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[1922]

THE SCHOOL LUNCH BOX

by

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The cold lunch at its best is not the most desirable food for taking care of the food requirements of the child, and when it is to be repeated every day of the school year is very apt to become tiresome and monotonous. The feeling that anything will do for the lunch box is altogether too prevalent. The lack of time is the most common excuse for the poorly prepared lunch box. It does not take any more time to put up wholesome lunches in an attractive way, but it does take thought and an appreciation of what the boy or girl needs in the food line.

The best lunch is that which is supplemented with a hot dish at school, but it is unwise to depend too much on the hot dish. The child needs both.

What to Consider in Planning for the Lunch Box.

1. The Contents.

The question of what the lunch box shall contain is answered by the needs it is called upon to supply. To the child it is to satisfy a big empty feeling, but the wise mother knows that it is to meet the requirements of a growing body under the abnormal conditions of the schoolroom.

Growing foods: Sandwich fillings of eggs, meat or cheese; fruits; vegetables; custards, milk; milk drinks and other milk dishes prepared at school or carried in thermos bottles.

Fuel foods: Bread, butter, plain cakes or cookies, Parisian Sweets, etc.

Regulatory foods: Fruits and vegetables.

2. Cleanliness and Packing.

The carrier should be so constructed that it can be easily cleaned, scalded and aired. For liquid or semi-liquid foods such as cooked fruits, non-leakable jars should be used. A thermos bottle is good for hot or cold liquids. Include paper napkins in the lunch box. Cut the bread evenly and not too thick. Cut the sandwich into convenient size. The lunch will be palatable and make an appeal only when neatly packed and the various articles kept separate by wrapping.

Suggestions for Sandwich Filling.

Good bread is the basis of the lunch. The bread may be varied from time to time - graham, oatmeal, nut bread, etc. Meat, cheese, hard boiled eggs, dried fruits and nuts are easier to handle and to digest if finely ground.

Hard boiled eggs:

1. Eggs minced seasoned with salt, pepper and little butter.
2. Eggs minced moistened with salad dressing.
3. Eggs minced with spinach or chopped parsley.
4. Eggs thinly sliced on lettuce leaf.
5. Eggs and olives or small amount of pickles chopped together.
6. Eggs minced with sardines.
7. Scrambled eggs.
8. Eggs and ham or bacon chopped together.
9. Eggs minced with chopped nuts.
10. Eggs and veal minced together.

Cheese:

To cream cheese, grate and add some liquid and work together until of creamy consistency and soft enough to spread.

1. Creamed cheese - moisten with cream.
2. " " - moisten with tomato juice.
3. " " - moisten with salad dressing.
4. " " with chopped olives or pickles.
5. " " " chopped nuts.
6. " " " pimento.
7. Cheese creamed with butter, seasoned.
8. Grated cheese moistened with cream.
9. Grated cheese and spinach.
10. Cottage cheese with or without ground nuts.

Nuts and fruits:

1. Chopped nuts with dates, raisins or figs (run nuts and fruits together through a meat grinder).
2. Crushed peanuts moistened with cream or salad dressing.
3. Banana sliced thin and sprinkled with nuts.
4. Chopped nuts moistened with salad dressing or cream.
5. Apple and celery chopped fine moistened with salad dressing.
6. Peanut butter moistened with milk, cream or salad dressing.
7. Peanut butter and apple sauce.
8. Raisins stewed with sugar and small amount of water until thick.
9. Marmalade.

Miscellaneous:

1. Meats of all kinds, meat loaf, chipped beef (best when ground or chopped fine).
2. Salmon minced and moistened with cream or salad dressing.
3. Tuna fish moistened with lemon juice.
4. Sardines minced, lemon juice may be added.

5. Chicken with chopped celery.
6. Baked beans.
7. Rice and tomato cooked together.
8. Lettuce leaf moistened with salad dressing.
9. Hollowed out biscuit filled with any vegetable salad.

Suggestions for Desserts.

1. Custards - different flavors.
2. Fruit & gelatin puddings.
3. Canned fruit.
4. Fresh fruit.
5. Plain cake or cookies.
6. Steamed prunes stuffed with nuts and rolled in sugar.
7. Stuffed dates.
8. Parisian Sweets - figs, dates, raisins and nuts put through grinder. Sugar a pan and pack ground mixture solid. Cut into squares and roll in sugar.

Note: Do not feel that just bread or crackers is sufficient for the child to supplement the hot dish prepared at school. Send at least two slices of bread and butter put together with some good sandwich filling, some wholesome dessert, and if possible, some fresh fruit.