

MASS-OBSERVATION ARCHIVE, ARTS D, UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX, FALMER,
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WINTER DIRECTIVE 1982

The theme is food, including drink. Please read the whole thing before you write anything.

1a First the things that you, your family, your relations and friends do NOT eat and why.

Here are some of the reasons why you might not eat certain things:

Moral:vegetarians would exclude meat on these grounds; also some non-vegetarians avoid battery eggs or veal etc because of the way in which they are produced.

Health:this might also be a reason for vegetarianism, it would also apply to people on permanent or temporary diets and people with allergies. I would include here foods avoided because of preservatives, and additives generally.

Political:the products of certain countries are rejected because of the policies of their governments.

Religious:certain religions ban certain foods absolutely or occasionally (ie on certain days or at certain periods).

"Personal":some people refuse to eat or strongly dislike eating some things for none of the above reasons, eg some people will not eat offal, others have an entrenched loathing of 'greens'.

In replying to this section please be as specific as possible, eg specifying if you are a vegetarian, vegan, or modified vegetarian eating, say, fish. If you object to particular additives, please say which. Finally, please do add other reasons which occur to you for not eating things.

1b. What foods do you now buy rarely or never because of their cost which you used to buy (or as a child eat) regularly; butter, beef (other than minced), ground coffee and cod are a few of the items that some people no longer buy regularly.

1c. Do you regard meat in some form as an essential food in the sense that you feel you should eat it once a day or that any proper meal should include it?

2. Food for special occasions: what foods do you buy, which you would not normally buy, for entertaining, for celebrations and anniversaries of all kinds (the answer to this may well overlap with 1b above).

PLEASE TURN OVER

3a. New Foods: taking the food of your childhood as a baseline, what items of food have been introduced since, either regularly or occasionally eg vegetables, fruits, delicatessen products, Asian (including Chinese) Take-away, 'convenience' foods. I am reminded as I write of the look on the face of a grocer when I asked for olive oil in mid-December 1953.

- 3b. Does the phrase 'in season' as applied to food mean anything to you today? Do you, for example, buy tomatoes in February or avoid pork when there is not an 'r'-in the month.
4. Like mother used to make..... Memories please of food which you particularly enjoyed as a child, not necessarily treats or special occasions but not excluding these. Also, frankly, childhood hates and a note on whether these have been overcome, eg as it might be for me : spinach, bread and butter pudding. I now like the former, the latter - never.
5. A project for home-growers only: in 1983 would you please cost the production of home-grown vegetables, cost of seed, fertilizer, pesticides etc from now until cropping time and then make a note of the approximate yield Do not cost your labour but please do keep a note of the amount of time spent working in garden or allotment.

If you grow so large a variety that it would be a real chore to cost the lot, please keep details for one main crop.

Would you also make a list of all your equipment that relates directly to vegetable production, ie hoe, spade, fork etc but not lawn mower, and when you are next in the shop make a note of their replacement value.

IN CONCLUSION AND AS A CONCLUSION TO 1982 GRATEFUL THANKS TO EVERY ONE OF YOU AND CONGRATULATIONS ON THE COLLECTIVE WORK DONE THIS YEAR. VERY BEST WISHES TO YOU AND YOURS FOR CHRISTMAS AND THE NEW YEAR.

Dorothy Sheridan

PS Be sure to read the enclosed notes!