

Home and Garden

Bits and Pieces

'Used-house' lot looks promising

by MARGARET SCHMALE

Frustrated homeseekers should be cheered to hear about an enterprising man who opened a used house lot. This idea could be the latest in small franchise. A couple of empty acres on a busy corner, some pendants blowing in the breeze, an attractive hostess handing out siding samples and you have the makings of another grand opening.

It wouldn't be any trick to find the houses. There are abandoned army barracks, deserted cabins and lots of houses left on freeway sites. All could be picked up for a song; maybe, "Ain't Agonna Need This House No Longer." Once removed from their tacky surroundings and placed on a neutral ground their original appeal could be restored. Eager buyers would flock to the homes just to beat today's prices.

A house brought to the lot in two pieces due to moving difficulties could be a bonus. Instead of one four bedroom home, the salesman could list a pair of two-bedroom homes. The ad could read: "Lovely 2 bedroom split level, wall to edge carpet, 1/2 bath, spacious airy entry way, excellent potential for expansion, needs some carpentry work."

Specials could be offered to attract the buyer from any competing lots. A guard dog house with every warehouse. Free flagmen with every move. A bag of ready mix cement with 20 percent down. A free plumb bob just for browsing. A 20 pound box of plaster if the house is removed the day of the sale. A free list of inspectors, city officials and contractors and their phone numbers for easy assistance in moving your home to your lot. A calendar from the local towing service that specializes in moving homes. A do-it-yourselfer's guide to the older home. It could be very tough business making it necessary for the salesman to offer the buyer a deal he just couldn't refuse.

A business like this could benefit many. The carpenters would be in steady demand. Painters could follow a moving house like lawyers are said to follow ambulances. Plumbers could stick hand bills on the bathroom mirrors, just in case. City and state officials would also get into the act by making it necessary for the owner to buy a licence and plates for his moving home.

The timing is perfect for such an undertaking in the house market. A catchy slogan like, "Bungalows with that lived in look to fit your budget" could give a person a new lease on life.



Sharon Koenig studies a treasured Dakota cookbook.

Eagle Creek cook likes Dakota food

Although she has lived in Oregon for all but five years of her life, Sharon Koenig of Eagle Creek still considers her roots firmly planted in North Dakota. While she was growing up her parents visited her native state every year or two, and Sharon became quite familiar with Dakota's customs and cuisine.

So it is natural for her to describe her favorite kind of cooking as "basic North Dakota food." Her job as grill cook at Mt. Hood Community College requires that she provide whatever the customers order. But when she is cooking for herself and her husband Sharon prepares the simple and hearty food of the prairie people.

At work Sharon says she likes "to cook to please the customers, to keep them coming back again and again." She has cooked at MHCC for seven years, except for one year she took off to help her husband log.

Now she is back at the grill again, and says she plans to stay there. Her husband is establishing a land-clearing and road-building business.

"A lot of the reason I stay on at the college is that I know I'd be out there with him, skinning cat or monkey wrenching, if I didn't have this job. I enjoy doing that, but it's not a life work," she said.

Cooking, however, is, in Koenig's estimation, "I've always enjoyed serving people, and this way I get paid for it," she chuckled.

"When I'm cooking at home, though, my husband's my guideline," Koenig continued. "A typical meal for us might be Swiss steak, potatoes and gravy. We use a lot of ground beef, and I dress it up differently. Ground beef is something so

versatile you could almost eat it every day."

It is also economical, she pointed out. "And economy is an important factor for almost everyone today." The North Dakota Goulash recipe features several economical ingredients, ground beef among them.

Koenig has been cooking

since her teen years, when she was enrolled in a boarding academy with a work-study program. Her assignment was in the kitchen, and she learned her trade as a part of her studies.

She offered two of her favorite North Dakota recipes for this week's cooking column.

Hearty dishes from the prairie

North Dakota Goulash

1 lb. ground beef, browned
2 pkgs. spaghetti sauce mix
1 1/2 oz. can tomato soup
2 cups water
2 cups macaroni

Brown ground beef. Add spaghetti sauce mix, water and soup. Simmer. While sauce is simmering cook macaroni. Drain. Pour into 9 x 13 casserole dish. Add sauce and mix thoroughly. Bake 350 degrees for 1 hour.

Variations: Add

1 3 oz. pkg cream cheese or
1 4 oz. can mushrooms, braised in butter

— from the files of Sharon Koenig
Eagle Creek, Ore.

Chocolate Chip Cake

1 cup dates, cut-up
1 cup hot water
1 tsp soda
Simmer above mixture and stir to a pulp. Cool.
1 cup shortening
1 cup sugar
2 eggs
1 tsp vanilla
1 1/2 oz. pkg chocolate chips
1/2 cup chopped nuts
1 3/4 cup flour
1/4 tsp salt

Cream shortening and sugar. Add eggs, vanilla, chips, (save 1/4 cup chips for cake top) and nuts. Mix well. Add flour and salt alternately with date mixture to creamed mixture. Mix well. Pour mix into 9 x 13 pan. Sprinkle top with 1/4 cup additional chips and 1/4 cup chopped nuts. Bake 350 degrees for 40 minutes.

— from the files of Leona Tenneyson
Antler, N.D.

OSU agent offers tips on ripeness of garden fruits and vegetables

The fruits of this year's garden are already being enjoyed. An OSU extension agent recommends picking vegetables at their peak of readiness to make the home gardening effort all the more worthwhile.

With fruiting vegetables such as squash, cucumbers, bush beans, tomatoes, peppers, eggplants and broccoli, regular picking encourages the plants to greater production.

"Even a few fruit left to mature on a cucumber plant will stop new fruit from setting," says Gray

Thompson, Oregon State University Extension agent, Clackamas County, home-urban horticulture.

Once a zucchini starts going to seed, he points out, the plant thinks its life is over and will not develop any more squash. One way to halt an overabundant zucchini harvest — short of tearing the plant from the ground — is to let it go to seed.

Here are some tips from Thompson on when to harvest certain vegetables. Summer squashes should be medium-sized and the rind should be easily dented by a fingernail. With winter

squashes, the rind should be firm enough so it is not readily dented by a fingernail. Color should be right for the variety, too.

Cucumbers should be picked before they turn yellow. Small cucumbers make good sweet pickles, medium good dills. Large ones are best eaten fresh. If cucumbers are too bitter for eating fresh, even after they are peeled, use them for pickles and relish.

Bush beans should be picked when they are at least three inches long and when the beans are just beginning to make the pod bulge.

For tomatoes, size is not an indication of maturity. Look for proper color. Tomatoes taste best if ripened on the vine, but can be picked at any degree of ripeness. Green tomatoes are used for relish or pickling, firm ones for eating fresh, and overripe ones for processing.

Peppers usually mature late. The green varieties should be firm and have a good shiny color. Allow red varieties to attain a uniform red color before harvesting.

Eggplants should be picked when shiny.

When ripe, broccoli stalks are firm but tender. Buds at the top of the stalk should be compact and not showing the yellow color that would indicate the plant is flowering. Thompson recommends cutting the large central head just before it separates into several heads. After that, cut the side shoots that develop into smaller heads.

In addition to regular harvesting of these fruiting vegetables, proper watering and fertilizing is important, Thompson emphasizes.

Lettuce salad offers variety

The popular summer dish of tossed green salad has many features to recommend it, according to an Oregon State University Home economist.

Carolyn Strader, an OSU extension "family living agent" for Clackamas County, lists the benefits that lettuce offers the summer menu. "Lettuce is a real asset to the dieter," Strader commented. "With only 65 to 70 calories for an entire head of lettuce, it can be very filling without exceeding the calorie budget."

Strader also points out that lettuce is an ideal food for summer because it doesn't require cooking and allows the cook and the kitchen to stay cool. "A crisp and cold salad can be stimulating to

appetites which are dulled by the heat," she said.

Lettuce also contributes iron, vitamin A and dietary fiber. Because it is usually consumed raw, none of its nutrients are lost in cooking.

"In shopping for the best quality lettuce, select heads that 'give' slightly when squeezed," Strader said. "To store lettuce at home, strip off any leaves that may seem too coarse for salad use."

Strader recommends rinsing the lettuce head under forcefully running cold water to restore the moisture lost in handling, storing lettuce in an air-tight compartment in the refrigerator. "Homemakers should make this simple procedure a habit, and the lettuce will always seem field fresh," she said.

Get garden pests while they're easy to control

The holes chewed in the foliage of garden vegetables and annual flowers may be a sign the cutworms grew too big for easy control. Ray McNeilan, Home Horticulture Extension Agent says the larger cutworm and armyworm pests get, the harder they are to control.

In western Oregon there are two main types of cutworms. One, the black cutworm, usually stays in the top surface of the soil and feeds on stems and roots. The variegated cutworm is often found feeding in the foliage as well as in the stems and surface roots.

Controls applied early in

the life of these worms can give quick results. But after the worm reaches mature size, more time and more insecticide will be needed to stop these pests. The recommended insecticide is Sevin, used as a dust or spray. Do not use Sevin around flowering plants where bees are working or you may kill off these beneficial insects McNeilan warns.

In late summer the beet armyworm may move into the garden and do the same sort of foliage destruction as the cutworm. The armyworm usually feeds on

pigweed until the leaves get old and tough. Then it may move into the corn or beet foliage or decide to take on the chard to finish out the summer. Control measures applied for the cutworm will be as effective for the armyworm.

In the small garden picking off and destroying the large cutworms and armyworms may be faster and as effective as dusting or spraying. "Either way," McNeilan says, "The gardener must have patience and expect control to be slow because these mature worms are tough customers!"

It tells quality

Check the egg's shell

Clackamas County egg and poultry specialist advises consumers to look for differences in shape, texture and color when shopping for eggs. These features can tell you a lot about the quality of the egg, according to Clayton Wills, OSU Extension Poultry Agent for Clackamas County.

The best interior and exterior quality is graded AA. This grade is what you buy at the store. Lower quality eggs are graded A, B, C. High quality eggs have high standing yolks and whites. Lower quality eggs, which are still wholesome, have abnormal shells, larger air cells and tend to spread out in the frying pan.

Labels such as Jumbo, Extra Large, Large, Medium and Small denote egg size. One dozen Jumbo eggs weighs 30 ounces or more, Extra Large 27-30 oz., Large 27-24 oz., Medium 24-21 oz., Small 21-18 oz.

Eggs are sent directly from the farm to the wholesale or retail stores. If the eggs you are buying are low quality and spread out in the frying pan, it's probably

because they have been kept too long at the store or supermarket.

Wills is available to answer

questions on egg and poultry quality through the Clackamas County Extension Office at 655-8631.

Fungus often causes lawn browning

Lawns in western Oregon are sometimes damaged by a fungus disease in mid-summer. Ray McNeilan, Home Horticulture Extension Agent, advises gardeners what warm, humid nights are ideal for brown patch disease.

This fungus causes irregular brown areas to form. The bentgrass lawns are most susceptible to this problem but in summers when the weather stays hot and humid for long periods the disease may occur in other lawn grasses as well.

The typical brown patch may be ringed with a margin of darker brown where the fungus is actively working. In severe situations the brown areas may become several feet across.

While the brown patch

fungus organism is active for only a short time under normal conditions, the effects may last until the fall rains begin. McNeilan says that proper treatment now will help prevent serious damage from occurring before cool weather returns.

He suggests spraying the lawn with a fungicide designed for use in turf grasses. Benomyl, Fore or Daconil are several materials labelled for this use. Follow label directions. Keep in mind that not all brown spots in the average lawn are caused by fungus diseases. More often the browning is caused by local dry spots. Check for this by taking a plug of soil out of the browned area. If the soil is dry then the only control measure you may need would be watering.

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