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**Stage I:
Focus Groups**

The first stage of the research calls for multiple focus group interviewing sessions with children, parents, teachers, pediatricians, etc. The primary purpose of these focus sessions is to gather information to guide the development of the different messages to be disseminated by television, radio, newspapers, the classroom, the school cafeteria, health professionals, grocery stores, and USDA's Food Stamp Program.

**Stage II:
Baseline Surveys**

The second stage of research calls for a variety of baseline surveys in each of the three communities among representatives cross sections of the children from the target age group, their parents, medical professionals, teachers, etc.

These surveys will be conducted via indepth personal and group interviews in the schools, homes, and offices in order to measure and evaluate children's, parent's, and other people's nutritional knowledge, attitudes, and dietary behavior.

**Stage III:
Post Treatment**

The third stage of the research will be conducted in each of the three communities approximately 7 months after the start of the campaign. The same respondents as interviewed in the second stage will, to the extent possible, be re-interviewed and re-tested in this stage. Thus, the results from this stage will measure actual attitudinal and behavioral changes which occurred during the various campaigns.

These measurements will indicate which communication strategies can be used to reach each important population segment at the most advantageous times. The data should also help USDA, other government agencies, and outside groups to better understand the influence various channels of communication can have on our choices of food.

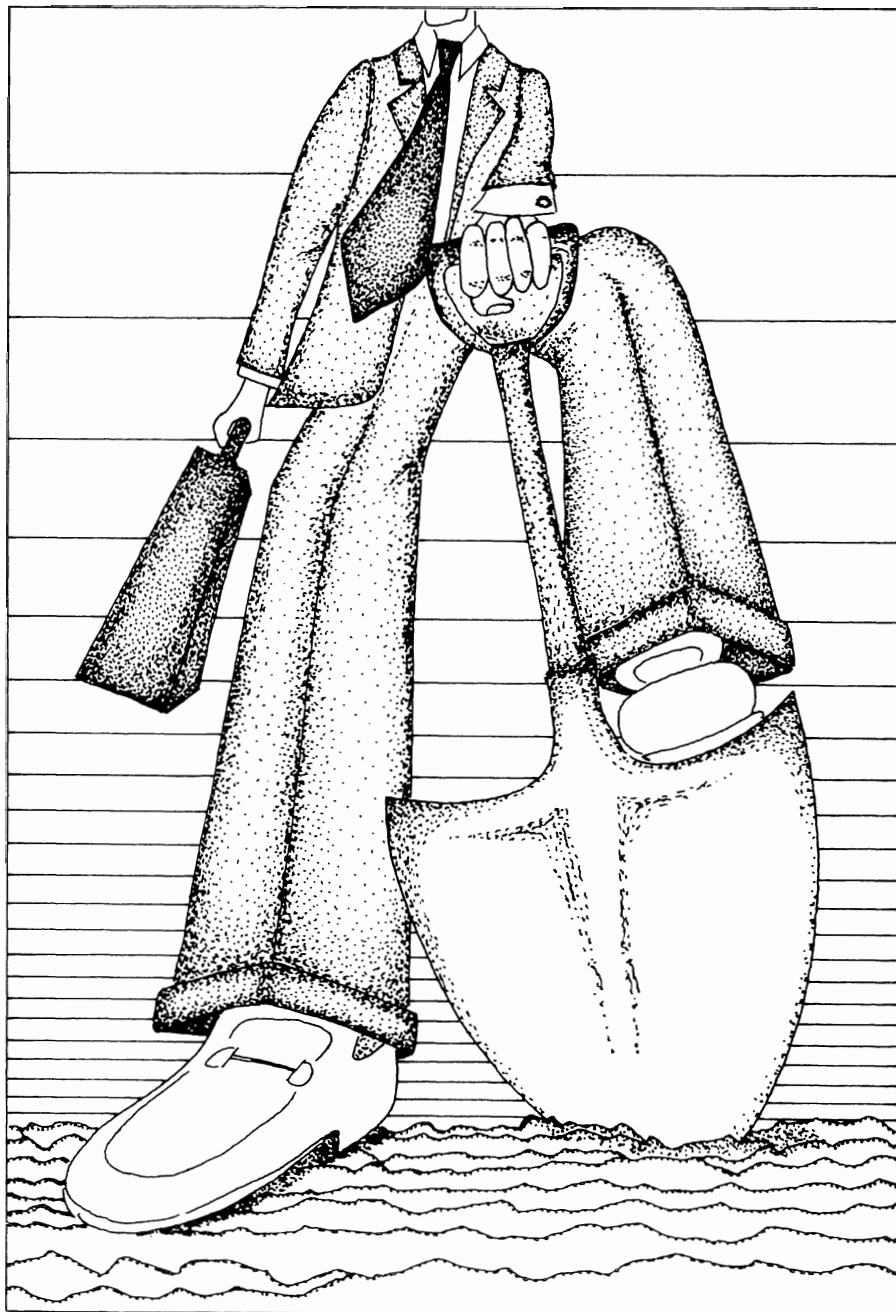
GARDENING — AN IMPACT ON THE FOOD SUPPLY

By Evelyn Kaitz

Is home production of fruits and vegetables an important source of food in our national diet? Does it affect demand in the marketplace? What proportion of the household population grows, and also cans and freezes home grown fruits and vegetables? Is increased interest in home food production a passing

fancy, or will it continue long enough to have a significant impact on the food supply?

These and other questions were investigated by ESCS in surveys of Consumers' Food-Related Behavior, Attitudes and Motives in the spring of 1976, the first quarter of 1977, and the first quarter of



1978. In each survey, respondents from approximately 1,400 households selected in a national probability sample were interviewed. Statistically, the chances are 95 in 100 that percentages from surveys could vary in a complete census by plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Number of Households Gardening

In each of the 3 years, respondents were asked whether, in their household, there was a garden the previous year, the current year, and plans for the next year.

Forty-four percent of the households had a fruit or vegetable garden in 1977. The rate of home gardening did not change much from year to year. However, in the 5-year period—from 1974 including the expression of intent for 1978—there could be about a 4-percent increase in the home fruit or vegetable gardens or a 5-million increase in the number of home gardens in the U.S., excluding Alaska and Hawaii.

Reasons for Gardening

The three reasons mentioned most for the household fruit or vegetable gardens in each of the three phases were the same and in the same order. "Better quality fruits or vegetables" was mentioned by more than 6 in 10 respondents. "Saves money and cuts down on the food budget," was given by about 5 in 10, and "It is a hobby, provides pleasure, pride and satisfaction," by more than one-third.

Reasons for the 1975 garden did not include enough mentions of "It's safer, no preservatives, no wax, nothing added" to be recorded. For the 1976 garden, this concern was mentioned by 3 percent. However, for the 1977 garden, 11 percent of the respondents gave this reason, reflecting consumers' growing concern about additives and preservatives in their food.

The reasons mentioned most frequently for not having a household fruit and vegetable garden were "no place to grow a garden"

and "no time for gardening." Around thirty percent non-gardening households gave these responses.

Size of Gardens

Although the number of households growing fruits or vegetables appears to be increasing over the past few years the size of the gardens appears to be increasing.

Preliminary data from the 1978 survey indicate that for the 1977 gardens, half of the households used 750 or more square feet, compared with 500 or more reported for the 1976 gardens.

Approximately 6 million acres were utilized for the 1977 home gardens, about the same used for growing the principal commercial fruits and vegetables. But the commercial acreage is utilized more extensively. In all probability, some ornamental flowers were included in the home gardening space as borders or as aids in pest control.

Freezing

Preliminary data from the 1978 survey indicate that 63 percent of the garden households froze some of their homegrown fruits or vegetables, or approximately 21 million households.

An average of 54 quarts of all fruits and vegetables were frozen from the 1977 gardens. This represents about 81 pounds of fruits and vegetables from the average household that had a garden froze some of their homegrown produce.

Only 12 percent of the respondents from households that froze some fruits or vegetables and had a garden said that no fruits or vegetables were frozen from their gardens.

Canning

Half the garden households, or nearly 17 million, canned some of their homegrown produce in 1977.

Only about 17 percent of the respondents from households that canned fruits and vegetables and also had a garden said that none

of their homegrown produce was canned.

Aggregating all the homegrown fruits or vegetables that were canned in 1977, 66 quarts or 132 pounds were canned in the average household that canned fruits or vegetables from the household garden.

As part of the 1976 survey, canners of fruits or vegetables were asked to fill out a supplemental questionnaire about the canning they did in 1975.¹ To increase the sample size, additional households were screened in the same locations. Among all the canning households involved in the supplemental study, 80 percent had fruit or vegetable gardens.

Impact on the Food Supply

According to data reported by Gardens for All Inc. from their Gallup Survey on Home Gardening in 1977, the Gross National Home Garden Product—the approximate value of the fruits and vegetables grown in household gardens—climbed from approximately \$10 billion in 1976 to \$14 billion in 1977. These figures are based on 32 million household gardens, an average garden size of 770 square feet, the most frequently grown fruits and vegetables, typical growing methods, and average supermarket prices.

The types of fruits or vegetables and the amounts planted, frozen, or canned differed in the individual households. However, it is obvious that home production of fruits and vegetables has an impact on the market system.

In addition, long-term benefits of home gardening are derived from utilization of homegrown fruits and vegetables beyond the growing season. Available data indicate that per capita consumption of processed fruits and vegetables from the 1977 home gardens was about 11 percent of all processed fruits and vegetables that year.

¹Conducted for USDA's Science and Education Administration, Consumer and Food Economic Institute.