

Household Hints – General Kitchen

By the Elizabeth-Westport Garden Club

SALT

1. If stew is too salty, add raw cut potatoes and discard once they have cooked and absorbed the salt. Another remedy is to add a teaspoon of cider vinegar and sugar, or simply add sugar.
2. If soup or stew is too sweet, add salt. For a main dish or vegetable, add a teaspoon of cedar vinegar

EGGS

1. If you shake the egg, and you hear a rattle, you can be sure it is stale. A really fresh egg will sink and a stale one will float
2. The white of an egg is easiest to beat when it's a room temperature
3. Add vinegar to the water while boiling, or poaching eggs. Vinegar helps to seal the egg, since it acts on the calcium in the shell
4. Store in tight-sealed containers, they will last longer in the refrigerator; or cover them with oil on the top in a sealed container in the refrigerator; for long term storage (if there is a special on eggs at your local supermarket), crack the eggs open and put them in the freezer unit (put one egg in the ice tray). When frozen, put egg cubes in a sealed plastic bag and you can take out one at a time for daily use
5. When you have saved a lot of egg yolks from previous recipes, use them in place of whole eggs for baking or thickening. Two yolks for every whole egg.
6. Brown and white shells are the same quality.
7. For fluffier omelets, add a pinch of cornstarch before beating.

TOMATOES

1. Keep tomatoes in storage with stems pointed downward and they will retain their freshness longer.
2. Sunlight doesn't ripen tomatoes; it's the warmth that makes them ripen. So find a warm spot near the stove or dishwasher where they can get a little heat.
3. To improve the flavor of inexpensive tomato juice, pour 46 oz can into refrigerator jar and add 1 chopped green onion and a cut-up stalk of celery.

VEGETABLES

1. If fresh vegetables are wilted or blemished, pick off the brown edges. Sprinkle with cool water, and wrap in towel and refrigerator for an hour or so.
2. Perk up soggy lettuce by adding lemon juice to a bowl of cold water and soak for an hour in refrigerator.
3. Lettuce and celery will crisp up fast if you place in a pan of cold water and add a few slice potatoes
4. By lining the crisper section of your refrigerator with newspaper and wrapping vegetables in it, moisture will be absorbed and your vegetables will stay fresher longer.
5. To keep the flavor in the vegetables, add a small amount of sugar to the water after cooking carrots, peas, beets and corn.

ROCK HARD BROWN SUGAR

1. Add a slice of soft bread to the package of brown sugar, close the bag tightly, and in a few hours the sugar will be soft again. If you are in a hurry, simply grate the amount called for with a hand grater. Or put brown sugar and a cup of water (do not add to the sugar, set it alongside of it) in a covered pan. Place in the oven (low heat), for a while

CAKED or CLOGGED SALT

1. Tightly wrap a piece of aluminum foil around the salt shaker. This will keep the dampness out of the salt. To prevent clogging, keep 5 to 8 grains of rice inside your shaker.

NUTS

1. To quickly crack a large amount of nuts, put in a bag and gently hammer until they are cracked open. Then remove the nutmeats with a pick.
2. If the nuts are stale, place them in the oven at 250 degrees and leave them there for about 5 or 10 minutes. The heat will revive them.

BOIL OVERS

1. Add a lump of butter or a few teaspoons of cooking oil to the water. Rice, noodles or spaghetti will not boil over or stick together.

TENDERIZING MEAT

1. Boil meat. Add a tablespoon of vinegar to the cooking water.
2. Tough meat or game. Make a marinade of equal parts cooking vinegar and heated bouillon. Marinate for 2 hours.
3. Steak – simply rub a mixture of cooking vinegar and oil. Allow to stand for two hours.
4. Chicken – to stew an old hen, soak it in vinegar for several hours before cooking. It will take a like a spring chicken.

COOKING ODORS

1. While cooking vegetables that give off unpleasant odors, simmer a small pan of vinegar on top of stove. Or add vinegar to the cooking water. To remove odor of fish from cooking and serving implements, rinse in vinegar water.
2. No-smell cabbage – don't over cook, and put in half a lemon in the water when you boil.

SLUGGISH CATSUP

1. Push a drinking straw to the bottom of the bottle and remove. This admits enough air to start the catsup flowing.

EXCESS FAT ON SOUPS OR STEWS

1. Remove fat from stews or soups by refrigerating and eliminating fat as it rises and hardens on the surface.
2. Or add lettuce leaves to the pot –the fat will cling to them. Discard lettuce before serving.

CARROTS

1. Adding sugar and horseradish to cooked carrots improves flavor
2. Marinate carrot sticks in dill pickle juice