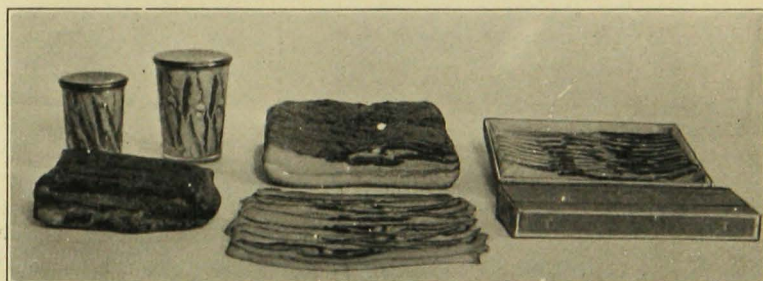


Selection and Use of Bacon

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PURCHASING BACON

Bacon may be purchased unsliced in slabs or sliced. Sliced bacon is put up in attractive one-pound or half-pound packages, either in pasteboard cartons or in cellophane. Bacon in the slab retails at lower prices than sliced bacon, but the buyer of slab bacon pays for the rind and the ends. Bacon in cartons retails at more per pound than bacon in cellophane. Some of the less expensive forms of bacon—squares or jowl bacon, rib-back bacon, and brisket bacon—are especially desirable for use in cooking with sauerkraut or cabbage or with baked beans.

Canadian Bacon

Canadian bacon is the boneless pork loin cured and smoked as ordinary bacon. Because of the large piece of lean in it, it is especially enjoyable by those who prefer lean to fat in bacon. It can be purchased sliced or unsliced, at prices somewhat higher than ordinary bacon. The price is high because Canadian bacon is prepared from a choice cut and there are losses from boning.

Canadian bacon may be cut a little thicker than ordinary bacon and cooked in the same way, tho it should not be so crisp, or it may be cut still thicker and fried like ham. It may be simmered in water or baked in the oven like ham, and it makes excellent sandwiches.

Selecting a Standard Piece of Bacon

When buying bacon one should inspect it to determine firmness, color, and the proportion of fat to lean best suited to an individual's taste and needs. The proportion and distribution of lean varies in slices cut from the same side. Some variation may therefore be expected when purchasing a pound or more of sliced bacon.

Figure 1 shows a slice of bacon that is standard and desirable and other slices that are undesirable.

It is suggested that the following be considered in choosing standard bacon:

1. Color
 - a. Inside lean, uniform pink
 - b. Inside fat, cream white, free from blood spots
2. Fat and lean
 - a. Fat and lean well intermixed
 - b. Streaks of lean less than one-fourth of an inch wide
 - c. Proportion of fat to lean (to suit individual taste)
3. Texture
 - a. Fine-grained, firm, velvety
 - b. Free from coarse fibers
 - c. Fat firm and relatively dry, not oily or flabby
4. Odor—mild, sweet, meaty, not too smoky

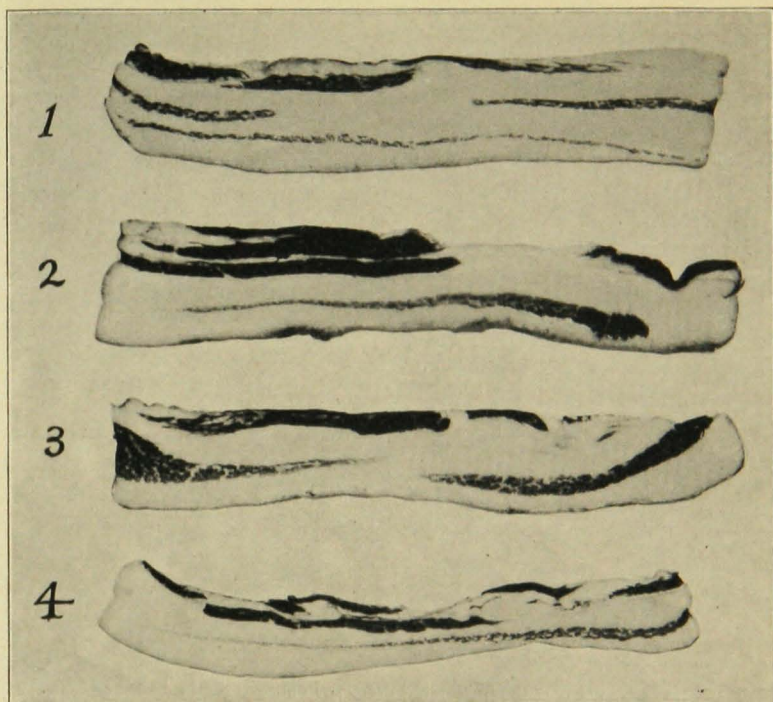


Fig. 1. Samples of Bacon, Desirable and Undesirable

1. Standard quality—good proportion of fat to lean; fat and lean well intermixed; lean well marbled; narrow streaks of lean; texture fine.
2. Too lean; lean hard, not marbled; lean streaks too wide.
3. Course lean and coarse fat; poor texture.
4. Too thin.

STORAGE OF BACON

Bacon should be kept at a temperature of 50 to 60 degrees F. In the summer, it should be kept in the refrigerator or a place equally cool. In a warm place it becomes soft and flabby, develops an undesirable odor and flavor, and may become moldy. This mold is not poisonous and can be removed and the bacon used. It is important to keep bacon at a constant temperature, because when changed from a cold to a warmer temperature, moisture condenses on it and this hastens the growth of mold and causes the fat to become rancid. Only the quantity to be used should be taken from the refrigerator, the remainder being left where the temperature is constant. Sliced bacon of the best quality can be kept for two weeks in an ordinary refrigerator, without altering its flavor.

COMPOSITION AND NUTRITIVE VALUE OF BACON

The fuel value of fat as food is two and one-half times that of protein and carbohydrate. In figuring the fuel value of bacon, however, it should be remembered that from 35 to 70 per cent of the fat may be lost in cooking. Because of the great variation in loss of fat, it is impossible to give a definite weight in grams or ounces for a 100-calorie portion of the cooked product.

Altho bacon is eaten primarily for the fat, it also furnishes the body with some mineral substances and a small amount of protein.

DIGESTIBILITY OF BACON

Investigators report that the average person utilizes 96.3 per cent of cooked bacon. The protein of the bacon is as easily digested as any meat protein. It is the first meat recommended for children, because it is easily digested, and it can be given as soon as they can chew well. For young children, bacon should be broken into small pieces.

EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

Cooking of Bacon

The following methods were found the most satisfactory for cooking bacon on a gas stove.

1. Panfrying (cooking in pan, pouring off excess fat)

- a. Place a single layer in a cool frying pan.
- b. Place over a low heat.
- c. Turn frequently.
- d. Drain excess fat frequently so that the bottom of the pan is only well greased.
- e. When bacon is light golden brown and evenly crisped, remove from pan, drain on paper or paper plate, and place on a hot platter.

Bacon may be cooked more quickly by placing all of it in a cool frying pan at one time and cooking without draining the grease. The hot fat in the pan hastens the cooking process.

2. Broiling Under Direct Flame

- a. Place cold slices of bacon on cool broiler rack.
- b. Place rack five inches below the flame. (Gas should be turned on for moderate oven—325 degrees F.)
- c. Turn frequently.
- d. When light golden brown and evenly crisped, remove to a hot platter.

3. Cooking in Oven

- a. Place cold slices of bacon in a cool dripping pan.
- b. Place dripping pan on a rack in the middle of a hot oven—400 degrees F. (Best results are obtained if bacon is turned frequently.)

When large quantities of bacon are to be cooked the oven method is quick and convenient.

4. Frying in Deep Fat

- a. Fill iron kettle half full of bacon fat.
- b. Heat fat (300 degrees F.)
- c. Drop bacon into fat (one-fourth pound lowers the temperature of the fat to 285 degrees F.)
- d. Keep temperature of fat below smoking temperature (293 degrees F.)
- e. Cook bacon until a light golden brown, about three minutes.

Bacon may be fried in oil at 400 degrees F., in about one minute.

Important Facts to Remember in Cooking Bacon

The smoking temperature of fat, or that at which it decomposes and gives off a sharp, pungent vapor (acrolein), differs for different fats. Certain investigators give the smoking temperature of bacon fat at about 293 degrees F. The important thing to remember is that bacon should be cooked below the smoking temperature to obtain the best flavor. If this is done, the room will not be filled with smoke.

Standard for Cooked Bacon

The following standard was used for cooked bacon:

1. Color, even light golden brown.
2. As straight and flat as possible.
3. Crisp but not brittle, dry, or charred.
4. Fat clear and free from white spots.
5. Flavor mild, meaty—not smoky, no burnt fat odor.

Losses in Cooked Bacon

Results of tests in cooking many pounds of bacon showed that the total losses ranged from 50 to 78 per cent, of which 35 to 69 per cent were fat losses. A slight loss caused by evaporation of moisture ranged from 0.3 to 22 per cent. Comparing the losses when different methods of cooking were used, it was learned that ovencooked bacon or bacon fried in deep fat lost less fat than panfried or ovenbroiled bacon.

In the tests made, panfried (drained) bacon lost in fat and evaporation a total of 70.48 per cent; panfried (undrained), 70.15; ovenbroiled, 64.64; ovencooked (drained), 52.64; ovencooked (undrained), 55.76. "Not crisp" panfried bacon showed a total loss of 63.75 per cent; crisp, 68.89; over-done, 71.04. Panfried (60 per cent lean) showed a total loss of 65.3 per cent; panfried (50 per cent lean), 75.6; and fat bacon (40 per cent lean), 78.7. Again, panfried bacon $\frac{3}{64}$ of an inch thick showed a total loss of 62.08, and panfried $\frac{3}{32}$ of an inch thick, 62.93.

Bacon Fat

It has been shown that the great loss in weight in cooking bacon is due to fat. Most of the fat can be recovered in the pan, and unless this is used, bacon is a very expensive food.

Clarification of Fat

A simple method to clarify bacon is to cook slices of potato in the drippings. The potato absorbs some of the strong flavor and in the process impurities settle at the bottom. For a quart of fat use ten slices of raw potato. Heat slowly. When the potatoes are browned, remove them and strain the fat through several thicknesses of cheese-cloth. Allow it to cool and use the clear fat which collects on top.

Another method is to heat the fat with water. Pour one quart of boiling water over one quart of bacon fat and boil the mixture thoroly. Allow the fat to harden, and drain the liquid, with impurities collected. Add more water and repeat until the fat is clean and there is no odor or flavor of bacon. Great care must be taken not to add water to hot fat. A large kettle should be used to prevent the mixture from boiling over.

Storage of Bacon Fat

Bacon fat will keep for a long time if properly stored in a cold, dark, dry place in an air-tight container.

Uses of Bacon Fat

Both clarified and unclarified bacon fat can be used for frying eggs, potatoes, and other products; also as a substitute for shortening in plain, bran, and cornmeal muffins, gingerbread, spice cake, molasses cookies, chocolate cake, and griddle cakes. Clarified bacon fat can be substituted for the shortening in many batter and dough products. That which is not eaten can be used for soap which is easily made with prepared lye by following directions on the can.

WAYS OF USING BACON

The following abbreviations are used in the recipes :

c = cup

tb = tablespoon

t = teaspoon

Breakfast Dishes

Muffins or Griddle Cakes

For muffins or griddle cakes, use bacon fat for the shortening, and add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup crisply cooked bacon cut in small pieces.

Bacon Omelet

1 egg

1 tb. milk

$\frac{1}{4}$ t. salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ c. bacon

Separate egg. Beat yolk until creamy, add seasoning and milk. Fold in carefully the stiffly beaten whites. Place in greased frying pan, cover, and cook over medium heat until brown on bottom. Uncover and place in hot oven a few minutes to dry top. Make dent across omelet at right angles to handle of pan. Place crisply cooked bacon, cut in small pieces, on top of omelet, fold once and turn on hot platter. The cooked bacon may be added before cooking omelet.

Bacon with Apple Rings

Core apples, cut slices across apple. Fry in bacon fat. Place crisply cooked bacon in center of chop plate and apple rings around the edge.

Luncheon Dishes

Oysters with Bacon (Pigs in Blankets)

Clean oysters, wrap a thin slice of bacon around each and fasten with toothpicks. Bake in a hot oven until bacon is crisp and brown, turning once during the cooking.

Dip thick slices of ripe tomato in egg and then in seasoned cracker crumbs. Fry in bacon fat. Place a "pig in blanket" on each slice. Serve on a hot platter.

Stuffed Bacon Rolls

2½ c. bread crumbs	3 tb. green pepper
1 egg	½ c. celery
½ c. milk	few drops onion juice

Prepare a moist dressing of the ingredients. Place 2 teaspoons of this dressing on a slice of bacon, roll the bacon slice around the dressing, just covering it. Fasten with a toothpick. Broil, ovencook, or panfry until bacon is crisp. Small rolls make an attractive garnish for meats.

German Lettuce Salad

½ c. bacon fat	few grains pepper
3 tb. lemon juice or vinegar	½ t. mustard
1 t. salt	few drops onion juice
½ t. sugar	

Heat the fat, add seasonings, and pour over lettuce to which small pieces of crisp bacon have been added.

Spinach with Bacon

1 c. spinach (cooked)	few grains pepper
¼ c. bacon	1 t. vinegar

Chop bacon fine. Cook until crisp. Add vinegar and seasoning. Add spinach and heat thoroly. Garnish with hard-cooked egg. Serve hot. Lettuce may be used in place of spinach.

Bacon Rarebit

½ c. bacon	2½ tb. flour
1 c. milk	1 egg
2 tb. bacon fat	½ t. salt
½ c. cheese	

Make a white sauce in the double boiler. Cook 5 minutes. Add beaten egg and grated cheese. Cook slowly over water until the cheese is melted. Add ½ cup crisp bacon cut in small pieces. Serve on crackers or small pieces of toast.

Bacon Sandwiches

Season chopped crisp bacon with mayonnaise or cooked salad dressing. Place between slices of buttered toast. For variation, add lettuce, or tomato, or hard-cooked egg, or stuffed olives.

Bacon-Egg Club Sandwich

Scrambled egg:	1 tb. milk
1 egg	¼ t. salt

Beat egg, add milk and seasoning, beat. Put in upper part of double boiler and cook until egg is coagulated.

Place scrambled egg on a slice of buttered toast. Cover with slice of buttered toast, place slices of crisply cooked bacon on toast, add mayonnaise dressing, cover with slices of tomato. Garnish with parsley.

The egg may be fried instead of scrambled.

Open-Face Sandwich

Place two slices of toast on a plate or small platter. On one, place three slices of crisply cooked bacon; on the other, a fried or scrambled egg. In one lettuce cup arrange sections of tomato and in another mayonnaise dressing. Place olives in center. Serve hot. A sandwich prepared in this way is shown in Figure 2. Chicken or cold meat may be used in place of the scrambled egg.

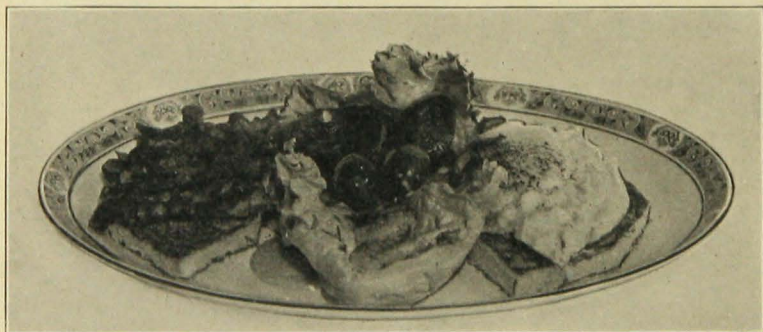


Fig. 2. Open-Face Club Sandwich with Bacon and Eggs