



OREGON'S NATIVE GREENS provide almost unlimited ideas for Christmas decorations throughout the house. Unusual and inexpensive decorations were shown at the Klamath District of Garden Clubs, Christmas Decorations Workshop at the Altamont School on December 3. A bow knot of bright red cranberries, a red yarn Santa and an off-center golden star were the dominating motifs in these arrangements held by (left to right) Mrs. Scott McKendree, Klamath Falls Garden Club, Mrs. Franz Nehammer, Mercer Island, Washington, instructor for the workshop and Mrs. Charles Thurman, chairman of the district garden clubs.

Wives Face Higher Food Bill Despite Bumper Farm Crops

Editor's Note: "If farm prices have fallen so sharply that the government is taking emergency action to help the farmers, why does food still cost so much? That question, in many different forms, reflects a widespread puzzlement among housewives and others about the 'spread' between farm prices and retail food prices. The following dispatch explains why the spread exists, how great it is, and why it's likely to grow even wider."

By GAYLORD P. GODWIN, WASHINGTON (UP)—The farmer gets considerably less than half of every dollar the housewife spends on food. And this "price spread" is expected to grow even wider. Despite bumper crops and lower prices to farmers, the Agriculture Department predicts that the housewife's food bill in 1956 will average about the same as in 1955. This poses the question as to why retail prices don't come down proportionately to the decrease in farm prices. The answer is in marketing and processing charges. They include labor, transportation, processing, wholesaling, retailing, profits of firms making and selling food products—in short, all the services connected with food handling. The

cost of these services has increased steadily in recent years and the outlook for next year is "further moderate increases." The cost comes out of the consumer's food dollar. The marketing bill for 1955 is estimated at 28 billion dollars. This is 80 per cent of the \$46,300,000,000 that housewives will spend across the grocery counter for farm-produced goods. Forty cents of each food dollar goes to the farmer. The Department of Agriculture computes the farmer's share and the marketing bill through use of a "typical market basket" for average wage earners or clerical workers in an urban community. The basket contains all farm-pro-

duced foods. Fish are excluded. In the latest report—July-September—all items of the market basket cost at retail \$983.35. Of this, the farmer's share was \$393.25, or 40 per cent. The 60 per cent marketing bill was \$590.10. The farmer does not get the same per cent of return on all items. For example, a pound loaf of bread in the market basket retails at 17.7 cents. The bread contains 0.912 pounds of wheat worth at the farm 2.5 cents, or 14 per cent of the cost of the loaf. The marketing bill—which in this case includes milling the wheat into flour, adding other ingredients and baking it into bread—is 15.2 cents.

A pound of choice grade beef retailing at 67.4 cents represents 2.16 pounds of choice grade steer-on-the-hoof. The marketing charge on the pound of beef is 26.5 cents, leaving the farmer 40.9 cents, or 61 per cent. Most of the marketing costs are fixed. They do not fluctuate like the prices received by farmers. Therefore lower prices at the farm

do not bring anywhere near as much of a reduction at retail.

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Over the GARDEN GATE

"The first step in Christmas decorating is to choose a theme and a color scheme." Mrs. Franz Nehammer, Mercer Island, Washington, flower arranger told some 150 garden club members Saturday, December 3, in Klamath Falls. Mrs. Nehammer conducted an all-day Christmas decoration workshop at Altamont School sponsored by the Klamath District, Oregon Federation of Garden Clubs. Mrs. Nehammer outlined principles of decorating and demonstrated examples at the workshop at which the 11 district clubs were represented. She said the theme and color scheme should be carried throughout the house, with emphasis on the four focal points—the entrance, fireplace, tree and dining table. The entrance, she said, sets the character of the decor and should express a warm welcome to guests. The type of entrance—exposed, sheltered, paneled—has a definite bearing on materials used. An exposed front door will demand more rugged, weatherproof material than a sheltered doorway. A paneled door calls for different treatment than one of glass areas. If a swag is used, Mrs. Nehammer instructed, it should curve toward the door handle. The door piece should be lightweight but

should not swing freely and it should have depth. The instructor demonstrated door pieces in both modern and traditional motifs. Her designs included a huge cranberry bow on a circular backing of fir; a red yarn Santa on a tree-shaped spray of spruce and a crescent-shaped swag centered with a string of green and gold bells of graduated sizes tied with a gold bow. Also displayed was a curved pine branch to which three sugar pine cones and a cornucopia fashioned from copper screening were tied with gold ribbon on a backdrop of fir. The cornucopia was filled with cone flowers and green branches. For a traditional dining table, Mrs. Nehammer featured a huge candy cane on a bed of fir branches with a focal point of three red balls which picked up the color value of the red paper-covered base. Another dining table arrangement consisted of a group of styrofoam snowballs in four sizes intertwined with fir twigs on a red base. Mrs. Nehammer displayed miniature table trees, one of greenish copper screening decorated with beads and another, a tiny yew, decorated with white beads and colored balls. She suggested a mantel piece

featuring a spiraled green-gold candle with a few pine branches at its base and accented by two groups of small balls in three values of red. Another mantel arrangement carried out a religious motif with a figure of a Madonna and Child dominating a few white bare branches and a low sprig of arbor vitae with a votive candle in front. A highlight of the demonstration was a sweet-meat tree designed for a buffet. It consisted of evergreen branches anchored to a wooden dowel. Hugging the tree "trunk" were silver paper cornucopias filled with tiny candy canes. Silver balls hung from the branches and above each ball was a miniature pan holding green and white mints. The base was a silver star. Mrs. Nehammer also showed how to make Christmas angels, stars and various ornaments. She has instructed flower show schools in seven states and at present is serving on the National Research Board of the Federation of Garden Clubs. She was introduced by Mrs. Charles Thurman, Klamath District director from Klamath Falls. Following the demonstration, Mrs. J. Pitts Elmore requested contribution of native material for use in landscaping the Klamath Falls Air Force jet interceptor base. Mrs. Elmore said the request had come from Major O. D. Whitten, installations officer, who said no funds had been appropriated for landscaping. Mrs. Earl McFall, Tulelake club president, announced the club's Christmas show to be held Friday, December 9, in the Tulelake Masonic Temple. Coffee will be provided but entrants are reminded to bring sack lunches.

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