruits and vegetables have symmetry of design whose imperfections make wonderful photographic material, he said, but to arouse appetitive appeal in a market basket is a provocative photographic problem.

To be considered also in food photography is the importance of contrast between the background and the objects to be pictured. Glasses of milk against a white tablecloth lose their identity. One method of overcoming this lack of contrast was an illustration of crystal which placed blue water in goblets against a pastel blue tablecloth. In goblets placed in front of red flowers or dishes, the competing colors did not show through.

Texture of foods pictures is as important as color, for this must be considered both in colored illustrations and in black and whites. This means that the illustration should have a three-dimensional quality.

Texture is a matter of lights and shadows. For this, photographers suggest careful placement of lights, a faster shutter

¹Victor Keppler, "Try Still Life in Color", The Camera, 66:16, October, 1944.

and a small aperture. Shadows must be kept open. In black and white pictures, double shadows are bad; in color they are disastrous.

Shadows give depth as well as texture. One suggestion for making backgrounds recede is the use of the hard screen between the spotlight and the background itself. For separation of color from backgrounds, place lights low to outline the subject and make the edges distinct. Most shadows are placed toward the front of the subject. Highlights must be kept warm and shadows cold.

For sparkle on victory garden vegetables, drops of water resembling dew add to the freshly picked appearance of the material. This brilliance may be approximated by using grey or black backgrounds. For such vegetables as carrots, a thin film of salad oil or glycerine adds shine. Egg white is sometimes brushed over pastry or hot breads for a shiny appearance.

Foods prepared for photography, however, must be at their peak of perfection. There is no substitute for the food itself. The best critic of food photography is the woman who loves to cook. She knows that good food is a picture in itself and will be quick to recognize any deceptions. To reach this perfection, photographers often provide kitchens in their studios where experts prepare the foods. An assistant arranges the table setting and props. "Stand-ins", the first dishes made, are used in arranging composition and lighting. At the last minute, the perfect product is rushed into a ready and waiting setting. These "stand-ins" must always look as much as possible like the actual

dish to be photographed.

One food editor¹ reports that knowledge of the exact moment when the dish is ready for photographing is one secret of fine pictures.

Care must be taken to take pictures quickly, for heat from the spotlights is often intense enough to wilt the product or to bring out undesirable characteristics. For products which are most attractive cold, the same care must be taken.

Editors and advertising persons often run into difficulties in obtaining foods to be photographed out of season. Deadlines are usually from four to six months in advance.

Apparently there is no substitute for the product itself, for the camera has a cruel, all-seeing eye. Every detail must be exact. However, a few 'tricks' are used. In photographing cereals which may quickly become soggy, something non-absorbent is put in the bottom of the dish on which the cereal will rest. The milk is poured in carefully until it just comes through the flakes on top. The picture is then taken quickly.

Vegetables must be undercooked and firm. Mixed salads must have pieces at least bite-size. Impressions must be logical and in keeping with the atmosphere. For example, supposedly hot dishes should not be held with bare hands. Hot dish holders should be shown. Table settings must be in good taste, for they will be copied.

In a survey of army wives made at Ft. Leonard Wood,² it was

¹Interview with Ruth Botz Jones.

²Jane Rockwell Koefod, Kansas State College.

revealed that many women disliked an elaborate party picture because they believed they could not reproduce the setting. Others welcomed the pictures as stimulents to their own imaginations. They insisted that dishes should not appear too difficult to make, lest readers become discouraged.

The greatest complaint this group of women made was that too many foods pictures in magazines appeared confused. They were "too busy". This opinion is verified by photographers who insist that a good picture has only one center of interest. Pictures may be cropped to focus this attention where it is desired.

On the whole, food illustrating appears to be work of professionals only - a combination of artistry on the parts of both the cooks and the illustrators.

Making Information Effective

Varying Copy. Almost as tedious as the homemaker's year in, year out daily stint of deciding what dishes to serve her family is the daily problem of the average food writer in deciding how to vary copy to attract the attention of her readers.

Study of the publications, however, reveals that many of the ways of varying fashion copy¹ with the addition of specialized approaches are applicable.

The writer may change the appeals of her copy by one, or a combination of several, of the following ways:

Present the material as a vicarious shopping trip, in which the reader visits the markets and the stores. Through use of viv-

¹Warburton and Maxwell, "Fashion for a Living", New York, 1939. p. 95.

id word pictures, the reader enjoys the tour, seeing the food displays, smelling the fragrances, and feeling the different textures. Market list in hand, she decides what she will select for the day's menus.

Relate the information to the occasion for which it will be used. This is one of the most popular ways utilized by the magazine writer. Foods for Thanksgiving dinner, for the bride's announcement luncheon, and for the children's Valentine parties are all interesting and attract attention.

Appeal to sense of values. This was one of the most used methods during the war when rationing, food alternates, scarcities and prices all had to be considered by every homemaker.

Appeal to a certain type of reader. A business girl with limited cooking facilities, a fern homemaker who does not have adequate refrigeration, a hostess with a dozen servants, all have special needs in running their households and in planning their menus. Some publications regularly appeal to a certain type of reader; others include one at a time so that all types may be benefited.

Tie-in with prominent person. This appeal, widely used by advertisers, is one of the stronger methods for adding interest. In addition to the fact that people like to read about activities of prominent persons, the use of names personalizes the copy.

Effect on the consumer. Special diets for those who wish to reduce or to gain weight are often asked for by readers. Other examples include articles concerning foods which are cooling, refreshing, stimulating or invigorating.

Romance of origin. This may be either the story of the geographical background of a food, such as spices from India, or of its history, such as the development of the wedding cake.

Tie-in with news. This is probably the most important and the least often used. It is easily combined with any of the other ways of varying copy and has a great reader appeal.

Slanting. "Know your reader before you write" might well be the motto hung over the typewriter of every food editor. "Slanting", the adapting of material to fit the needs and interests of certain persons, is one of the most important aspects of handling food information.

The larger magazines and newspapers¹ spend thousands of dollars in determining who their readers are. Surveys are made regularly to determine not only which features are preferred but also to find out all possible about the readers themselves.

It is important to the editor to know

Circulation of the publication. How many readers gives an idea of the range of interests and backgrounds. The larger the circulation often the more general the information presented.

Geographical distribution. Knowing where the readers live tells the editor whether or not the information must fit all types of climates and what special local problems may be obvious. The food page of a publication with a national distribution, for example, can't devote the same space and attention to preparation of salt water fish as one read by persons on the seacoast. Basket picnics in January may be fine for the Miami Herald but would

¹ New York News; Country Gentleman.

not be suitable for the Minneapolis Star-Telegram.

Geography also tells the editor a great deal about the reader herself. Is she a farm woman on a Dakota prairie or a homemaker in the Bronx? Types and amounts of food available obviously would be different, and yet, the editors of the large women's magazines must write copy which will fit the needs of both of them.

To be sure these needs are really met and to be sure that food standards meet those of each section of the country, one large metropolitan newspaper¹ employs home economists from each part of the nation to check on all material printed.

Income of the reader. Whether or not menus and recipes are to be offered for the young mother who is feeding her family on a hopeful budget or for a dowager who entertains lavishly must be known by the editor. Many of the editors print the approximate cost of the meal² or of the recipe³ with her average reader in mind.

Size of family. Home groups on farms are slightly larger than those in the cities, so food editors plan the yield of recipes accordingly. However, most of the recipes studied showed servings for 4 or 6. Four was used more often than six. Recipes in farm publications, especially in the summer, are sometimes sized for 8 or 10 persons.

One publication⁴ prints each recipe twice: once for 5 persons and once for 10.

¹New York Herald Tribune.

²Woman's Day.

³Chicago Sun.

⁴American Weekly.

Size of the family also gives the editor an idea of the slice of family income which must go for food costs.

Religion of readers. This is obviously a necessary one, for certain food customs are adopted by the various denominations. Most of the food editors plan certain foods for the Lenten season. Metropolitan editors¹ mention Kosher ones.

Racial backgrounds of reader. Knowing the predominating racial groups of those who read the food pages assists in the selection of the type of foods to write out. However, from time to time, the food editor deliberately plans to show typical foods of each section of the nation.²

Education of reader. This is discussed in "word usage", yet might well deserve a chapter of its own. Much of the final selection of the material depends upon the understanding of the reader. How alert to new ideas, how progressive are they? What vocabulary do they understand? All these are carefully considered.

Type of home. How the family lives is one of the items most carefully checked by those making surveys. What type of equipment have they? Do they have electricity? Is there domestic help? How far from stores are they? What are their food storage facilities? What type of furnishings as a whole? What are their social obligations?

All of these are checked to prevent publication of such articles as one written by a college student.³ With great confi-

¹New York Herald Tribune.

²Ladies' Home Journal.

³Kansas State College journalism student.

dence she prepared and sent an article on electric refrigerator desserts to a farm publication. Its readers carried their own ice home from town in their cars.

Commercial companies are equally interested in such knowledge so much so that many employ their own promotion department men to keep an up-to-date accurate check on the users of their products.

Slanting for the publication itself is another important aspect of the editor's work. She must conform to:

Editorial policy of the publication; the amount of space available; the amount of money available; the kind of paper which influences the type of illustration; type used throughout the publication; frequency of publication; the method of presenting material by the publication as a whole; the adjusting of the food articles to combine effectively with the remainder of the publication contents if it's a magazine; advertising policies of the publication; deadlines; and typographical style.

Timing. Timing of the publication date of a food article to coincide with the interests and needs of the reader is of the utmost importance.

The magazine editor, working months ahead of publication, has a particular problem in anticipating the specific needs of her readers or the availability of certain foods.

So essential is this, that during the war, the War Production Board employed a representative¹ to inform the food editors of rationing probabilities, trends and potential shortages.

¹ Alice Nichols.

The food editor must know the publication date of her magazine, for some are released earlier in the month than others. Such dates must allow for holidays and certain occasions, as readers must have information in time to plan their menus and try out new recipes, for Christmas, Easter or Thanksgiving.

Seasonableness is part of timing. Stories of the first strawberries, of new potatoes, of the first pumpkin, of hot weather foods, of barbecues must be timed to the customs and demands of the season. Special activities must also be considered: picnics for July 4; preparation of wild game during the hunting season; hot lunches for school children; or cooling beverages for steaming days.

The fact that certain foods are available in quantity at different times throughout the United States must be taken into consideration in preparing menus and recipes by magazines of general circulation. This is true, especially at canning time.

The writer of syndicated material should see to it that her information is released in time to be printed by the papers so that readers may plan to utilize available foods. She marks release dates carefully because local editors are not always observant. One newspaper printed material on "how to have a Hellows'an party" two weeks after October 30.¹

Some editors have been criticized for not timing more carefully. They have selected menus, for example, which included baked potatoes when new potatoes were the only ones on the market.

The food editor of a daily paper has a somewhat different

¹ Manhattan Mercury-Chronicle.

timing problem than her sister on the magazine. Hers is the task of giving the latest information possible about available foods, their prices and their preparation. Hers is a daily stint, so she has less time for individual preparation of her writing. She consults the market editor of the paper or checks the market herself. The latter is difficult for a morning paper, however, for its early deadline precludes a visit to the market which often opens at 3:30 to 4 o'clock in the morning.

To tie in with local news, she must use last minute information. Pictures of persons entertaining must be used while they are still news.

Some newspapers plan to devote extra space to food stories on the grocery-buying day of the community. Others prefer the day previous to it. This day varies from place to place and from Wednesday to Friday, the latter preferred in small towns. The editor confers with the advertising manager on selecting the day.

Choosing Words. One of the usual problems given students in a home economics journalism class¹ is the timed writing of a description of a strawberry. Apparently a simple assignment, it has resulted in being most difficult.

The tendency of the students is to use the worn-out words such as "delicious", "beautiful", "lovely" rather than to employ descriptive ones. This same tendency was observed in the study of the various publications. Food writers interviewed pointed out that same difficulty in handling their own copy.

All agreed that in food writing it is more important to be

¹Journalism for Women", Kansas State College.

correct and sincere than to strain for effect.

Many agreed, however, that too much of the food writing was stodgy and dull.

Some writers¹ have the happy gift of creating such a desire for the foods described that the reader immediately cancels all plans and ties on her best apron - eager to try the adventure of preparing a new dish.

Study of the newspapers and magazines reveals that writing has more appeal and "sparkle" when some of the following are observed:

Write on the same level as your reader - woman to woman - careful not to talk down to her. Don't preach. Avoid use of words "must" and "should".

Sentences should be reasonably short and their structure varied.

Verbs should do most of the work.

Use association in describing new items.

Make every sentence have a message.

Don't be wordy. If you must lengthen your story, add information, not mere superfluous phrases and clauses.

Use simple words but use the exact one.

Use active voice usually rather than passive voice.

Avoid sleepy expressions such as "there is" and "there are".

Avoid bromides, platitudes, cliches, and shop-worn personalities such as "Mother Nature" and "Mrs. Americas".

Avoid fine writing.

¹ Ann Batchelder, Ladies' Home Journal.

Use of trade or commercial names or names which specify a certain commercial type product often puzzles a new editor. The commercial food companies, of course, include them in releases, hoping they will be used. Some even include their names in capital letters.¹ A number of publications print these trade names as evidence of their willingness to cooperate with the concern's advertising program.² Others ruthlessly cut them out.

Some terms, however, should be edited carefully. One of these, for example, is the indiscriminate use of the word "refrigerator". Many use the word "Frigidaire" as meaning any electric refrigerator. This is advertising for the one manufacturer and should be handled as such. Some writers term all food storage cabinets as "iceboxes" when the correct term is "refrigerator". They are operated by gas, electricity or by ice.

Some editors may make careful distinction, too, in their description of cereals. Unless care is taken, certain types of cereals, made only by one company, will be recommended. The meat packing companies use the word "lard"; others may say "vegetable fat". Use of the words "butter" and "margarine" are problems for certain mid-western editors.

Certain newspapers,³ however, deliberately devote their columns to commercial foods and to the establishments which sell them. They are among the outstanding food columns in the nation and have large reader audiences. In this case, the food writer is agreeing with many women's page editors that it is a service

¹ Armour and Company.

² Topeka Daily Capital.

³ New York Herald Tribune.

to the readers to recommend and to explain where certain items may be obtained.

The article should be checked and double checked for accuracy of statement, lucidity of presentation and correctness of grammar, rhetoric and punctuation.

A significant move on the part of magazines to find a practical working plan, for the choice of words has grown from the development of "readability yardsticks" - the Lorge and Flesch formulas developed in the readability laboratory of Teachers' College, Columbia University.

Either one helps to determine whether a given piece of writing is pitched at a good level for intended readers.¹

Extension studies in Georgia, North Carolina and West Virginia show the need for writing farm family publications in short, clear sentences made up of simple, concrete words. For example, some of the homemakers did not understand "edible soybeans" but they did understand "soybeans that you can eat".

"No one need feel that simplifying his writing is either beneath his own dignity or an insult to the intelligence of his readers. After all, some of the most effective writing in the English language has been in this direct and simple style," states a report on the readability tests.²

Such a direct style is highly to be recommended even for writing which aims at college graduates, at professional people, because it makes possible more rapid reading.

¹ Amy Gronna Cowing, "They Speak His Language", The Journal of Home Economics, 37:487-89, October, 1945.

² loc. cit.

The Journal of Home Economics has been checked by the Flesch readability test. Results show that articles varied from that of Reader's Digest eighth to ninth grade level to that of the senior high school level, the average for the publication, which is about the same as Harpers Magazine.

An example of the comparison of information presented in technical language with that now presented by the Bureau of Human Nutrition and in language sixth graders can understand is:¹

"Vitamin A is a fat soluble compound, the function of which is concerned with the maintenance of the epithelial structures of the body and the preservation of normal physiology in the eye. The carotenes which constitute the chief precursors of the vitamin A of normal human nutrition are formed in plants and must be converted by the body into vitamin A before it becomes available either for immediate nutritional needs or for storage in the body. Certain animal products are excellent sources of the free vitamin.

"Vitamin A - in fact, all vitamins - help to protect against infection. A is one of the vitamins needed for growth and for healthy teeth, bones and nerves. Vitamin A is important for good skin and good linings to nose, mouth, and organs throughout the body.

"You get vitamin A by eating ripe yellow and green vegetables and some red-colored ones...tomatoes, for example; also from liver, butter and eggs. Bright colors in foods are often - though not always - like flags, signaling with yellow, green, orange, or red, 'This way for vitamin A'."

The Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics writes about nutrition at the seventh grade level. In some states, simplified leaflets are being put out to supplement more comprehensive informational booklets.

Using the Lorge formula, one determines the average sentence length and number of hard words, prepositional phrases and personal references in 300-word samples.² Hard words are those not found

¹loc. cit.

²loc. cit.

in Edgar Dale's list of 769 easy words, known by most kindergarten children.

In the Fleach formula, one counts the affixes in words, the number of personal references and sentence length, then averages the data and figures the score.

Average farm readers can easily understand the seventh or eighth grade level, that of The Ladies' Home Journal.

Incorrect or careless use of certain professional words indicates that the writer may be a novice and, subsequently, destroys confidence in her knowledge of foods. Writers find, also, that care is needed in differentiating between certain terms.

The following list¹ includes terminology used in food writing. The preferred term is given first. If, in addition, the first term is marked with an asterisk it is the correct or professional one.

Food writers differentiate between the following terms:

- *advertise - advertize
- *American Dietetic Association - American Dietet-
ics Association
- automatic refrigerator - mechanical refrigerator
- *boiling water bath - hot water bath
- *canned foods - tinned foods (commercial products)
- katsup - ketchup or estohup
- cloth - rag
- convenience outlet - wall plug
- *cooked egg (soft or hard) - boiled eggs
- *county home economist - home demonstration agent
- *dietetic training - internship
- *dietitian - dietician
- dishtowel - tea towel
- *electric bill - light bill
- family or relatives - folks
- fixture - chandelier

¹Iowa State Collage, Ames, Iowa, Home Economics Journalism, Terminology List, p. 203.

food alternate - food substitute (alternate: a
 partial substitute)
 *foods and nutrition - food and nutrition
 froasting - icing (hee a sugar base)
 heat - flame
 *heat resistant glass - Pyrex
 *home economics - home
 homemaker - housewife
 *home management house - practice house
 inexpensive - cheap
 *institution management - institutional management
 *less tender - tough (meat cuts)
 *margarine - oleomargarine or oleo
 meal preparation - getting meals
 *meat fats - animal fats
 *nicin - nicotinic acid
 pan - tin
 *prepare food - fix food
 range - stove
 rear - raise children
 *recipe - receipt
 *refrigerator cookies - ice box cookies
 *rennet custard - Junket
 *saleswoman - clerk
 *serving - helping
 sirup - syrup
 skillet - frying pan
 soil - dirt
 *student dietitian - interne
 *supervised or student teaching - practice teaching
 *thrifty cuts - cheap cuts
 *under supply - shortage
 vacuum cleaner - electric sweeper
 *vitamins are destroyed - not killed
 *walnuts or *California walnuts - English walnuts
 washer - washing machine (also) dishwasher - dish-
 washing machine
 *waxed paper - wax paper
 *women - girls, ladies

Advising young home economists to take journalism to write
 sparkling food copy, one magazine writer¹ said:

"It would be a fine thing if more girls would toss a little
 saffron and garlic into their food column as Clementine Paddle-
 ford does; marinate their words in wine a la Mary Frost Mabon; or
 add a few cents to the food budget for a piquant sauce or a memo-

¹ Weaver, op. cit. p. 153.

reble aroma, as Charlotte Adams did for her carefully budgeted but none the less interesting menus for P. M.

"Read the high priestesses of gastronomical literature. To them food is an emotional and sensual experience. When they talk about food their mouths work elightly. They swallow often, their eyes shine with unholy greed. They can cook and they can write and once they give up their amateur standing they make a pretty penny sharing their gustatory life and their culinary secrets with the readers of the class magazines."

Protecting Information Presented

Although few food writers employed by newspapers care whether or not other publications use their materiel verbatim, nevertheless, some of them do invoke legal protection under the copyright law.¹

The main concern of editors is lest they, themselves, in obtaining food information and re ipes from the verious sources may be violating copyrights. Amateur free-lance writers, espeecielly, are prone to pick up recipes word for word from books or magazines which have been copyrighted.

One editor of a national magazine² warns of this danger, but insists that usually the selection of a reliable or known source is a safeguard. She has learned from manuscripts of new writers that often the wording of a recipe will reveal whether or not it has been "lifted" because few homemakers know the formula for writing a recipe. Usually an ingredients is omitted or out of

¹Mary Mesde, the Chicago Daily Tribune.

²Ida Migliario, Household Magazine.

order or the directions for preparation are not clear.

The Federal Statute on Copyright (USCA Title 17) does not list recipes by name. However, the legal terms are broad enough to cover all material within the pages of the article or publication copyrighted.

If one is following the law literally, it appears that the use of the words themselves, the exact expression of ideas, is copyrightable but the facts as such are not.

Therefore, as protection, magazines or newspapers may feel more secure in using the recipe if the size of the recipe is changed and if different words are used in explaining the preparation of the dish. The law is not specific on the exact number of words which may be quoted without violation of copyright, but general practice says not more than twenty.

SUMMARY

This study was made to determine if there are recognized techniques used in presenting information about food and nutrition to readers of periodicals. Although much information is available about the increasing demands by magazines, newspapers and commercial organizations and associations for persons who have knowledge of both food and journalism, little is printed on how this food material is handled.

The first recipes in periodicals were the "rhymed receipts" in Godey's Lady's Book, difficult both to read and to follow. First attention to care in presenting this information is credited to Miss Fanny Farmer, cook book editor and writer for the Wo-

man's Home Companion in 1905 when she began to use level measurements in writing her recipes. In the 1890's, with the rise of the women's page in newspapers, food information began to appear in the syndicates and since that time has been prominently used in the larger publications.

To obtain a comprehensive picture of the field, obviously several sources of information must be used. Consequently, detailed and comparative studies were made of four nationally circulated women's magazines and of two metropolitan newspapers; analysis for special techniques was made of magazines and newspapers; material released by commercial food companies and associations was examined; food writers and editors were interviewed; and study was made of allied fields of writing.

The food writer or editor selects her subject matter from the everyday life of the homemaker. She endeavors to choose that which is most seasonable, helpful and important and that which interests the largest number of readers.

To do this she writes about news of food and nutrition; she selects new or valuable information on meal planning and menus, etiquette and entertaining, food service, marketing, reasons for methods of preparing food (why copy) methods of preparing foods and recipes (how copy) budgeting, care and storage of food, food preservation, special diets and kitchen equipment.

The study shows that meal preparation, recipes and menus predominate in both newspapers and magazines and that marketing information is used to a great extent by newspaper writers.

The food editor has a wealth of authentic information avail-

ables which she herself writes or has a member of her staff write; which she purchases from free-lance writers or from news or food syndicates; or which come to her without cost from the various commercial food publicists and advertising agencies.

With a special emphasis on food writing techniques, she utilizes all the forms of presenting material which other home-making editors do. She decides which of the following forms is the most effective method for her needs; news story, column, feature, filler paragraphs, tables and charts, recipes, menus, letters from readers, booklets or leaflets and illustrations.

She uses the column form more often than any other, possibly because it is the most flexible and may be the most personal. It is written with a by-line, the writer herself being the authority.

She often popularizes technical information and uses it as news or to supplement feature material.

Illustrations not only add life and interest to the food pages but they are used extensively for telling the story as well. Predominating are the "how-to-do-it" steps in food preparation and table setting and the appearance of the finished product. More and more color is used in the photographs. In many instances, captions and pictures tell the complete story.

Recipes may be presented in several ways: the listing of ingredients in tabular form followed by a paragraph of instructions; the combining of ingredients and amounts in paragraph form; and the grouping of associated ingredients in tabular form with paragraphs of instructions interspersed. The last form is the one

being used by many of the commercial companies.

The editor should make sure that each recipe has a title; that it has accurate and complete measurements; that amounts of ingredients are written out rather than abbreviated; that both the exact oven temperature in degrees Fahrenheit and the description of the heat are given; and that the yield or the number of servings is included. Sometimes, she adds also the cost and the length of time necessary for preparation.

The recipe article is often a lead introducing a number of recipes related by occasion, type of food or method of preparation.

The food editor may present her material either in a personal or an impersonal manner. In the former she strives for emphasis on the friendly "you and I" approach. She uses the first person experience article and the utility article. She includes her own by-line because she is herself the authority for the information. If she writes in the informal style, she uses the straight news form, the news feature and the third person experience article. She avoids preaching and dogmatism by using the third person throughout and quoting someone else as the authority. Her by-line is usually given as credit for work well done.

She slants her copy for both her reader and her publication. To do this, she studies the typical or average reader by finding out all possible about his age, income, education, racial background, religion and general type of family to which he belongs. She learns how many readers she has and where they live. She

patterns her material as carefully as does any dressmaker.

In slanting for the publication itself, she fits the copy to the policy of the publication, its kind of advertising, its space and type requirements and its general form of presenting homemaking material.

Her copy is varied with different appeals to keep it new and exciting. She does this by: relating it to the romance of origin, appealing to the reader's sense of values; associating it with prominent people; linking it with special occasions; writing for certain persons; describing the effect on the user; tying it in with local news; using human interest incidents; and taking her readers on a vicarious shopping trip.

The copy is as carefully timed as advertising. Seasonableness and timeliness are of utmost importance. Material for special occasions must be released early enough for the reader to best utilize it. Market news must be prepared at the last possible minute to give readers full benefit of foods and prices available. Menus must be planned to take advantage of food buys and plentiful foods. Especially difficult for the magazine editor who must work several months ahead of publication is the anticipation of needs of readers and the foods available. In daily papers, the editor attempts to release pertinent information for special food shopping days which vary in different parts of the nation. She must know her own readers' habits to assist them as much as possible.

She may protect her own material by copyrighting it and

must be alert not to purchase stories containing recipes or literary style belonging to someone else. To guard against this she changes the wording of any questionable material submitted to her.

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