

## LEAVES from Uncle Sam's Notebook

by HARRIET MAY WILSON

### Soil Conservation

In the matter of soil conservation, the agriculturist will do well to take a leaf out of Nature's own book, for one of Nature's tricks for holding and fertilizing the soil is to keep it constantly covered with vegetation. Such coverage, when maintained by the farmer is usually called a cover crop. It may be a fairly permanent cover, maintained over a period of years, or it may be planted merely for a winter or a summer season.

Careful erosion surveys made throughout the United States show that 50,000,000 acres of once-fertile land are now completely useless and 100,000,000 more in bad condition as a result of soil erosion. The greater part, if not all of this shocking loss of productivity could have been prevented by the use of proper soil conservation methods. One of such methods, and an important one, would have been the planting of cover crops in proper rotation with other crops. A recent Farmers' Bulletin lists the following advantages to be derived from the use of cover crops:

- "1. The cover crop reduces runoff of rain and thus conserves moisture;
- "2. Prevents excessive erosion of soil;
- "3. Adds organic matter to the soil;
- "4. Prevents the leaching of available plant food, especially nitrate nitrogen;
- "5. When turned under, forms organic acids or other compounds which aid in the liberation of mineral plant food;
- "6. May provide late fall, winter, and early spring pasture;
- "7. Protects newly constructed terraces and other soil-erosion devices;
- "8. Increases yield of corn, cotton, and other regular farm crops;
- "9. When plowed under, improves the structure of both heavy and light soils and increases the water-absorbing capacity and the infiltration of water into the soil."

Such crops as corn, tobacco, potatoes, and cotton which are grown in wide rows with clean cultivation, and also wheat and other small-grain crops grown on sloping land under a summer-fallow system of rotation are all highly conducive to soil loss by erosion.

### CROP YIELDS INCREASED

Farmers are sometimes disinclined to try cover crops because of the cost of seed and labor involved; nevertheless, both practical and experimental results of cover cropping show that in the Cotton Belt yields have been greatly increased—as much as 35 per cent for cotton and 75 per cent for corn by this practice. In winter-grain sections, yields have also been materially increased by the use of summer cover crops. Legumes, especially, themselves a cash crop, may be used as cover crops in rotation with other cash crops, to reduce erosion and increase the yield of the cultivated crops which follow them.

In the northern Corn Belt and in the western part of the United States where soils are neutral or alkaline, sweetclover, broadcast with wheat is very valuable since its large top and root growth add much organic matter to the soil. A standard crop along the Atlantic coast, from New Jersey to northern Georgia is crimson clover. It must be admitted that it is frequently difficult to obtain a stand of crimson clover, but wherever a stand can be secured it makes a very satisfactory erosion-control crop. For best results, sow the seed in the hull, at the rate of 50 pounds per acre, on a well-prepared seed bed, and press the seed into the soil with a roller.

### NON-LEGUMES

In either the Corn Belt or the Cotton Belt, one of the best all-around cover crops is rye, which germinates easily and makes a complete cover in a very short time. Winter oats may also be used where freezing is not severe. Wheat, in areas to which it is adapted, or oats or barley make good cover crops. In regions where leguminous crops are, for any reason, not desirable, Italian ryegrass, redtop or rye are indicated for cover. Cover crops should be turned under two weeks before corn planting or three weeks before cotton planting. For early truck crops, plant for cover something which will form a dense growth in the fall to serve as a winter mulch and turn it under in February or March.

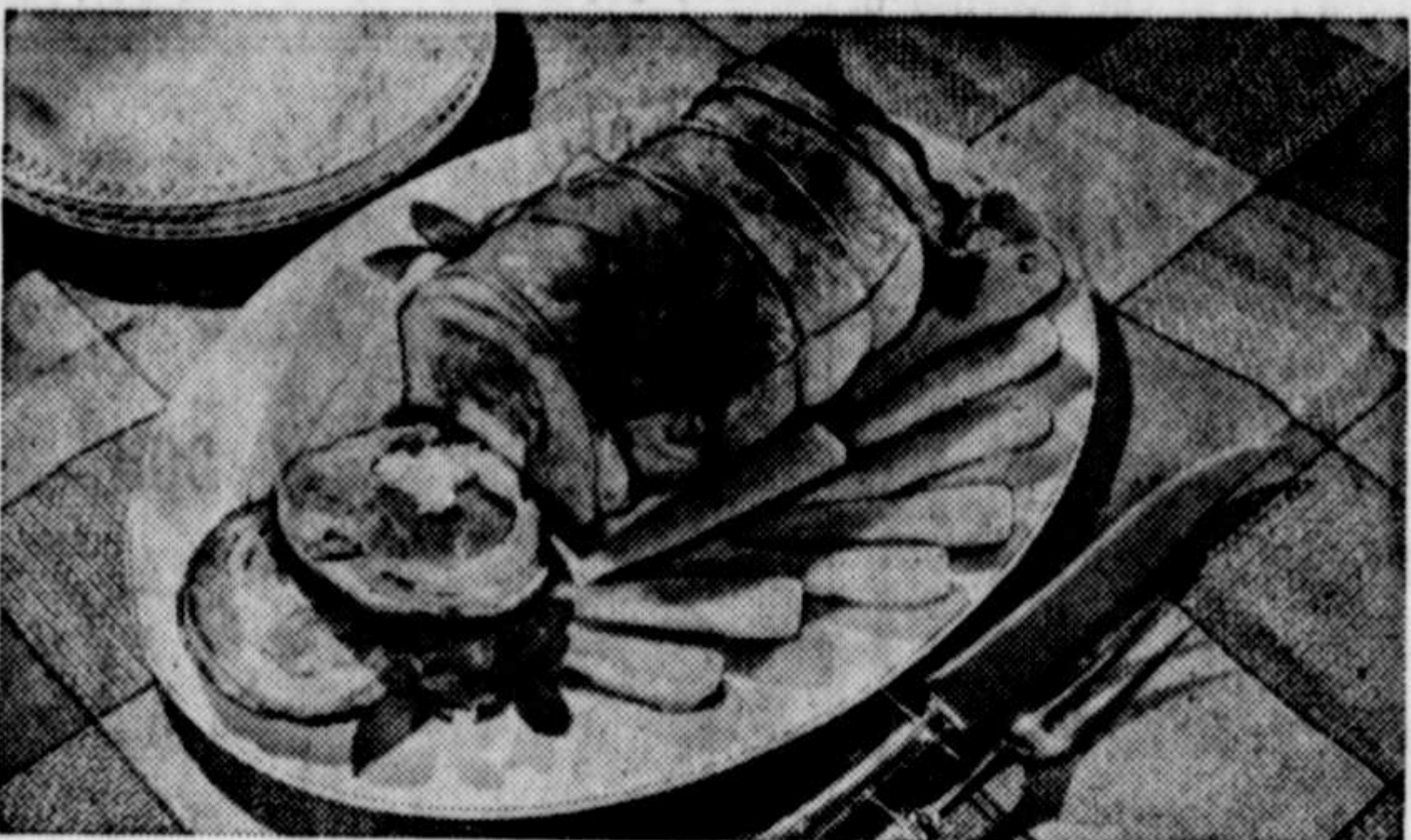
For further information concerning cover crops, send five cents to Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C., asking for Farmers' Bulletin No. 115.

### THE PITCHER PLANT

It is the leaf of the pitcher plant which gives it its name. These leaves may be anywhere from 4 to 10 inches long. They are hollow and are shaped like little trumpets with the small end of the "trumpet" attached to the stem of the plant. Each perfect leaf is winged on its inner side and is colored in various shades of green, streaked in purple or a dark liver color. These trumpet-shaped leaves are usually nearly full of water (the plants grow in boggy marshes). Hence its name.

## Household News

by Lynn Chambers



THRIFT CUTS—MORE MEAT FOR YOUR MONEY  
(See Recipes Below)

### MEATS FOR BUDGET MEALS

If you're meat-wise, then you're budget-wise! For the less expensive cuts of meat have a way of making food dollars really stretch.

What's more, the thrift cuts of meat are equally as chock full of flavor, health-giving vitamins, body-building proteins and minerals as the more expensive ones. When you buy a chuck roast instead of chops; hamburger instead of steak; or baby beef liver instead of calves liver, your economy isn't depriving your family or guests of even a teeny, weeny bit of food value. That's the verdict of nutrition experts. And they know.

Economy in purchasing meat comes from knowing the wide variety of different meat cuts available, and from purchasing some of the cuts which are not in greatest demand. For example, a pot roast of beef, delicious as it is and as much as it is enjoyed by everyone, sells for considerably less per pound than a rib roast of beef. The reason, of course, is that there is a greater demand for rib roast.

You'll surely be pleased, and surprised, too, at the way you can save money on your food budget, at the same time adding variety to both your family and company meals, by following today's penny-pincher recipes.

**\*Stuffed Shoulder of Lamb.**  
How to Buy: Good quality lamb is pinkish and well-marbled with fat. Outside fat is smooth, hard, glossy and cream-white. Look for both government inspection stamp and packer's private grade stamp. Find the grade that suits you, then always buy it. Ask your meat man to bone the shoulder, leaving a cavity to fill with stuffing. (You can use the bones for broth, soup or gravy stock.)

**How to Cook:** Prepare a well-seasoned stuffing; fill cavity, then sew up edges or skewer in place. Weigh meat after stuffing to compute cooking time. Place fat side up on rack in open pan, rub with salt and pepper. Cook in slow oven (325 degrees F.), allowing about 35 minutes per pound. Garnish with mint leaves and a vegetable; serve. Delicious!

**Dressing for Lamb.**  
2 slices bacon  
2 cups bread crumbs  
1 cup sour apples, chopped  
1 cup raisins  
1/2 cup celery, chopped  
Fry bacon until crisp and add to bread crumbs, raisins, diced apples and celery. Season with salt and pepper and pile lightly into cavity in lamb shoulder.

**Eye-of-Round Roast.**  
How to Buy: The lean of beef should be well-marbled with fat, firm, smooth, glossy; soon after the meat is cut, the surface should turn bright red. The outer fat should be fairly thick, firm, flaky, cream-white. In lower grades fat is softer, yellower. Though price per pound will perhaps exceed that of rib roast, it is all solid meat—no bones, no fat, no waste of any kind.

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### THIS WEEK'S MENU

- Cream of Pea Soup
- \*Stuffed Shoulder of Lamb
- Parsley Buttered Potatoes
- Buttered Carrot Strips
- Sweet Cabbage Relish
- Peppermint Ice Cream
- Chocolate Cup Cakes
- \*Recipe Given

It goes a long way. For best results, slice very thin.  
**How to Cook:** Put meat, well covered with fat, on rack in open roasting pan. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place in moderate oven (325 degrees F.) and allow about 25 minutes per pound for rare beef, 28 to 30 for medium and about 35 for well done. Do not baste. Potatoes may be cooked in same pan with roast.

**Swedish Meat Balls.**  
(Serves 6)  
2 pounds finely ground beef  
1 cup mashed potato  
1/2 cup apple sauce  
1 1/2 teaspoons salt  
1/2 teaspoon pepper  
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg  
Shortening  
1 can vegetable soup  
1/2 cup milk  
Combine beef, potato, apple sauce and seasonings. Roll into small balls the size of a walnut. Brown well in hot shortening, in baking dish. Pour on soup and milk and bake in moderate oven (375 degrees F.). Thicken gravy; serve.

**Cubed Steak With Vegetables.**  
Cube 1 pound of thrifty cut of steak, such as round or chuck. Brown in hot fat. Add 1 cup boiling water and 1 teaspoon cornstarch, mixed with a little cold water, and salt and pepper to taste. Stir until mixture is boiling. Add 1 large green pepper cut into squares, and 2 large sweet onions cut into eighths. Cover and simmer until steak is tender. Add 2 large tomatoes cut in eighths and cook 2 minutes longer. The gravy may be seasoned with a few drops of seasoning sauce. Serve at once. Boiled rice is an excellent accompaniment.

**Stuffed Flank Steak.**  
(Serves 6)  
1 flank steak (about 1 1/2 to 2 lbs.)  
4 cups dry bread  
1/2 cup milk  
1/2 cup boiling water  
1/2 cup butter  
1/2 cup finely chopped onion  
1/2 cup finely chopped parsley  
1 egg  
1 1/2 teaspoons salt  
Pepper  
Have your butcher score the steak and cut a pocket in it. Break the bread into small pieces. Mix milk and boiling water. Pour over bread and let soak until soft. Melt the butter, add onion and cook without browning, about 5 minutes. Add to bread-milk mixture the parsley, beaten egg, salt and pepper. Press this stuffing into the pocket of the steak. Bake in a shallow pan, uncovered, in a moderate oven (350 degrees) two hours. Slice it generously and garnish with sprigs of crisp parsley.

There's plenty of good, substantial eating in stuffed flank steak, so the rest of the meal can be simple. A vegetable (stewed tomatoes, beans or cauliflower, perhaps); dessert and beverage would round out a satisfying, appealing menu.

**Veal Birds With Mushroom Sauce.**  
2 pounds veal round  
bread stuffing  
3 tablespoons flour  
3 tablespoons lard  
salt and pepper  
1 small can mushroom soup  
Have veal round cut into one-half inch slices. Cut into pieces for individual servings as nearly 2 by 4 inches in size as possible. Place a spoonful of stuffing on each piece, roll and fasten edge with toothpicks. Dredge with flour and brown on all sides in hot lard. Season. Pour mushroom soup over veal birds, cover and cook very slowly until done, about 45 minutes.

For variety, instead of using a bread stuffing, spread finely chopped onion over the meat, place a partially cooked carrot in the center, roll and fasten.

(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

## FIRST-AID to the AILING HOUSE

by Roger B. Whitman  
(© Roger B. Whitman—WNU Service.)

**Brightening a Flagstone Floor.**  
QUESTION: How can I brighten up a new broken flag floor that we have just had put down on our porch? Could I take off its dusty look with a polishing of liquid wax?

Answer: After brick, stone or tile is laid in cement mortar, it should be scrubbed with a solution of muriatic acid, to remove any cement that may have been smeared on the surface. Use one part muriatic acid in twenty parts of water; allow to act for a few minutes, then rinse with clear water. Work on a small area at a time. When mixing the solution, pour the water slowly into the acid, stirring constantly. As this acid is highly corrosive, wear rubber gloves and old clothes; be careful not to get any of it on your skin. You can enrich the color of the stone by applying a liberal coat of raw linseed oil, mixed half-and-half with turpentine. After several hours of soaking, wipe off the excess oil. Try the oil first on some hidden part of the floor, to see how you like the effect.

**'Crazing' Varnish.**  
Question: Is it a usual condition, in all highly figured mahogany, to develop surface scratches, known as "crazing"? This condition has developed in my bedroom suite, which is English Chippendale, crotch mahogany. Can this condition be remedied at home, and will it recur after it has been repaired?

Answer: Crazing in the varnish finish is not natural on any wood. This condition is usually caused by the drying out of the varnish. If the crazing is not very deep, light sandpapering will remove it, followed by a wiping with turpentine to clean the surface; after this, apply a thin coat of varnish. Deeply crazed varnish must be removed and the furniture refinished.

**Water-Soaked Floor.**  
Question: We have just purchased and have moved to the mainland a house that has been standing in salt water for some time; for about a year water covered the floors at high tide. What solution can we use for washing the floors that will remove the salt from the wood?

Answer: Nothing will be more effective than plain water, in which salt is soluble. Even with this, however, I greatly doubt if all of the salt can be removed. I should live in the house for a year or two, to study the effect, with the idea of replacing the floors if necessary. Mildew is not to be feared.

**Washing Down Paint.**  
Question: Is there a liquid with which I can wash down painted walls to take off dirt, but not the paint?

Answer: There is on general sale at most paint stores a powder made of a cereal compound, which is very satisfactory for washing painted surfaces. Or, you can dissolve a teaspoonful of trisodium phosphate in a gallon of tepid water. After the wall has been washed with this solution, rinse with clear water. Start working at the floor level and wash up toward the ceiling, to avoid making dirty streaks.

**Paint or Stain for Shingle.**  
Question: Which is the more enduring, shingle stain or paint?

Answer: Wood shingles on a roof should never be painted. They will last longer if stained with a good quality shingle stain. Wood shingles used as a wall siding can either be painted or stained. The lasting properties of paint or stain will be about equal if they are of a good quality.

**Digger Wasps.**  
Question: My lawn is covered with round holes, about the size of a half-dollar, which I think must be from moles. Is there any simple way to get rid of them?

Answer: Moles do not make such holes as you describe. Much more likely the holes are made by digger wasps. Two or three moth balls dropped into each hole, and the hole closed, should end the trouble.

**Waterproof Glue.**  
Question: How can glue for wood be made waterproof?

Answer: That will not be an easy job to do at home. It will be far simpler to buy waterproof glue. One excellent variety is a glue made of casein that can be had at a hardware store. While this is mixed with water, it becomes highly water resistant when it dries.

**Making Things.**  
Question: I am interested in making small objects, such as decorative shelves, plant stands, etc. How should I go about it? Are there any books for novices?

Answer: A book by Julian Starr, called "Make It Yourself," should give you all the information you want. It is published by Whitteley House, and is on sale at book stores.

## PATTERNS SEWING CIRCLE



the other is turned back in narrow revers. Make the dress in household cottons, trimming with braid and adding a couple of pockets, and it will be one of your most comfortable work-a-day styles. Make it of light, inconspicuous prints, flat crepe or spun rayon for street wear, with plain neckline, softened by a narrow touch of contrast.

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