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A Note from Glen

Happy New Year! I hope yours is off to a good start and that great things lie ahead for you.

Who ever thought this newsletter would go on for so long? If you count issues, this is the 23rd one. I still enjoy doing it. I have learned so much myself over the months and hopefully you have found something of value along the way.

Fun Facts and Trivia

The only 15 letter word that can be spelled without repeating a letter is "uncopyrightable".

The dot over the letter 'i' is called a tittle.

Upper and lower case letters are named 'upper' and 'lower' because in the time when all original print had to be set in individual letters, the 'upper case' letters were stored in the case above the case that stored the smaller 'lower case' letters.

Brain Teaser

What does this mean? generation

See page 3 for the answer.

Deception or Clever Marketing?

There has been a lot of talk about rising supermarket prices, but did you realize that what seems to be a stable price could actually be a price increase? It's because shrinking of containers keeps the price the same. In other words, you are getting less of the product for the same price as before. In many cases you don't even realize that you are getting less for your money.

Do you eat Skippy peanut butter? Have you taken a close look at the container lately? It looks about the same size as before, but upon closer examination you see that the jar has developed a "dimple" on the bottom. Instead of 18 ounces, it now contains 16.3 ounces. That's about 10% less peanut butter! The only way to know you are buying less is to look at the weight on the label and recognize it's lighter than before Unilever, owner of the Skippy brand, switched out containers.

Across the supermarket, manufacturers are trimming packages, nipping a half-ounce off that bar of soap, narrowing the width of toilet paper and shrinking the size of ice cream containers. Often the changes are so subtle that they create the illusion that you are buying the same amount. The manufacturer's explanation is that the new smaller sizes are clearly marked on labels and you should read them. Apparently they feel it is to their advantage to try to slip these changes by the customer rather than announcing them.

Here are more examples. Last June, Kellogg Co. reduced the weight of many popular cereals, including Cocoa Krispies, Corn Pops, Apple Jacks, Froot Loops and Honey Smacks, an average of 2.4 ounces per box to offset rising grain and energy expenses. The reduction wouldn't be obvious to shoppers walking down the cereal aisle. From the front, the size of the box remains the same; only the depth was reduced,

Breyers ice cream containers have been reduced to 1.5 quarts from 1.75 quarts. (Remember the half gallon cartons?) Competitor Dreyer's Grand Ice Cream did the same by shortening its carton.

I guess our choice is to read the label and pay the price, change brands, or stop purchasing the product.

Tech Tip

Are you tired of looking through the phone book for a business number? Or being charged by the phone company to connect you? Then you should try the new 411 service from Google. The service is fast, free, and easy to use. Here's how:

From any phone, dial 1-800-GOOG-411 (1-800-466-4411). State the location and business type. Connect to the business for free.

Give it a try and see how simple it is to find and connect with local businesses for free. [Learn more and watch a demo.](#)

Food Fact

Max out your mashed potatoes by boiling them whole. Cubing your potatoes first will slash their potassium content by as much as 50 percent. It does take a bit longer, but the payoff is that you preserve their potassium content. You get not only more potassium but more of other important minerals, too: iron, zinc, magnesium, manganese, and phosphorus. Potassium helps your body regulate blood pressure and heart rate, as well as nerve and muscle function.

Quotable Quotes

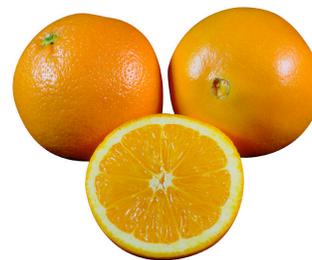
You make the world a better place by making yourself a better person.
~ Scott Sorrell

In any free society, the conflict between social conformity and individual liberty is permanent, unresolvable, and necessary.
~ Kathleen Norris

The most difficult thing in the world is to know how to do a thing and to watch somebody else doing it wrong, without comment. ~ T. H. White

Oranges: A Tasty Healthy Snack

Oranges are juicy and sweet and renowned for their concentration of vitamin C. They make a perfect snack and add a special tang to many recipes. They are one of the most popular fruits in the world. Oranges are generally available from winter through summer with seasonal variations depending on the variety.



Just one orange supplies 116.2% of the daily value for vitamin C which is the primary water-soluble antioxidant in the body. Vitamin C is also vital for the proper function of a healthy immune system. It is good for preventing colds and may be helpful in preventing recurrent ear infections.

The health benefits of oranges continue with their fiber. A single orange provides 12.5% of the daily value for fiber. Fiber can help keep blood sugar levels under control, which may help explain why oranges can be a very healthy snack for people with diabetes. In addition, fructose, the natural fruit sugar in oranges, can help to keep blood sugar levels from rising too high after eating. The fiber in oranges can grab cancer-causing chemicals and keep them away from cells of the colon, providing yet another line of protection from colon cancer.

In addition to oranges' phytonutrients, vitamin C and fiber, they are a good source of thiamin, folate, vitamin A (in the form of beta-carotene), potassium and calcium.

As Valencia oranges ripen on the tree they will first turn a yellow-orange color and then regain a little green tinge near the stem end of the fruit. This "regreening" of the orange is not a sign of immaturity or considered a blemish on the skin. Florida and Texas growers will sometimes use a dye to enhance the appearance of their fruit in the marketplace. All fruit treated with dye will be stamped "color added" to notify people with food allergies that dye has been added to the fruit.

When selecting oranges, look for fruit with a shiny skin free of blemishes, wrinkles, and soft areas. They should be heavy for their size which indicates that they are full of juice. Lighter fruit has more skin and drier pulp resulting in less juice. Select navel oranges with small sized navels. Larger navels indicate that they were overripe when picked. Store oranges in a cool place outside the refrigerator. If you need to keep them longer, refrigerate in a plastic bag or in the vegetable crisper section of the refrigerator. Try to eat them within a few days.

The Wine Corner



Oak barrels have been used for centuries to store and age wine. Wooden wine barrels allow for a small amount of evaporation of the contents during the aging period. For many years French Oak was considered especially desirable wood for making wine barrels. Winemakers

select wood for their wine barrels from different forests for the effect on the finished wine. Different forests produce wood with distinctive characteristics including the amount of oak flavors that are imparted to the wine.

Early experiments with American Oak were not very successful since the amount of influence that the barrel had on the taste of the wine was too great. At first it was thought that the problem was with the wood itself. Now we know that most of the difficulties were caused by the preparation of the wood and the way the barrel was constructed. As coopers began using traditional French barrel making techniques the results improved dramatically.

Perhaps the two most significant differences in wood preparation and barrel construction techniques were the seasoning of the wood and the way the staves were prepared. The French Coopers always let the wood air-dry for at least 24 months to attain proper seasoning. The American barrel makers were more used to building whiskey barrels and used a kiln-dry method to season the wood. The staves for whiskey barrels were also sawn rather than split. The French barrel makers split the wood along the grain of the wood to make the staves. Splitting, rather than sawing, produced staves, and ultimately barrels, that had more subtle effects on the wine.

To be continued next month

Recipe of the Month

Supposedly the last words of Kit Carson, American frontiersman (1809-1868), were, "I sure wish I had time for one last bowl of chili." I have experimented with many chili recipes, taken what I think were the best of each, and created this recipe. I named it Rock Creek Chili because it takes me back to my roots. I grew up near the banks of Rock Creek in Oklahoma. A cold winter day is the perfect time for this chili.

Rock Creek Chili

2 pounds lean ground beef
1 large onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 teaspoon dried oregano (preferably Mexican oregano)
3 tablespoons chili powder (or more, to taste)
1 teaspoon ground cumin
2 teaspoons salt or to taste
5 or 6 dashes Tabasco or other hot pepper sauce
2 cups hot water
1 14 1/2-ounce can diced tomatoes
1 15-ounce can red kidney beans

Place the ground beef in a Dutch oven and brown well. Add onion and garlic and cook until onion is soft, about 5 minutes.

Add the oregano, chili powder, cumin, salt and Tabasco. Add the water and tomatoes and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer; cover and cook for 45 minutes. Add the beans, with liquid, and cook uncovered for 15 minutes. Makes 6 servings.

A Final Word

Thanks again for reading this newsletter. Comments or questions are welcome and appreciated. You can express yourself [HERE](#).

I hope 2009 is the best year ever for you, your family, and friends. I think we have many reasons to be optimistic.

Until next time remember: If you always do what you always did, you'll always get what you always got.

Answer to Brain Teaser: Generation gap

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