

# Victory Recipes of the Great War | American Experience | Official Site

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The Great War changed America’s role in the world. At home, it also changed how Americans ate. When Wilson declared war in 1917, the cookbook industry — as well as local clubs and newspapers — immediately fell in line. Wartime editions were rushed into print. Herbert Hoover’s new Food Administration, meanwhile, issued guidelines and announced themed days of the week: Mondays were meatless, Wednesdays wheatless... Certain foods, like sugar, wheat, meats, and fats, were urgently needed for the front and for Allied civilian populations. “It became evident that food was going to be a weapon in the war,” says Helen Veit, an interviewee in *The Great War* and a leading food historian. “Herbert Hoover immediately worked to get Americans to think that saving food and conserving food was the most important thing that they could do as individuals.”

We’ve scoured more than a dozen World War I “victory cookbooks” and read hundreds of recipes from around the country to bring you a week’s worth of historical dishes. All of them meet Food Administration guidelines. Set your tables back to 1917 and make sure to share your victory meals with us using #GreatWarPBS on [Instagram](#) and .

Remember, as a victory cookbook explained in 1918: "Don't give the new dishes a black eye by having too many of them at once. Use all the ingenuity you have to make them both taste and look well. Food habits, like other habits, are not easily changed. Lead gently into the new realm."



[Download the recipe cards \(2.1 MB\)](#)

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# VICTORY RECIPES OF THE GREAT WAR



## “**FOOD WILL WIN THE WAR**”

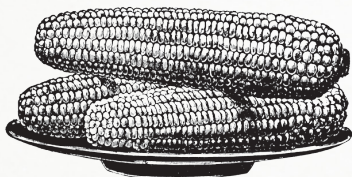
—FOOD ADMINISTRATION

Food was a weapon during World War I. The U.S. never had to ration, but citizens were strongly encouraged to forego certain ingredients to save them for European allies and American soldiers. From 1917 to 1918, 14 million households pledged to:

- Observe two wheatless days a week
- Save sugar every day
- Eat no meat on Tuesday
- Keep Saturdays porkless
- Make every day a fat-saving day

# WHEATLESS MONDAY

## HOOVER CORN BREAD



“WE ALL LIKE CORN”

—Herbert Hoover, director of Food Administration

## HOOVER CORN BREAD

From Alice Bradley, *Wheatless and Meatless Menus and Recipes* (1918)

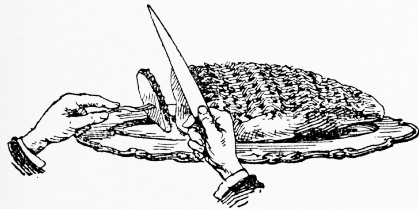
2 cups yellow cornmeal  
2 Tbs baking powder  
1 tsp salt  
2 cups milk  
1 Tbs shortening or cooking oil  
1 tsp corn syrup

Mix and sift cornmeal, baking powder and salt. Add slowly milk, melted shortening or cooking oil, and corn syrup. Bake in shallow pan, split, toast and spread with butter.

The Food Administration argued that if Americans could use more corn, millions of bushels of wheat would be liberated for the Allies.

# MEATLESS TUESDAY

## CAMOUFLAGE ROAST



**“WE MUST SAVE MEAT  
TO SAVE OURSELVES”**

—Food Administration

## CAMOUFLAGE ROAST

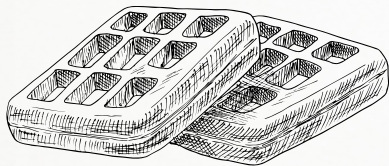
From *Twentieth Century Club War Time  
Cook Book* (1918)

2 cups bread crumbs  
1 cup peanuts (ground or pounded fine)  
Juice of half a lemon  
A pinch of mace  
1 small grated onion  
1 tsp butter substitute  
1 egg  
1 cup milk  
1 tsp flour or cornstarch

Stir flour into melted butter substitute, add milk and onion, and bring to a boil; add nuts and bread crumbs; remove from fire; add lemon juice, egg and mace. Bake in a buttered pudding dish till brown and serve with tomato sauce.

# WHEATLESS WEDNESDAY

## POTATO WAFFLES



## POTATO WAFFLES

From Pauline Partridge & Hester Conklin,  
*Wheatless and Meatless Days* (1918)

1 cup cold mashed potatoes  
1 cup milk  
2 egg yolks  
1 tsp melted fat  
¼ cup sugar  
½ cup rye flour  
1 tsp salt  
2 tsp baking powder  
2 stiffly beaten egg whites

Mix potatoes, milk, and well-beaten egg yolks. Mix the sugar, salt, flour, and baking powder, and add to first mixture. Add melted fat and beat vigorously. Fold in the stiffly beaten egg whites, pour into a hot, evenly greased waffle iron, filling the iron two-thirds full each time. Cook until brown and serve with maple or Karo syrup.

# SUGAR- SAVING FAT- SAVING THURSDAY

## POPCORN BALLS



**“POPCORN HAS POWER”**

*—Twentieth Century Club War Time Cook Book*

## POPCORN BALLS

From Carolyn Webber, *Two Hundred and Seventy-Five War-Time Recipes* (1918)

1 cup molasses  
1 Tbs oleo (margarine)  
1 Tbs sugar  
¼ tsp baking soda  
½ tsp salt

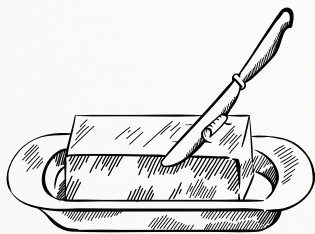
Boil molasses and oleo 3 minutes. Add sugar. Boil till it threads very slightly. Remove, add soda. Pour over 4 quarts popcorn. Shape. Roll in wax papers.

“Popcorn is very valuable as a food. Give the children popcorn balls . . . [They] will be happy and satisfied, and you will be helping your country by saving on other sweets.”

*—Twentieth Century Club War Time Cook Book*

# FAT-FREE FRIDAY

## WAR BUTTER



## WAR BUTTER

From *Win the War Cookbook* (1918)

How to make 2 ¼ pounds of butter out of 1 pound.

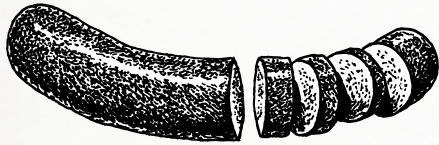
1 pound butter  
1 pint rich milk  
1 Tbs gelatin

Cream butter. Put small amount cold milk with gelatin. Heat rest, pour over soaked gelatin. Add to butter, heat until it begins to thicken, place on platter by spoonful to thicken.

Europeans lacked butter. “Extending” butter at home was one way to help the war effort. Other fats, like glycerin, were also needed for the manufacture of explosives.

# PORKLESS SATURDAY

## MOCK SAUSAGE



**“MAKE THE NEW FOODS AS APPETIZING AND ATTRACTIVE AS POSSIBLE”**

*—Twentieth Century Club War Time Cook Book*

## MOCK SAUSAGE

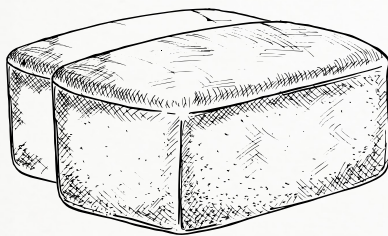
From *Twentieth Century Club War Time Cook Book* (1918)

1 cup lima beans  
½ tsp powdered sage  
½ tsp dried thyme  
½ tsp dried sweet marjoram  
Corn or vegetable oil  
Salt  
Pepper  
Flour

Soak lima beans over night, boil until very soft, drain and mash, season with salt, pepper and a half a teaspoon each of powdered sage, thyme, and sweet marjoram; make into rolls about the size of a finger; roll in flour and fry a golden brown in corn or other vegetable oil.

# SUGARLESS SUNDAY

## WAR CAKE



## WAR CAKE

From U.S. Food Administration,  
*War Economy in Food* (1918)

1 cup molasses	1 tsp cinnamon
1 cup corn syrup	½ tsp cloves
1 ½ cups water	½ tsp nutmeg
1 package raisins	3 cups rye flour
2 Tbs fat	½ tsp baking soda
1 tsp salt	2 tsp baking powder

Boil together for 5 minutes the first nine ingredients. Cool, add the sifted dry ingredients and bake in two loaves for 45 minutes in a moderate oven. This cake should be kept several days before using. It makes about 20 to 25 servings. If desired 1 cup oatmeal may be used in place of ⅞ cup of flour.