

Food Rationing

At the start of 1940 the British government introduced food rationing to ensure that everyone got a fair share of foods that were becoming increasingly scarce. The Ministry of Food was responsible for overseeing rationing and issued every man, woman and child with a ration book.

Basic foodstuffs such as sugar, meat, fats, bacon and cheese were directly rationed by an allowance of coupons. A number of other items, such as tinned goods, dried fruit, cereals and biscuits, were rationed using a points system. The number of points allocated changed according to availability and consumer demand. Extra allowances of essentials such as milk and eggs were given to those most in need, including children and expectant mothers.

DID YOU KNOW?

Many children growing up during WW2 had never seen a banana until rationing ended.

It was common to have to queue for a very long time to get the food you wanted and often people would reach the front of the line to discover that the foods they wanted had run out. Food rationing did not end until 1954.

Visit our website to see various British Pathé information films about rationing and recipes: poppyscotland.org.uk/veday75/

Activities

- 1 Classroom takeover.** Using Ministry of Food leaflets and recipes for inspiration, create your own VE Day afternoon tea celebration. Think about the rationing restrictions and what could be substituted to create a yummy feast. The more creative the better.
- 2** Bake some of your recipes as a class or in groups to have your own afternoon tea in class or share in assembly.



Dig For Victory!

As a lot of food was imported to Britain, the ships carrying the food were always under threat of attack from German U-boats. People were encouraged to grow their own fruit and vegetables in their gardens as well as using parks and sports pitches to create allotments for growing vegetables. People also kept their own chickens, pigs, rabbits and goats. This was known as the Dig For Victory campaign.

DID YOU KNOW?

The head of the Agricultural Plans Branch of the Ministry of Food, Professor John Raeburn, born in Aberdeen, set up the Dig for Victory campaign.

DID YOU KNOW?

Even the lawns outside the Tower of London were turned into vegetable patches.

The campaign produced many posters encouraging people to grow their own food featuring the characters "Dr Carrot" and "Potato Pete".



Activities

- 1 Classroom takeover.** Create your own allotment in your playground. Where would you put it? Are there areas of grass or soil where you could build raised beds to grow your vegetables? Think about what vegetables you could grow and how you could design your allotment. Work together as a class or in groups to plant your vegetables and tend to them throughout the year.
- 2** The Dig For Victory campaign had a very successful marketing campaign including posters, radio broadcasts and even songs to keep people's morale up and encourage them to grow as much as they could. Design your own marketing campaign to encourage people to grow their own food. What would be the benefits for people? How would you encourage them? Think about using different types of media to get your campaign across.