

Other Viewpoints

Bio-defense facility needs another look

Caution in building the new Bio and Agro-Defense Facility in Manhattan is wise. Bringing a foot-and-mouth research lab to the heart of cattle country should not be taken lightly.

There has been some opposition to the lab because of the concern that an accidental release of the disease could devastate the livestock population here. Adding to those concerns is a July report by the Government Accountability Office, which criticized risk studies by the Homeland Security Department.

Yet, in the push to construct the lab, and the resistance by those who want more safety studies, a good compromise has been reached: Money will continue to be available for the design of the lab as safety research is conducted; construction, meanwhile, will wait for the green light.

The compromise spending bill still must be approved by the House and Senate before going to the president, but final approval is expected.

In further safety studies, the Homeland Security department would be required to evaluate the risks of operating the 520,000-square-foot lab. The National Academy of Sciences then would review the study.

Additionally, the secretaries of the Homeland Security and Agriculture departments must report to congressional committees on what procedures will be used to issue a permit for foot-and-mouth disease research and on an emergency response plan if there is an accidental release....

The lab would be a big boost to the economy. Kansas officials say the \$650 million lab would bring in 1,500 construction jobs and employ at least 300 people with an annual payroll of \$25 million to \$30 million.

It is important to temper the desire for an economic boost, however, by carefully weighing the risks.

— *The Hutchinson News, via The Associated Press*

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U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback, 303 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. (202) 224-6521

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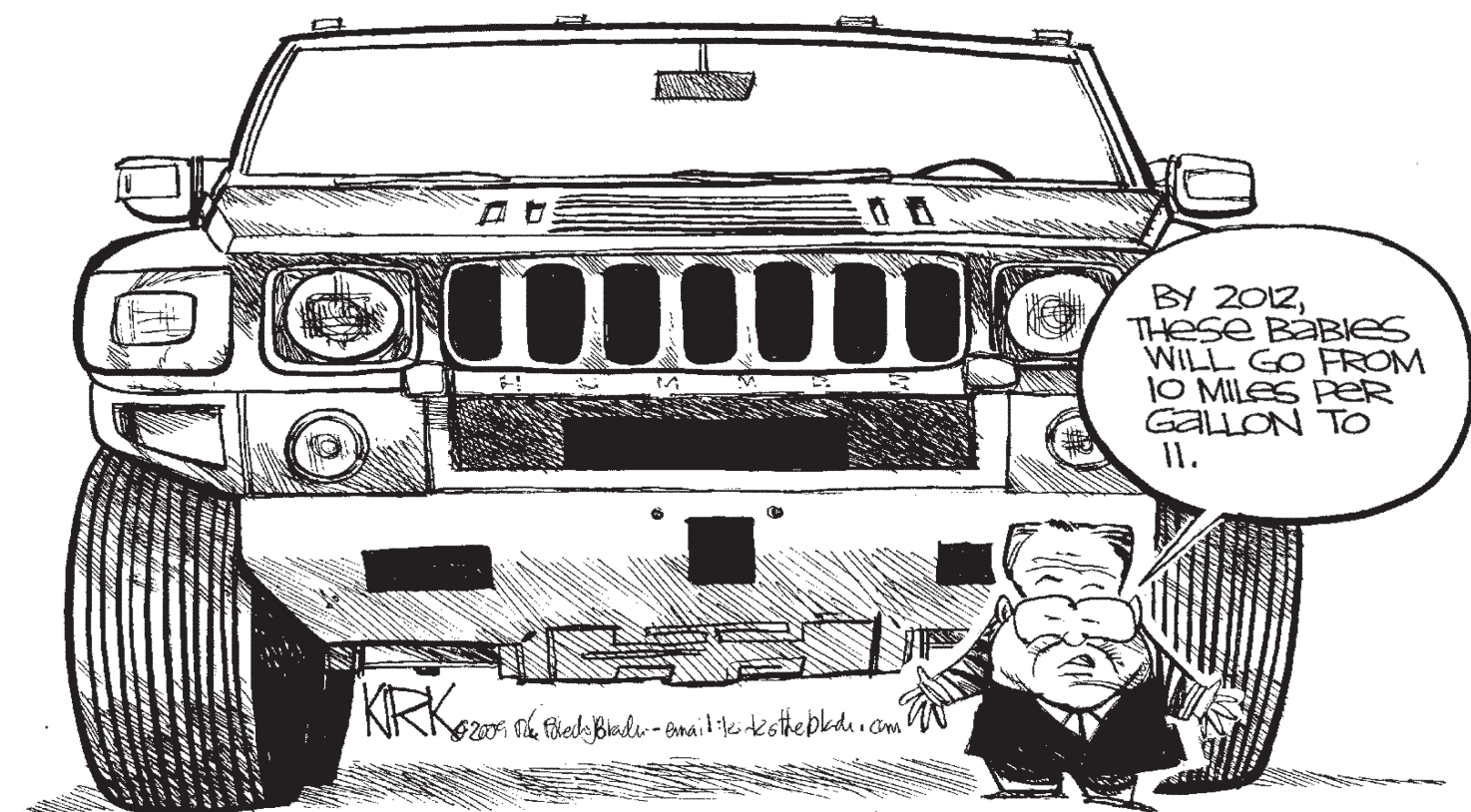
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THE CHINESE COMPANY THAT BOUGHT THE HUMMER PLANS TO MAKE MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY VEHICLES...



Do you have a club cookbook?

Today, I was reminded of another generation gap, one that reflects the rural culture.

We had a carry-in lunch for Bosses' Day, a quick and easy menu ranging from potato chips to sloppy joes.

Any occasion like this serves to remind me of a whole string of similar events throughout my life, ranging from family gatherings to Scouts and youth groups and church potlucks. There have been many in my life, and the rules for what to bring have ranged from none at all to a very specific assignment. Today, I was assigned buns, a critical element in serving sloppy joes, you must admit.

All those years of potlucks, though, have spawned a lot of recipes, and a lot of home-grown recipe books. Some of mine go way back, courtesy of my mother's collection and a few garage sale finds. In fact one, entitled "Secrets of Oak Ridge" probably qualifies as a family heirloom.

My aunt's family lived in Oak Ridge, Tenn., during the final years of World War II, where her husband taught high school to the children of scientists in the Manhattan Project. Needless to say, when the women decided to raise money with a cookbook, their culinary "secrets" made a handy play on words in a community where secrecy was the name of the game.

Do-it-yourself cookbooks have been around for a lot of years. They come from schools, churches and extension clubs, among others. I've even seen an international cookbook from the Defense Language School in Monterey, Calif.

Yet the usual fund-raising cookbook has a pretty standard selection of recipes. There are recipes for meat loaf and stew, for cookies and cakes and pies. Then there's a section called



Marian Ballard

• Collection Connections

"other," which has things like ketchup and sour cream dill dip and play dough.

There's been a big boom in cookbooks in recent years. You can find volumes dedicated to the latest fad diet or the priciest new piece of cookware. It would be easy to fill a shelf with books dedicated to chocolate lovers or vegetarians. Heart-healthy diets and cancer prevention diets have their own books.

If you prefer recipe cards, you can join a recipe-of-the-month club and keep exotic ideas coming into your home on a schedule.

But for real, down-home, good cooking, nothing can beat an extension club cookbook. There you will learn how to make the perfect red devil's food cake — or an angel food cake from scratch in any size, depending on how many egg whites you use.

When a busy month one summer left me with a garden full of ripe cucumbers, an extension club cookbook gave me the recipe for cucumber ketchup to use them up — along with several other varieties of ketchup I never got around to trying, including one using grapes.

The secret ingredients for my grandmother's potato soup can be found in a mission circle cookbook.

My mother's recipe for picadillo (my online dictionary says this is the correct spelling) came from a book that said "Dawes County

4-H Extension Clubs" on the cover. I think that book also had the recipe for a wonderful relish made with, among other things, a gallon of raw tomatoes and a teaspoon of whole peppercorns. We always had to work hard to eat this up, since it had to be refrigerated, but it really wasn't much of a sacrifice.

Somewhere along the line, though, people have stopped cooking. Sales of cookbooks apparently has been relegated to the past. Fancy kitchens stand unused.

Fast food and takeout and frozen entrees have taken the place of home cooking, just as supermoms and working women and families on the run have taken the place of full-time homemakers who were able to take an hour or two a month to gather with friends and exchange ideas for doing their full-time jobs at home better.

The change took place at different times in different parts of the country, I think. Country churches and rural schools are usually the last holdouts, where a shrinking group of traditional women stubbornly hang on to the way it used to be, or the way it "ought" to be. I, for one, wouldn't be caught dead trying to fix fried chicken for a potluck these days.

I'm glad to say, though, that the idea of sharing the work and sharing a meal among friends is still going strong. The menu may have changed, but we still know how to join as a community.

Marian Ballard has collected careers as counselor, librarian, pastor, and now copy editor for the Colby Free Press. She collects ideas, which are more portable than other stuff.

Shop smart at the supermarket

How do shoppers in your family react when they go to the supermarket?

Many shoppers today report they are upset and frustrated. Most have already heard food in this country is a bargain, but when they finish paying the bill they're not so certain. These shoppers believe their food dollars are being gobbled up by a marketing system where they have no say.

Shoppers can really save and many do. Alert, well-informed shoppers can save up to 15 percent. For the average family food bill, this could mean a savings of nearly \$1,000 a year.

Almost every shopper has compiled a list of cost cutting ideas of his or her own. The following list is by no means complete, but contains effective ways to save at your local supermarket:

- Shoppers should know what they are buying. With thousands of items in the modern supermarket, product information is essential to find the best buy.

- Like all education, this requires some reading, listening and studying. For example, the product label on a gallon of milk is a source of



John Schlageck

• Insights
Kansas Farm Bureau

information on nutrition, menu use, quantity and quality of the food item.

- Cost-conscious shoppers must buy when and where the price is right. There are many times to buy on special, buy store or generic brands or to buy in quantity — if shoppers keep abreast of the price practices of our highly competitive supermarkets.

- Shopping regularly at two different stores is an informative practice. Doing so can lead to savings, because different stores usually specialize in different food items.

- Accurate record keeping has become an important part of a smart shopping routine. Money-saving ideas take time, but it's time well spent. A half hour of planning before each weekly shopping trip can result in savings.

- Cost-conscious shoppers influence the entire food industry. If shoppers do not check prices, retailers may display items that sell by saturation advertising or gimmick packaging. Both add to food costs.

- Retailers who respond to cost-conscious shoppers must look for the best buy from suppliers. Farmers who fill some of these orders must make the best use of their resources to match the competition.

Smart shoppers can experience satisfaction instead of frustration. Initially this satisfaction results from actual savings in the family's food budget. Secondly, the wise shopper realizes intelligent buying keeps our food industry the best in the world.

Getting the most for your food dollar is important to every consumer in this country. It is also well worth the effort.

John Schlageck of the Kansas Farm Bureau is a leading commentator on agriculture and rural Kansas. He grew up on a diversified farm near Seguin, and his writing reflects a lifetime of experience, knowledge and passion.

Mallard Fillmore

• Bruce Tinsley

