

SOME INFORMATION ABOUT STANDARD FLOUR

Not Like the War Bread of Europe as is Generally Supposed--Not as White and Highly Refined as High Grade Flours---New Regulation Works for Food Conservation.

(By R. Harcourt, Professor of Chemistry, Ontario Agricultural College.)

The standard flour is not a black or even a dark flour. So many discrediting stories have been circulated about the war breads of Europe that people appear to have jumped to the conclusion that our standard flour is of the same kind. It is not as white and highly refined as the high grade patent flours, nor is it like the low grade flours; it is all the flour from the wheat left in one grade.

Until January 28th of this year a miller might make several grades of flour from one stream of wheat: High patents like Five Roses, Royal Household and Purity; baker's grades like Glenora, Three Stars and Harvest Queen; and many other grades of

flour, even down to what is called "feed flour." Under the new regulations all these grades of flour, high and low, are left unseparated and only one grade, what we call the standard flour, may now be made in Canada.

Considerable Saving of Flour.

Formerly a miller might use as many pounds of wheat as he liked to make a barrel of flour; now he must produce at least 196 pounds of flour from 2665 pounds of spring wheat, or 275 pounds of winter wheat. This means that out of every 100 pounds of spring wheat milled, 74 pounds must be converted into flour.

The saving effected by this ruling is considerable and the regulation works for food conservation from different angles. In the first place regarding the saving of wheat, probably a few of the larger flour mills have been making as long an extraction as the Food Controller's order requires, but such has not been the case in the majority of the mills and certainly not in many of the smaller ones.

For instance a correspondent recently reported that he took 1,142 pounds of spring wheat to a mill for

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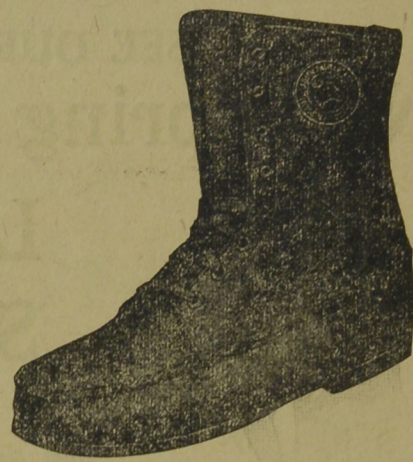
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grinding and received in return 435 pounds of flour and 685 pounds of feed. If his wheat had been milled according to the Food Controller's orders, it would have yielded 814 pounds of flour and (allowing two pounds of waste per barrel of flour) 288 pounds of feed. The customer received only a little over half the amount of flour to which he was entitled and the shorts and even the bran were loaded with flour. Such milling is wasteful, too wasteful to be allowed under present conditions. One of the objects of the recent order is to correct this condition and thus get more of the flour from the grain.

Furthermore, in all the mills, large and small, a certain amount of the low grade flour was usually sold as feed flour, for cattle use. Again, much of the flour above the feed flour and



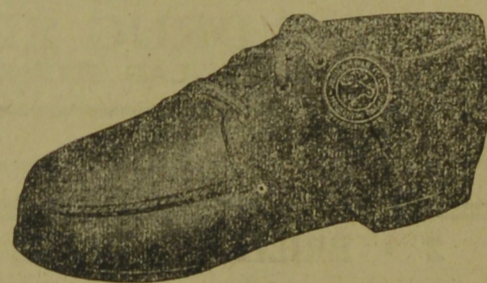
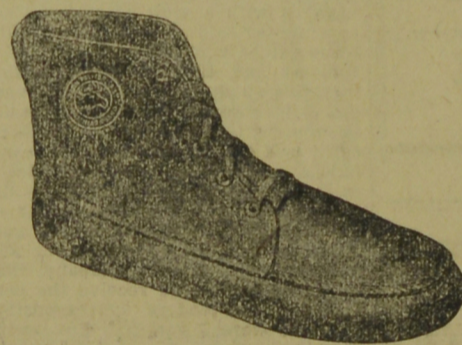
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THE FLAVOUR LASTS

below the baker's grades was used by the foreign element or exported. We cannot calculate the saving effected in these various ways but it must be considerable.

Saving in Transportation Also.

All mills, no matter what their capacity, are now permitted to turn out only one grade of flour and while it is true that the quality of flour that has characterized a mill in the past will still be evident, it is probable that the during will result in localizing the use of the flour and saving transportation.

Fear has been expressed regarding the keeping quality of this flour in arm weather, but we may safely assume that there will be no trouble in this respect, especially if the buyers observe the Canada Food Board's request not to purchase more than a month's supply in advance.

Repeated tests made in our laboratory show clearly that the new standard flour is of good quality. It has a rich, creamy appearance; the bread made from it is slightly darker in color and the texture a very little coarser; the crust is of good full color. In general, the change in the quality of the bread is so slight that it has been delivered by the baker in the usual round of his business and the customer observed no difference until his attention was called to it.

No order of the Food Controller or of the Canada Food Board has been made with a desire to restrict the manufacture and use of graham and whole wheat flour; rather it is desired to encourage their production. A limited use of the former tends towards conservation and an extended use of the latter, provided too much bran is not left in the flour, also means conservation.

The Question of Price.

Many people have expressed surprise that the price of the standard flour was not lower than that of the flour formerly used. As a matter of fact, it is less than that of the high patents and about the same as that of the baker's grades. But it must be pointed out that the full fixed price of wheat was paid last fall and no arrangement was made for the cost of carrying over wheat supplies until the spring and summer. Some one has to pay the interest on the money invested, loss in storage, etc., and such costs always come back on the consumer. No charge of any kind was made against the wheat for this purpose until January. Awaiting the arrangements of what this charge should be, the miller did not advance the price of flour.

The wheat now costs the miller several cents per bushel more than it did last fall, but for the arranging of the standard flour, the price of flour would have advanced. This has been prevented and our new flour, while not quite so white as the higher grades of flour formerly used in bread making, is in nearly all other respects their equal. The fixing of a standard flour has prevented the expected rise and that in spite of the carrying over charges on the wheat, increased cost of bags and labor.

In the United States the standard flour is the same length of extraction as our own and the commercial baker

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is compelled to use 20 per cent. of the flour or meal of other grains along with it in making bread. We have not the other grains, in sufficient supply over and above requirements for feeding livestock, to warrant such a compulsory measure at the present time.

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