

### OPEN FORUM

#### THE LUMBER MARKET

Many people... the farmers who are cutting lumber, the merchants in our town and others... have been asking my views as to what happened to the lumber market, and what the future prospects are.

Not being able to answer everybody, I thought to outline briefly what the real picture of the lumber market in general is, and particularly as far as our region is concerned.

The general market all over the country is good. There is a kind of a standstill at present, owing

to the unexpected result of the election, and it might take some time till big capital will adjust itself to the trend of Congress.

With regard to our region, I would say that the lumber market, by itself, is a good one, as the approximately twenty-six million feet which has been passing through Murphy annually for the past several years goes mainly in four directions. To the planing mills in town to the large planing mill in Alcoa, to the large concentration yard in town and for ties. Those four outlets are in a position to absorb the whole production of lumber in our region, and are selling some at a profit, especially in view of the fact that the production consists of more hard-

### Here's A Luscious Fir Tree Cake To Top Your Christmas Party With Success



Photo courtesy Swansdown Cake Flour

Here is a luscious Christmas cake, a downy-light fir tree cake, to help make the holiday menus real triumphs. It is perfect for dinner dessert on Christmas Eve or for refreshments at a Christmas week or New Year's party.

The best thing about it, of course, is its rich chocolate flavor, and the delicate texture assured by the use of cake flour. It's made by the mix-easy method, too, so that you needn't linger long in the kitchen. There won't be a big mess of utensils to wash — just one bowl, measuring spoons and cup, and a mixing spoon.

Decorate the cake, after it is frosted, with tiny Christmas trees cut from sliced citron and colored green with vegetable coloring or with tree-shaped gumdrops.

#### Fir Tree Cake

Preparations. Have the shortening at room temperature. Line bottoms of two deep 9-inch layer pans with paper; grease. Start oven for moderate heat (350° F.). Sift flour once.

Measure into sifter:  
2 cups sifted cake flour  
1 teaspoon soda  
1 teaspoon salt  
1½ cups granulated sugar, or  
1½ cups finely packed brown sugar  
Measure into mixing bowl:  
½ cup shortening

Measure into cup:  
\*Milk (see below for amount)  
1 teaspoon vanilla

Have ready:  
2 eggs, unbeaten  
3 squares unsweetened chocolate, melted

\*With butter, margarine, or lard, use ¾ cup milk. With vegetable or any other shortening, use 1 cup milk.

(Mix by hand or at a low speed of electric mixer.) Stir shortening just to soften. Sift in dry ingredients. Add ¾ cup of the milk and mix until all flour is dampened. Then beat 2 minutes. Add eggs, melted chocolate, and remaining milk and beat 1 minute longer. (Count only actual beating time. Or count beating strokes. Allow about 150 full strokes per minute. Scrape bowl and spoon often.)

Baking. Turn batter into pans. Bake in moderate oven (350° F.) about 30 minutes. Spread seven-minute frosting between layers and on top and sides of cake.

woods than softwoods.

The trouble is that at the moment when there is a slight decline in price, or some kind of a stagnation and some of the above sources of buying cut down their purchases, or stop buying for a while, the small farmer, who is cutting on his portable mill, feels it very badly, and it is obvious that same would be at once felt all over the trade of our small town.

The money for about twenty-six million board feet of lumber,

annually is being spent to a substantial extent in our town. Twenty percent of the cost of the lumber goes directly to the labor in town.

At the moment a small mill stops his production and has to start again, he is losing not only in time, but also in money, and sometimes it is difficult for him to make up this loss. Here is where the small farmer needs some help, and unfortunately cannot get same.

We have no financial institution that could help out the producer of lumber in a temporary stoppage. What I mean by that is, if the former could get financial assistance against the lumber he is cutting up to the moment he is selling same, he would not have to stop his production, and would be able to carry over till the market conditions again became active.

Of course, bankers are always cautious, and I would say, sometimes over-cautious, being afraid of heavy drops in price. In our region, there is no room for any arguments as far as this point is concerned. The producer is unable to deliver lumber at a lower price than he is doing at present, as ninety percent of his cost of production goes into wages, and the stumpage doesn't mean very much at all. Everybody will agree with me that we can't expect, under the circumstances, any reduction in wages - rather to the contrary. Therefore, there can be no question of lower prices for lumber.

One may say that the lumber market might drop. Then, in my opinion, the whole production of lumber will have to be stopped altogether, and an interval of non-production for just six to eight weeks will deplete the stocks to such an extent that prices are bound to rise.

Well, those who have lumber in stock will be all right—but the little farmer, as well as the merchants in our small town,

### Kitchen Accident Rate Is High, Says Home Agent

The kitchen is the location of many accidents, but with a little extra care and caution most of these accidents can be avoided, says Miss Mary Cornwell, home demonstration agent for the State College Extension Service. The good housekeeping rule, "a place for everything and everything in its place," is especially important in the kitchen.

According to the National Safety Council, most kitchen accidents are falls. Many of these occur through the use of such makeshift devices as chairs, stools, and boxes for climbing. A safe step stool is an essential piece of equipment in any modern kitchen. Grease and water should always be mopped up to eliminate the danger of slipping and falling.

Scalds and burns also rank high among kitchen accidents. Miss Cornwell suggests that pan handles be turned away from the front of the stove to prevent accidental tipping, and that a cover be used when carrying scalding liquids. Before opening a steaming kettle or roaster, cover the pan with a cloth and lift the far side of the cover first. Follow directions when using a pressure cooker, making sure that the safety valve is in working condition.

Knives and other sharp tools are involved in 14 per cent of all home accidents, she points out. Sharp knives should be kept in a safe rack or special drawer.

Miss Cornwell suggests these other kitchen precautions:

- Keep matches out of children's reach.
- Don't use gasoline or kerosene to start fires.
- Keep all drycleaning operations out of the kitchen.
- Check stovepipes and flues regularly.
- Store all medicine, insecticides and drugs away from the kitchen and where children cannot reach them.

Nearly half the lumber cut in the United States comes from some 40,000 small sawmills.

won't gain very much by that. —Sam Aronson



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Murphy, North Carolina

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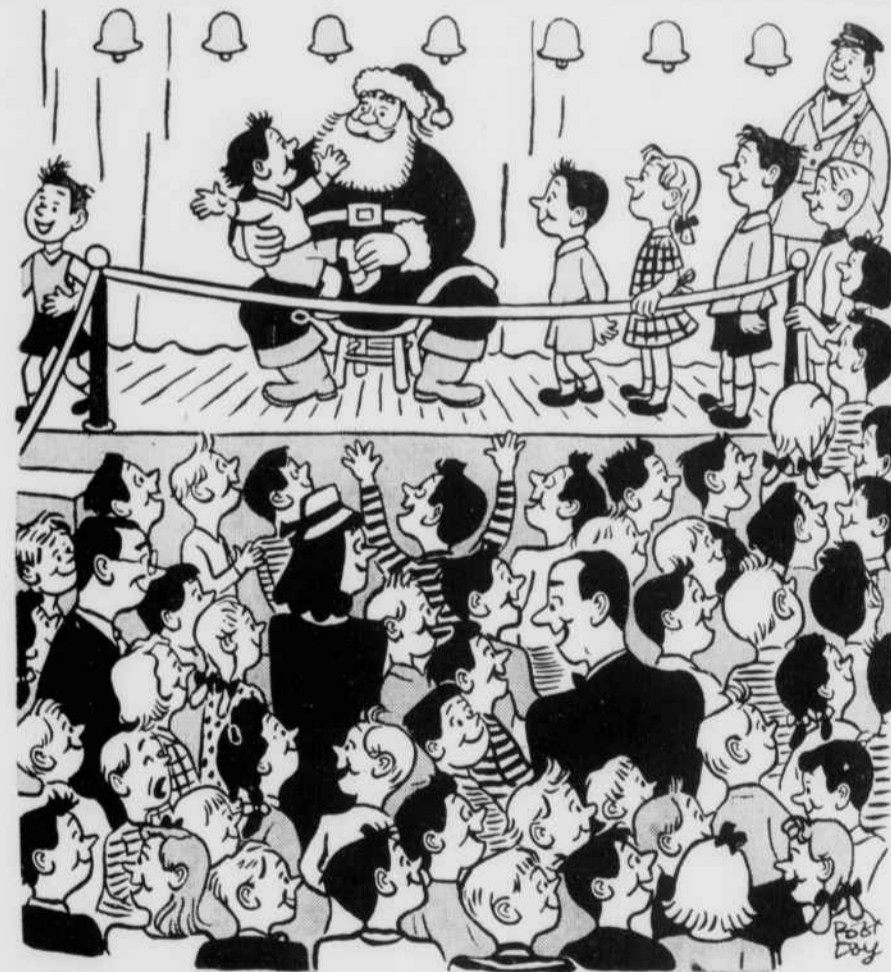
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