

**BEANS & FRANKS HIT THE TARGET**



By Betty Barclay

What homemaker doesn't love having a main dish to serve her family that's both popular mealtime fare and good for them?

This skillet of canned beans & franks in tomato sauce has the proud honor of being classified in just those categories. Protein-rich beans and the ever-popular frankfurter are mated right in the can. Great, just as they are, this dish becomes even more delicious with the addition of some prepared mustard, Worcestershire, and sliced onion.

For the nutrition-conscious, this special beans & franks dish, served with molded raw vegetable salad, corn muffins, and fresh fruit for dessert, will satisfy the homemaker's concern for her family's health and will afford the family real eating pleasure.

**Peppy Beans & Franks**

- 1 small onion, sliced
- 1 tablespoon butter or margarine
- 1 can (1 pound) beans & franks in tomato sauce
- 1 teaspoon prepared mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire

In saucepan, cook onion in butter until tender. Add beans & franks, mustard, and Worcestershire. Heat, stirring now and then. Makes 2 to 3 servings.

**Good Pasture Can Benefit Many Tar Heel Dairymen**

Many questions are being asked by North Carolina dairymen about the place of pastures and forages in their feed program. In answering these questions, dairy extension specialists at State College say the following points should be considered in developing a forage system:

Historically, forages have been considered the cheapest source of nutrients for dairy cattle; and, feed constitutes a high percentage of the total cost of producing milk. Today dairying has become a competitive business requiring enormous investments. There are many other major items of expense, such as labor, interest on investment and utilities which go on regardless of the level of production. This means that a constant, continuous supply of high quality nutrients has become a must.

Over 85 per cent of the dairying in North Carolina is in the Piedmont and Mountain parts of the state. Most of the land has some physical limitations. It is gently rolling to steep, most of the soils are clay with over half of the topsoil gone, the fields are generally small and irregular in shape, and the summer rainfall is heavy, coming in thundershowers, causing erosion problems on cultivated fields. These factors limit the choice of crops and the cropping system.

Because of the great differences in climatic conditions, size of farm and herd, possible alternative uses of the land, soil type and slope, and for numerous other reasons there is no one right and only forage program for all dairymen of the state. Rather, it must be tailored to the individual farm. Each dairyman must weigh these factors and make the choice for his farm.

In planning a feeding program, the specialists say, it is not a question of silage versus pasture, or grass silage versus corn silage or hay versus silage. These crops should not be considered to be in competition with each other. In-

stead, they supplement one another.

"Seldom do we build a feeding program around one crop or one single system," the specialists emphasize. "Rather, we must fit the parts together into a complete and satisfactory program. We must use our advantages of a relatively long growing season and overcome our disadvantages if we are to compete with other areas of the nation."

Because of the fact that much land in North Carolina, especially in the Piedmont and Mountains, is best adapted for pasture use, pastures and other perennial sod crops will continue to play a vital part in our dairy forage program.

Just any old pasture will not do, however. If pastures are to com-



What about mulches? What are some of the advantages? Disadvantages? Let's see what we can learn about mulches, objectively.

Nature mulches the roots of plants with fallen leaves. This means that no cultivation is practiced where plants grow naturally. The forest floor is a good example. Moisture is conserved and plant foods are manufactured due to the decomposition of organic matter. Soil is conserved by the prevention of erosion.

Under these mulches, where natural or man-made, many things happen. Chemical change is taking place. Bacteria by the billions play a part, as do the fungi. Moisture is necessary for all life processes. Good soil is teeming with living things and we who live on the soil are dependent upon its good performance.

I guess that we could agree, then, that the use of mulches is one method of duplicating natural processes by providing a happy soil environment in the flower, vegetable and fruit gardens. Now let's see why this is true by reviewing some of the advantages of mulch-

pete they must be treated as a crop! They must be kept productive and high quality must be maintained. They must be limed, fertilized, seeded, topdressed, managed, rotated and renovated.

Above 100 cows, maximum use of grazing for the milking herd may be almost impossible due to the distance involved. However, use of high quality grazing can be expected to increase milk production.

Probably the greatest advantage of a mulch is the conservation of moisture. Evaporation is greatly reduced by protecting the soil from the direct rays of the sun and from air movement. Raindrops are quickly absorbed and the soil is protected from compaction. Erosion, the greatest enemy of our soils, is prevented. Mulches are especially helpful during prolonged periods of hot dry weather.

Don't expect a mulch to control weeds completely. It will help, especially with the annuals. Where pre-emergence sprays are used to control weeds, the mulch is more effective.

The soil temperature is reduced under a good mulch. This is of material help because some beneficial soil micro-organisms are not happy under high soil temperature conditions. Neither are tender roots near the surface.

The decomposition of most mulches improves soil structure, favors water absorption and aeration of the root zone.

Mulches in the apple orchard prevent bruising of dropped fruit and keep ripening strawberries

clean by preventing the splashing of soil and sand. Mulches also prevent heaving of the soil during winter freezes.

While the advantages of mulches far outweigh the disadvantages, a few of the latter might be mentioned: The fire hazard — A match or cigarette carelessly dropped in pine needles, straw or leaves may destroy all you have tried to accomplish. Mice may be more troublesome under mulches but can be controlled by ground sprays or baits. This is the one you want to watch for — nitrogen starvation.

The more woody or fibrous the mulch the greater the need for nitrogen to decompose it by favorable bacterial action. The bacteria are going to get their share of the nitrogen supply first and the leaves may turn yellow on the plants unless the supply is adequate for both the nitrifying bacteria and the plants. This is not difficult to adjust if you use good judgment.

Mulching materials. Peat moss, sawdust, pine straw, grain straws, ground corn cobs, peanut hulls, shredded hardwood bark, softwood bark, composed leaves and plastic film.

An effort has been made to discuss some of the basic principles involved in the use of mulches rather than recommend which material to use. It is hoped that, whether you live in Manteo or Murphy, you can select the mulch best suited to provide a happy environment for your plants.

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