



AgEcon SEARCH
RESEARCH IN AGRICULTURAL & APPLIED ECONOMICS

The World's Largest Open Access Agricultural & Applied Economics Digital Library

This document is discoverable and free to researchers across the globe due to the work of AgEcon Search.

Help ensure our sustainability.

Give to AgEcon Search

AgEcon Search
<http://ageconsearch.umn.edu>
aesearch@umn.edu

*Papers downloaded from **AgEcon Search** may be used for non-commercial purposes and personal study only. No other use, including posting to another Internet site, is permitted without permission from the copyright owner (not AgEcon Search), or as allowed under the provisions of Fair Use, U.S. Copyright Act, Title 17 U.S.C.*

Future of Convenience Foods

A University

Food 70's

Tells about the University of Maryland's modern concepts of food service

Milo C. Knight
Director of Food Service
University of Maryland

I am proud to tell you of our campus food facilities and our convenience program.

The University of Maryland Food Service is operated as a University function. It is a self supporting budget depending solely on student board charges and a small income from catering to on campus functions for operating income.

Our purpose and aims are to furnish participating students with well prepared, nutritious, tasty, dietetically balanced meals served in an atmosphere that helps to relieve some of their mundane problems. Although we try, we are not always successful in relieving these mundane problems.

In 1967 a system was born at the University of Maryland. This became known world wide as the "Convenience System" and was truly revolutionary in Institutional and in plant feeding. Basically this system introduced pre prepared frozen foods, recognized many of the foods already in use as convenient foods and replaced china service and stainless flat ware with single service or disposable table service.

A new method of converting a frozen mass into a hot tasty meal in a minimized amount of time was also developed and is known as the Foster K-10. This machine cut the Recon time of 12 lb pan of 0° degree food from 4 hours to 1 hour. I only mention the Foster unit because it was the first developed for this specific purpose and this is not intended as an advertisement. Recently, many companies have developed units that do equally as well as the Foster, i.e., Vulcan-Hart, Crown X, and many others.

The Student acceptance of this System was really phenomenal. We started in a dining hall serving 500 students and because of student request and a continuing shortage of qualified labor, a year and one half later all of our 5 dining halls, serving 8,500 students had been converted to a total convenience program. Because of the success of this system here; virtually all of the Colleges

and Universities throughout the nation are now participating to some degree in "Convenience Foods". There is no doubt in my mind that the old days of preparing a meal from scratch, where the cook has the opportunity to take a perfectly sound recipe and innovate according to his mood, until the results cannot be recognized, are gone. The major food processing companies throughout this nation are doing a magnificent job of turning out real quality dishes, cheaper than they can be prepared on premises.

While the students have not asked for any changes in the present system, because of man's desire not to stand still, we are going to revert back to china table service for the dinner meal for the esthetic value it will add to that meal.

There is one phase of our "Convenient System" that is performed by the Department. That is the preparation and assembly of salads and desserts. For this operation, we have established a commissary type facility. A special crew of women receive, process and pre portion on individual serving plates all of the salads and desserts served, except, of course, such items as ice cream, apples, bananas, etc. Once assembled, these dishes are placed on a sheet pan and then into a refrigerator where it remains until time for delivery. At this time, they are rolled into a refrigerated truck and distributed to the various dining halls. They are ready to be selected by the customer without further processing. An interesting note is that this crew of 16 women can and on occasion produce 32,000 single units in an 8 hour day.

Perhaps a few examples of what we consider convenient foods are in order:

1. Roast Beef: We buy a U.S. Choice Shoulder Clod that is boned, rolled and tied. All our cooks have to do is place them in a pan, sprinkle with salt and pepper, place in an oven at 275°F for three hours then removed, cooled and sliced. Admittedly, this takes more steps than we like to do, but the end product is much tastier than any like item furnished already cooked and sliced.
2. All canned goods that need only to be heated before serving.
3. All fresh meats such as pre cut or preformed hamburgers, pork chops, chicken, etc., when our only requirement is to pan and place in the oven for a specified time.

Our present storage facilities are not adequate to permit our buying direct from the processor. However, a new dining hall is in the final stages of approval that will give us over 6,000 square feet of freezer space and 12,000 square feet of dry storage. We expect to realize about 24% saving in food purchases when this facility is completed some time in 1972.

In closing, a few statistics may be interesting to you, such as:

- a) We feed 8,500 students in 5 dining halls, the largest of which feeds 3,500, the smallest 500.
- b) We operate on a totally self supporting budget. This includes everything from replacing material and equipment to all maintenance costs.
- c) Our total budget is 4-1/2 million dollars.
- d) Our annual labor bill is approx. 1 3/4 million dollars. This is distributed among 156 full time state employees and approx. 500 part time student employees.
- e) Purchases for resale (food items only) amounts to 2 million annually.
- f) Our full board student pay \$2.25 per day.

From where I am looking, "Convenient Foods" are here to stay and we are daily testing new ones in our search to find the very best.