

Nutritionist balances sugar scales

by **PAUL SANDERSON**
Some nutritionists now believe that sugar has inherited an unfair, and unhealthy, harmful reputation in our, "think

thin diet conscious society." The essential message of Joan Fielden, one of Canada's best known home economists, is the

promotion of a balanced diet. As co-ordinator of the Canadian Sugar Institute's public education program, she has learned that sugar is a part of this diet.

Sugar has been recognized as a "safe food" for the past 20 years, by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, she says. Their research suggests that sugar can constitute up to 25 percent of a healthy person's caloric intake.

"Everybody eats too much sugar," is the biggest single myth battled by Fielden, in her promotion of a healthy diet for Canadians.

Canadian sugar consumption among adults averaged approximately 10 percent of caloric intake, and about 15 percent among children. And surprisingly enough, Statistics Canada figures also show that current sugar consumption (83.1 pounds per capita in 1983) is no greater than it was 50 years ago (86.1 pounds per capita in 1934).

In Fielden's experience, most people consider sugar to be

fattening. But sugar is a simple carbohydrate, and not a fat at all, she asserts. While a teaspoon of sugar actually contains just 16 calories, 115 calories is a common guess among the general public.

Fielden, author of the *Chatelaine Diet Cookbook*, stresses the reduction of caloric intake in general, during successful dieting. An unhealthy imbalance can result when an overweight person concentrates solely on removing sugar from the diet. The natural functions of fat and protein may be impaired if the body robs them for the energy normally provided by sugar.

The Canada Food Guide, widely available in schools, government offices, and libraries, clearly outlines the balanced diet promoted by Fielden. The essential principle is to select foods from at least three of the four

food groups, at every meal: meat and meat alternates, fruit and vegetables, dairy, bread and cereal.

In the meantime, explains Fielden, sugar will continue to enhance

the flavour of nutritious foods like cereals, fruit, and milk, and serve a major role as an effective preservative in many canned, bottled, and packaged foods. Fielden was in Midland last Friday.



Public Libraries' Week

Irene Roth, head of adult services in the Midland Public Library, displays one of the plastic bags which the library is giving patrons this week. This week is Public Libraries Week

across Ontario. Yesterday, flowers were presented to Rachel Ferguson, a user of Midland's library since 1927. At the rate of three books for 10 days, she has read more than 9,000 books.

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