
MEAL MANAGEMENT TODAY



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Prospect Heights, Illinois 60070

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1985 reissued by Waveland Press, Inc.

ISBN 0-88133-169-4

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Printed in the United States of America

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◇ PREFACE ◇

The rapid change affecting most areas of modern daily living has had a marked impact on family meals. Socioeconomic developments and the resulting modifications in life-styles have generated significant changes in meal patterns. Although convenience foods and innovative kitchen equipment simplify food preparation, they have not made the meal manager's role less challenging.

To help meet the challenge, *Meal Management Today* is designed as a college or university text for meal management courses offered to students majoring in food and nutrition, dietetics, home economics education, extension, business, food service management, food science, and related fields. Nonmajors will also find *Meal Management Today* useful.

My primary goals in writing *Meal Management Today* were to make the text relevant to today's life-styles, to reflect an awareness of increased male participation in meal management and the growing number of single-parent and single-person households, and to impress upon students the importance of applying scientific management principles to meal management. Moreover, as a registered dietitian, I have been motivated to stress the nutritional aspects of meal management.

Meal Management Today also emphasizes cost control, time management, and energy conservation. Convenience foods, which are staples to many students, are assessed specifically in the time management chapter. Because of the complexity of today's food supply and distribution system and the increased hazards and risks the meal manager must consider, the

text devotes an entire chapter to food safety and sanitation.

Most importantly, *Meal Management Today* demonstrates to students that meal management is a creative, satisfying, and rewarding activity. The text encourages family participation, not only as a wise use of human resources, but also as a means of strengthening interpersonal bonds and giving special meaning to meals.

The Structure of the Text

Meal Management Today is divided into six parts. The first examines how meal patterns have changed and introduces the scientific management process. Part 2 details how the meal manager can achieve the five overall objectives. Part 3 examines the role of government and industry and analyzes the steps in the food marketing process. Part 4 contains general purchasing guidelines for the five food groups. Parts 5 and 6 explain how to apply management principles to family meals and entertaining. Parts 3, 4, and 6 may be studied out of the given sequence. Where purchasing is taught as a separate course, Part 3 serves as a convenient review and reference tool.

Features

Clear goals begin each chapter, and references and further readings end the chapter. A glossary and three appendices—a table of the Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDAs), menu-writing mechanics, and metrics and meal management—supply valuable reference material.

Learning Aids

Management problems at the end of each chapter challenge application of its content. Suggested activities offer ideas for classroom, laboratory, and outside projects. Review questions serve as learning checks and test accomplishment of chapter goals.

Acknowledgments

My thanks go to my former Clarke College associates, especially to Barbara A. Schick, head of the Food and Nutrition Department. I cannot measure the help and encouragement she supplied throughout the text's development. I also thank many other teaching and dietetics colleagues for their generous professional and moral support.

I am most appreciative of the efforts of reviewers who so conscientiously read the manuscript and offered helpful suggestions and support: Dorothy C. Howell, Louisiana State University; Margaret A. James, University of Wisconsin, Stout; Elena Kissick, California State

University, Fresno; Beverly S. Madden, Iowa State University; Janice R. Peach, Western Washington University; Patricia A. Redlinger, University of Wisconsin, Stout; Connie E. Vickery, University of Alabama; Debbie Wright, Florida State University; and Barbara J. Zeches, University of Arizona.

To the many food and equipment industry friends and the government contacts who shared information so generously, I am grateful, too. My special thanks to those companies and groups who contributed photographs to enhance the text's visual appeal.

I sincerely appreciate the work of the Wadsworth staff: Judith McKibben, production editor, who so efficiently directed transformation of final manuscript into bound book; Jonas Weisel, copy editor, whose meticulous editing strengthened and burnished the copy; Marshall Aronson, subject editor; Debbie Oren, editorial associate; and Diana Griffin, permissions editor.

Not least of all, I am indebted to those many unnamed persons, including my former teachers and students, who have influenced my approach to meal management.

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MEALS AND MANAGEMENT



CHANGING MEAL PATTERNS

A man once asked Diogenes what was the proper time for supper, and he made answer: "If you are a rich man, whenever you please; and if you are a poor man, whenever you can."

Diogenes Laertius

♦ GOALS ♦

On completing this chapter, you will be able to

Explain the different meanings food has had for humans throughout history.

Identify and discuss past population shifts that directly influenced meal patterns.

Cite events contributing to the increase in women working outside the home since World War II, and discuss how this increase has changed the approach to meal management.

Describe the impact of changing life-styles on family meal patterns.

Relate the popularity and practicality of snacks and minimeals to today's life-styles.

Explain the significant contribution agriculture makes to today's food supply.

Discuss recent food technology advances that result in expanded food choices for the consumer.

Give examples of four factors influencing the meal manager's choices when food shopping.

Food—its meaning is not always the same for all people. At different times and under varying circumstances through history, food has been an essential for survival, a dependable means of nourishment, or simply an enjoyment. Often the regularity and frequency with which our ancestors partook of food were not a matter of choice, but were determined by success or failure in obtaining food. Meals were uncertain; mealtimes, unpredictable.

Prehistoric people were hunters and gatherers, who depended on natural resources and their own efforts to fight the constant threat of hunger. Throughout the thousands of years of primitive existence, humankind banded together in tribes for protection and spent much of its time searching for food.

As civilization progressed, people learned to cope with food supply problems and managed to ensure regular repasts for themselves and their families through industry and resourcefulness. This change in meal patterns is, in fact, a recognized bench mark for measuring civilization's progress.

With the development of farming in 10,000 B.C., the connotation of "food" began to suggest a less uneasy sustenance. People planted and harvested crops and domesticated and raised animals. By training oxen, water buffalo, and camels to pull heavy plows they were able to produce more crops. No longer was it necessary to roam the land searching for food.

Grain, the basic food crop of those first farmers, became a mainstay of the diet. The major part of the meal of biblical times, for example, was meal: stone-ground grains cooked and mixed with oil from available seeds. The porridge was scooped from the cooking vessel with leaves or twigs. A thicker mixture was sometimes shaped in cakes, baked in the sun or at the fireside, and eaten out of hand.

In sharp contrast to such simple fare was the medieval banquet. A typical lavish meal of A.D. 1400–1500 included capons, peacocks, swans, pheasants, partridges, pigeons, and all manner of breads, fruits, sweets, and spiced wines. Although such elaborate, gluttonous feasts were only for the royalty and nobility—the peasantry's

fare was meager and monotonous—they do represent one type of meal that was a part of that period's patterns.

Meal patterns have changed dramatically in the long span between medieval feast and today's "meal on a bun." A look at the socioeconomic developments of that intervening period explains why these changes took place.

The Disappearing "Three Meals a Day"

During the 1600s and the 1700s, the rugged frontier existence of the New World made regular meals more a hard-sought goal than a daily reality. Early American settlers depended on rivers and lakes for fish, on forests for a variety of wild animals, and on whatever nuts, berries, and other wild fruits were available. They labored to grow grains and vegetables for the table and grasses for the grazing of livestock.

As settlers geared agricultural methods to the soil and climate of the new country, life became a less than constant struggle, and three big meals a day became an established pattern. Working long hours and expending considerable energy, farm families needed regular nourishing meals to sustain them. Often supplemental lunches were taken to the farmers in the field.

As America became industrialized, that meal pattern assumed a different shape. Farming methods benefited by mechanization. Machines such as the steel plow, the gasoline-powered tractor, and the McCormick reaper were introduced, making it possible for fewer farmers to produce more food. Work and meal schedules became more flexible.

Population Shifts: Rural- Urban-Suburban, Ethnic

In 1861, the Civil War uprooted many men from the land. After the war, as reconstruction began, factories drew workers from rural areas and from the heavy influx of immigrants. Before long, ur-

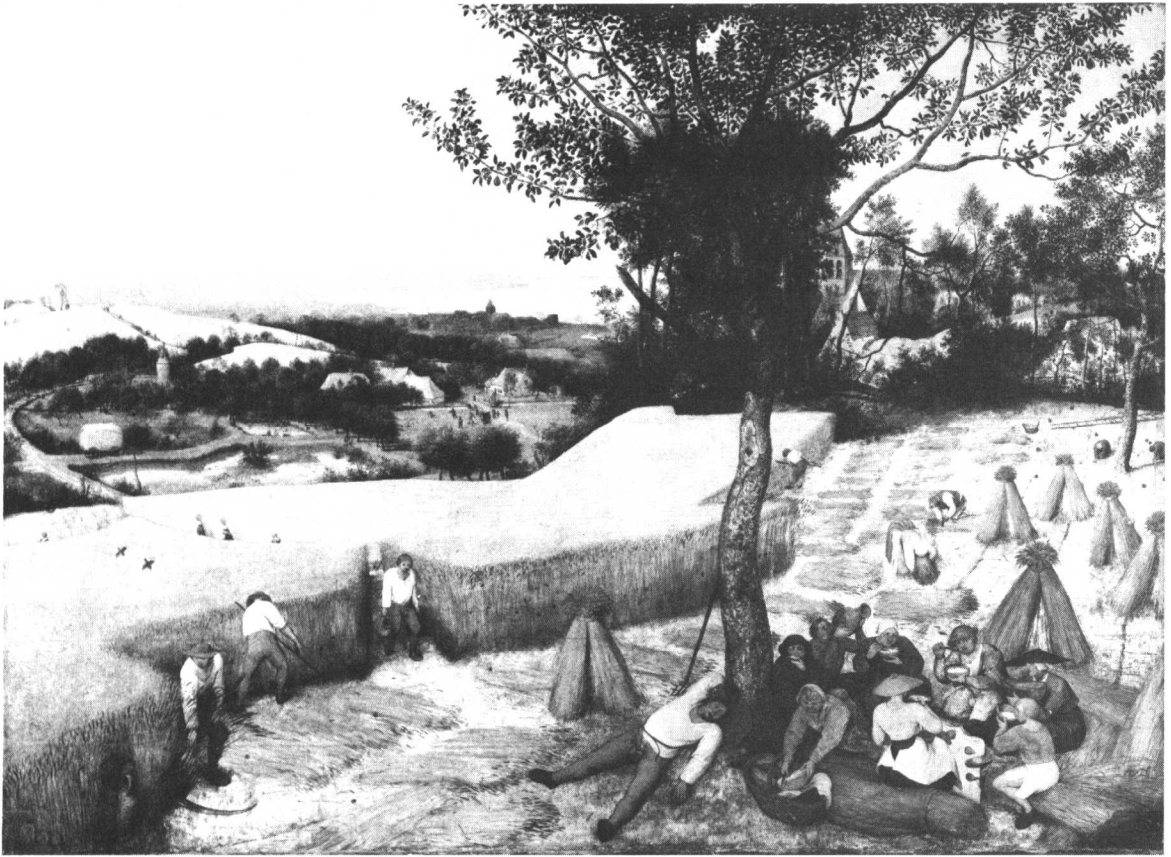


Figure 1.1/ The Harvesters by Pieter Bruegel the Elder. (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1919)

ban areas grew rapidly, and significant shifts in population from farm to city occurred.

Soon, in addition to increased factory work, job opportunities developed in offices, retailing, hospitals, and the many businesses that were a part of the burgeoning urban community. The amazing new automobile compressed distances. Living patterns, particularly the three-meals custom, adapted to change. Lunch buckets became standard gear; restaurants began to dot the urban scene.

Many immigrants, hungry for contact with a familiar language and social customs, clustered in specific areas of the city. Such ethnic groups fostered retention of Old World eating habits

and introduced great diversity to early American mealtime.

In 1917–1918, the participation of the United States in World War I brought some small changes in the American style of living. But in the early 1940s, World War II gave real impetus to the rural-urban shift. Workers in defense plants and in war-related occupations constituted a new “at-home army.” Many of those employees were middle-class white women, working away from home for the first time. Until then, females in the labor force had been limited to the poor, immigrants, and minorities.

Postwar attitudes changed. These women made it clear they wanted to remain in the labor

force. In addition to—or perhaps as much as—job satisfaction, women appreciated the improved standard of living that working made possible.¹

At about that time, another population shift occurred. Its direction was urban-suburban, marked by a routine of commuting considerable distances between home and work. Clearly the routine was incompatible with the custom of three meals a day with the entire family at the table. The 1946 National School Lunch Act, designed to provide school children with nutritious lunches, also played a part in the disappearance of the family lunch at home.

Life-styles in Transition

In terms of meal management, the still continuing increase in working women is significant. Usually the meal manager has been perceived as a full-time homemaker, with a total commitment to homemaking and sole responsibility for managing family meals. Today, however, most meal managers are not full-time homemakers, but are working outside the home in a wide variety of jobs. Many are not working women, either, but men and other family members who share in or are totally responsible for meal management activities.

Many meal managers are professional home economists in education, extension, or business, who teach meal management principles to others. Dietitians in health care facilities and in other segments of foodservice, nutritionists involved in shaping the food habits of many persons, and restaurant managers also apply these principles.

Often the family unit is not the nuclear family of a mother, father, and two children, but a single-parent unit. In March 1979, nearly one of every five families with children under eighteen was maintained by a single parent who was either divorced, separated, widowed, or never married. The unit may be an extended family, which has an elderly relative or another person sharing family living. Such groups may handle

meal management tasks in ways quite different from the past. Indeed the unit may not be a "family" in the traditional sense. Bureau of the Census figures indicate that single-person households in this country have increased at almost twice the rate for all households during the past twenty-five years. Someone now lives alone in 22.5 percent of all United States households, and the percentage is growing.

The changing identity of the meal manager and the family has been accompanied by numerous changes in life-style. These trends can be observed in all areas of family living and among all age groups. Many have a strong impact on our food choices and meal patterns.*

Working Women and Teenagers In 1978, 59 percent of all women eighteen to sixty-four, the usual working ages, were workers. The median age of the woman worker was thirty-four. Compared to 1960 statistics, the picture looked like this:

Proportion in labor force	1960	1978
All women over 16	38%	50%
Women between 25 and 34	36%	62%
Mothers with children under 6	19%	42%
Mothers with children 6 to 17	39%	50%
Teenagers (male and female)	47%	58%

*Figures adapted from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census Reports.

Nearly two-thirds of all women workers in 1978 were either single, widowed, divorced, or separated or had husbands earning less than \$10,000 a year. The median annual income for single-parent families was \$7,800 and averaged only about 38 percent of that of two-parent families. Two-parent families with working mothers earned an average annual income of \$22,200.²

"Moonlighting," or holding more than one job, is increasing among women workers. In May 1979, about three out of every ten multiple job holders were women, nearly double the proportion ten years earlier.³



Figure 1.2/ Today's working woman may be in a nontraditional occupation such as cabinetmaking or woodworking. (Design Photography)

The increase in women workers has resulted in larger total family income and greater purchasing power, even though in inflationary times that power is severely eroded. In most homes, the "working-woman" pattern has meant realignment of meal management schedules, delegation of responsibilities, and more family participation in meal-related tasks.

Later Marriages and Smaller Families Median age for men to marry is now around 24.6; for women, 22.1. Average household size, 3.33 persons in 1960, declined to about 2.8 persons in 1980 and is projected to drop to 2.6 persons by 1990. More single and two-person households mean nontraditional approaches to meal management.

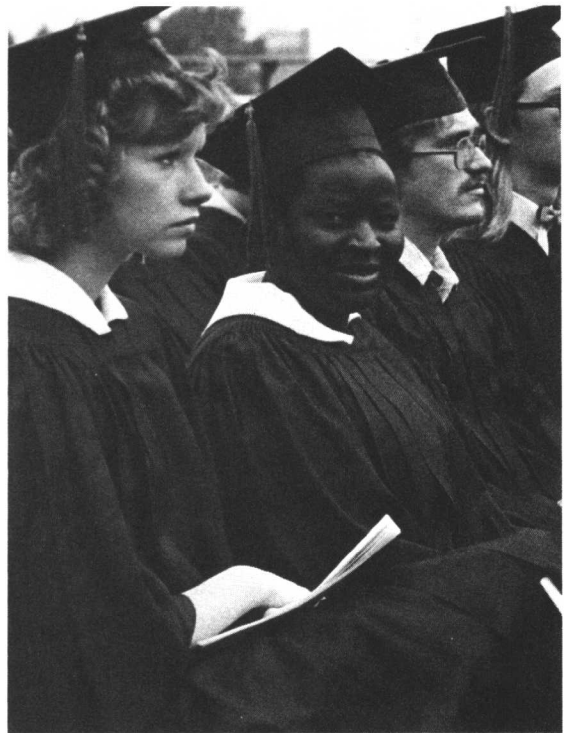


Figure 1.3/ Graduates from vocational-technical schools and community colleges are increasing in number. (Design Photography)

Longer Life Expectancy Today's women can expect to reach almost seventy-seven years of age; men about sixty-nine. One woman in ten is widowed before age fifty and may be forced to assume unexpected financial and family responsibilities.

Higher Education Levels Men and women workers today have completed a median of 12.4 and 12.3 years of schooling, respectively. More people are going to college and graduate school. Enrollments at vocational-technical schools and community colleges and in adult and continuing education programs have increased. In general, the higher educational levels mean a higher standard of living and increased economic stability.

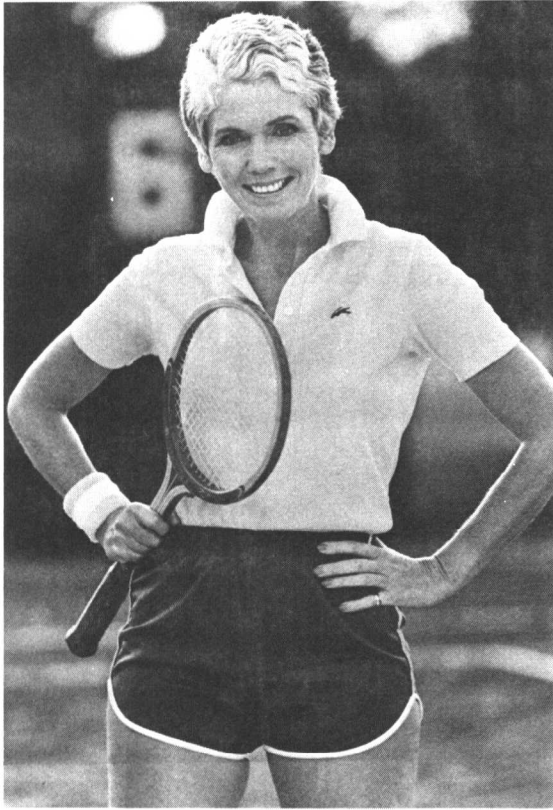


Figure 1.4/ Exercise and leisure activities are being enjoyed by all family members. (Photo courtesy of Kretschmer Wheat Germ, International Multifoods)

Wider Travel Domestic and international travel has brought exposure to new foods and eating experiences and to other life-styles. More cosmopolitan tastes have given rise to a growing number of specialty and international restaurants.

Stepped-up Family Activity Family members pursue separate work, leisure, and social lives, making meal management responsibilities and mealtimes difficult to schedule. Because of its ease of use and speed of cooking, the microwave oven has solved some of these difficulties for the meal manager and has had a significant impact on meal patterns.

Against the backdrop of today's life-styles,

adhering to a pattern of three daily sit-down family meals is highly improbable. In many homes, managing even one meal at which the entire family is present is difficult. As a result, there has been an almost reflexive swing to snacks and **minimeals**.

The Swing to Snacks and Minimeals

Results of a Family Food Study done by *Woman's Day* indicate that our more relaxed and casual life-styles and less formality and rigidity are part of changing values. These changing values "run counter in many ways to the rigors of adhering to a set routine of three meals a day, regular meal-times, making sure that every meal is balanced, or sticking to a menu in which certain foods are appropriate for only certain meals."⁴

In interviews with a national sample of 1,188 consumers, eighteen years of age and over, views and attitudes on diet and nutrition were expressed as shown in Table 1.1.

Impromptu, unscheduled meals vary considerably in content and nutritional quality. The challenge for the meal manager is to integrate them into the day's total intake of food, to make them add up to the "balanced day" concept referred to in the *Woman's Day* study, and to plan them with good nutrition as the prime consideration.

Away-from-Home Eating

"Eating-out," whether it be snacks or complete dinners, has become a firmly entrenched habit—as an alternative to home food preparation and cleanup, and as a leisure and recreation activity. Total away-from-home food expenditures today, including meals eaten in an institutional setting, account for about 35 percent of the food dollar.

Foodservice operations, the umbrella term for away-from-home eating places, range from the

Table 1.1/ Views on Diet and Nutrition

	Total percentage agreeing with statement
It's important to eat three meals a day.	57%
You don't have to eat three meals a day to have a good diet.	43%
Breakfast is the most important meal of the day.	71%
Dinner is the most important meal of the day.	28%
It's important that each time you eat, it should be a balanced meal.	51%
It doesn't matter what you eat or don't eat at any one meal, as long as your intake of food is balanced by the end of the day.	49%
It's important that the menu for each meal should be appropriate.	48%
There's no reason not to have foods such as soup, meat, or vegetables for breakfast or cornflakes or cereal for dinner.	51%

SOURCE: *Nutrition, A Study of Consumers' Attitudes and Behavior Towards Eating at Home and Out of Home*. First Woman's Day Family Food Study. Conducted by Yankelovich, Skelly and White, Inc., 1978. Reprinted by permission.

functional vending machine to the elegant full-service restaurant. They include:

Schools, colleges, and universities

Health care facilities

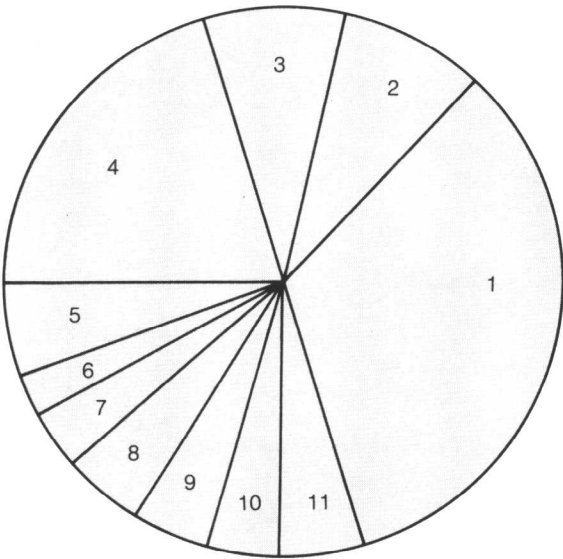
Fast-food outlets, full-service restaurants, and hotels or motels

Transportation systems (mainly airline meals, but also bus and train)

Retail (department stores, supermarkets or convenience stores)

Recreation (ski resorts, ballpark and racetrack concessions, theme parks, and so on)

Figure 1.5/ Foodservice Industry: Percentages represented by various types of operation. (*Institutions Magazine*, 15 March 1980)



Key:	
1. Full-service restaurants	36.4%
2. Schools	8.5%
3. Health care	8.3%
4. Fast food	20.1%
5. Hotels and motels	3.9%
6. Transportation	1.5%
7. Recreation	2.4%
8. Colleges and universities	3.9%
9. Retail	3.3%
10. Military	3.2%
11. Employee feeding	5.7%

Employee feeding

Military

Figure 1.5 shows the percentage of the total foodservice market represented by each of these segments.

Fast-food outlets, the most rapidly growing segment of foodservice operations, doubled during the seventies. Today they represent over 20 percent of the foodservice market. About 25 percent of every dollar spent on restaurant eating is for fast foods. The variety of food these outlets offer is also increasing: hamburgers, hot dogs, and pizza; chicken; fish 'n chips; subma-

rines, grinders, and assorted other sandwiches; ethnic favorites; and—as one foodservice operator wryly observed—“barbecued everything.”

Away-from-home eating is important for the meal manager to consider when assuming responsibility for managing meals for oneself, family, or others. If the resource is used wisely, away-from-home meals can contribute effectively to the total daily food intake.

Today's Expanded Food Choices

For most Americans, a food supply with limited choices is hard to envision. Yet, until as recently as 1940, food shoppers had only about 1,000 items from which to choose. Although that represented a slight improvement over country-store days, when 900 items were offered, it hardly compares to the extent of today's choices.

A supermarket shopper today is presented with 12,000–15,000 food items. Many are new products that did not even exist ten years ago. Monitoring by government and industry is designed to ensure the wholesomeness of all these products. The nutritional and overall eating quality of many products is high. However, numerous other choices of lesser quality are available and require careful evaluation by the meal manager.

Unmatched Abundance

A large share of the credit for the abundance of our food supply is due to our rich natural resources and to the over 3 million farmers who produce the food we consume. About half the total land area in the fifty states is devoted to farming.

A century ago an acre of land would yield 28 bushels of corn. But—thanks to new technology and better seeds, fertilizers, and insecticides—that same acre today yields 100 bushels.

Farmers have mechanized, using efficient tractors, harvesting machines, and trucks. They

have become better managers, making their operations more productive. In 1776, the farmer produced enough food for himself and two other people. By 1955, that number had grown to 19.5 people. Today, on the average, the farmer produces enough food and fiber for fifty-six other people. By the year 2000, he or she will be growing enough food for seventy-nine other people—on about one-fifth less farmland.⁵

The farmer does not do this single-handedly. Many people are involved in the marketing chain. Agriculture depends on 8–10 million people to store, transport, process, and merchandise the output of the nation's farms.

Food Technology's Innovations

Food processing, or food manufacturing, involves many skilled and knowledgeable people, highly efficient equipment, and great technological expertise. Sanitation in every phase of the total operation is a predominant concern.

The general objective in food processing is to make raw food materials more marketable and more acceptable to the consumer by altering their composition or character in a wide range of ways. It may mean developing new products or finding new applications for existing products. It definitely means more choices in the marketplace.⁶

Food technologists have made remarkable advances in recent years. Today's food shopper may view frozen foods, a major processing accomplishment since World War II, as an ordinary staple. However, years of research were spent perfecting freezing techniques and equipment and developing new types of raw products suitable for freezing. New packaging materials were perfected to preserve product quality, and efficient transportation and storage systems were established.

Present-day canned foods are greatly improved in quality and variety. Aseptic canning, a method whereby container and contents are sterilized separately, retains flavor and extends product life. Aseptically canned precooked pud-