

wanted to know, did farm women get from all these sight, sound and printed mass media? And in their answers the ladies said it was mostly news about foods and fabrics that they wanted, but that they also wanted to be kept up to date on farming matters.

In the next issue we'd like to tell you something about the range and variety of these and other subject topics which were of interest to rural women when they read, watched and listened for, "helpful" homemaking information.

Information for Consumers

By Ruth Moyle

SOME INTERESTING information regarding U.S. women shoppers and their shopping habits has been published recently. It wasn't all what you might call highly complimentary I'm afraid, and as I have read it I have been wondering how Canadian Consumers generally would regard the article. Would we mark the conclusions "True" or "False"? How would we each rate ourself individually?

Packaging was discussed, the food packages which the article suggests must be considered "Salesmen, Symbols and Services." In other words, today's food package is designed to take the place of the personal touch. The package must take the place of those people who used to tell us about the product and sell it to us. All of which, according to one marketing authority, has changed greatly. "Shoppers today," he contends, "no longer buy 'products.' Instead we buy 'packages' and 'symbols.'"

The outside of the package, according to this authority, makes the difference between success and failure when it comes to getting the shopper to accept a new product. The quality of the food alone cannot sell it, nor will lower prices.

"We Consumers," according to this marketing expert "want to think, or like to think, our buying habits are quite rational." Apparently, however, and sad to say, our final choice, although we are not aware of it, is generally influenced by the package rather than the contents.

What proof does this critic of women shoppers have to support these statements?

Well, for one thing, he tells of the results of a test which was used to try to find out what effect, if any, the colour of the package has on consumer acceptance of a food product.

Two hundred women were asked to sample four brews of coffee. The tasters knew nothing about the four they were to taste test except that one cup was made of coffee from

a plain red container, one from a brown one, one from a blue, and one from a yellow. The results of the test were interesting. 84%—that's 168 of the 200 women, rated the coffee from the red can as having the richest, fullest flavor. 73%, or about 146 of the 200 felt the coffee from the brown can was too strong. To most of the 200 women the coffee from the blue can had a milder flavour, while that from the yellow can was rated as a "weaker blend."

As you may have guessed by now, if the women had taken the test blindfolded they would have known in each case that the four coffees were exactly the same brew of the same coffee. Because of the eye appeal of the different colored containers, however, the women rated the flavour all the way from "too strong," "rich and full" to "milder" and even "weaker."

So before we can rate this evaluation—that women today buy packages rather than products—as true or false, it might be a good idea for each of us to do a bit of individual research. The next time we shop let's take a close look at the package we have taken down from the shelf to put in our market basket and ask, "Why did I pick this particular make? Was it because of the quality of the contents? Because of price advantage? Or did I choose it because of the package, which, after all, is going to end up in the garbage can?"

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TREASURES

By Patience Strong

Things of beauty should be cherished, kept with every care — so that future generations may enjoy and share — the priceless treasures of the past that nothing can replace: china, crystal, brass and copper, silver, linen, lace.

Grateful we should be to those who made them in their day — and to those who have preserved them in a loving way . . . The thought of treasures lost or broken is a thought for tears — when gentle hands have passed them on all down the changing years.

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