

1965

EC65-1139 1965 Outlook for Family Living

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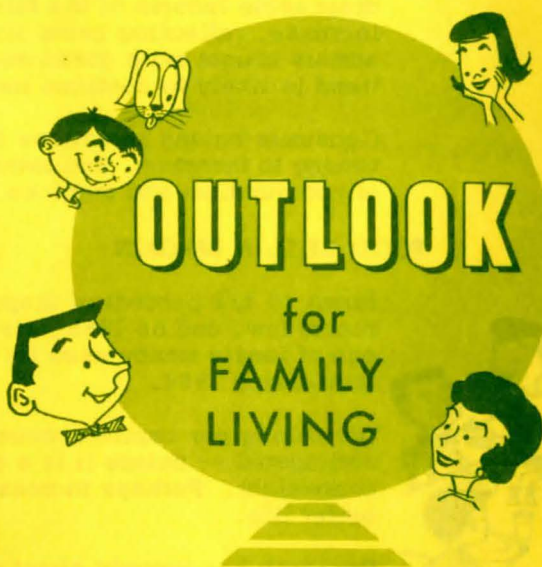
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In Brief...

- *general situation
- *household equipment
- *food and nutrition
- *housing
- *services
- *furniture & furnishings
- *clothing and textiles
- *what to do about it

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COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS
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The high oven range has been so popular that it is expected to boost development of the electronic range. New insulation materials for refrigerators allow increased interior capacity without increased exterior dimensions. Improvement on no-frost types reduce cost of operation. Almost 400 different cordless appliances are being manufactured. Continued research in cells and batteries for their power will undoubtedly result in freeing more and more equipment from the trailing cord. Non-stick housewares are now on the market with the non-stick chemicals impregnated into the metal, thus eliminating the need for extreme care to avoid scarring and marring the surface with a metal kitchen tool.



Dry cleaning appliances for the home are not as "blue sky" as they once seemed. A machine somewhat larger than a washer has a capacity of six or seven pounds of clothes. The cleaning agent may be a problem due to housing codes, and general safety problems. Retail, the cost of the cleaning machine is higher than for a washer.

Imported "tinyvisions" with four- or five-inch screens may soon become as common as transistor radios. They sell in the \$100 range. Color television may see a growth in 1965 of as much as 55 percent over the 1964 record.

EDUCATION AND RE-EDUCATION WILL SHAPE FUTURE

Against a rosy backdrop of more things for more comfortable living for more people there is a sad note of low-incomes to a very large segment of the population. Low incomes are usually thought of as a problem of urban slums. A significant number of rural and rural non-farm people are also plagued with insufficient resources to maintain an acceptable level of living. Individuals who are unemployed are most often those whose education and training are relatively low. The unskilled and inexperienced fall by the wayside because of their inability to meet ever-rising hiring standards both for education and skill.



In a society such as ours, where change is rapid, the education of youth takes place under conditions that differ markedly from those under which they live and work when their formal education is completed. Many people today are working at jobs that did not exist when they were being educated. Education beyond high school -- whether liberal arts or college or specialized education -- will become increasingly important in occupation placement and advance. Youths without a high school diploma will have increasing difficulty in obtaining employment, and will find themselves caught up in all the social problems associated with low levels of education and resulting low income.

The recently passed Economic Opportunity Act offers three separate programs specifically for youth:

The Jobs Corps to provide work experience.

The Neighborhood Youth Corps for young men and women who are unemployed, have been forced to drop out of school, or have failed to pass the selective service test. Their training may help them to remain in, or return to, school.

Work-Study Program to be handled by agreements with institutions of higher learning, whereby eligible students may work up to 15 hours per week in a job related to the student's educational objective.

what's ahead for food

HERE WE ARE

A combination of increased wages and higher personal income and reduced tax rates boosted consumers' after-tax income for 1964. With the continued decline in farm numbers, net income per farm rose and may increase again in 1965. The per capita disposable income of the farm population from all sources is expected to show an increase, reflecting gains from both farm and non-farm sources. As a result consumers bought more goods and services and increased their savings in 1964. This trend is likely to continue into 1965.

Consumer buying intentions for cars, appliances and other durables are also continuing to increase. And extra income probably will encourage additional purchases of non durables and services.

FOOD STILL A BARGAIN

About 18 1/2 percent of disposable income is being spent for food. This is a new record low, and as 1965 rolls along there could be a further decline in the percentage of family money used for food. Retail price increases probably will be smaller than during 1964.

Increasing per capita consumption of food is continuing. No particular change is anticipated -- unless it is a greater concern about America's No. 1 health problem, overweight. Perhaps increased per capita consumption is not a good measure of a better life.

Research has brought about major changes in food processing in the past several decades. Vitamin enriched, frozen, dehydrofrozen, freeze-dried and tenderized foods are commonplace today. But there's something about a tomato that makes it hard to freeze successfully. That is -- there was. Now USDA research staff foresee the day in the near future when Mrs. Homemaker will find fresh tomato slices in frozen form in her supermarket. It is reported that the quality of green beans, strawberries, asparagus and onions have been improved by liquid nitrogen freezing. Dehydrated sweet potatoes are now on the market, a convenience to the consumer and a real boon to the grower -- thanks to USDA research.

Early commercialization is in prospect for some of the exotic sub-tropical fruits grown in Hawaii. Jet airfreight and improved handling practices will soon bring to the midlands guacamole, a frozen avocado salad; Kona coffee from the Kona coast of the big Island of Hawaii; and ripe, high quality papayas and pineapples -- the kinds you now taste first hand only in the tropics.

Packaging is changing as much as the food it protects. Look for more prepackaging of bananas, peaches, pears and citrus, green beans, sweet corn and sweet potatoes. Tin coated steel foil, as sheer as the finest grade paper makes it possible to vacuum pack such foods as coffee to protect flavor and aroma. Sauces, gravies, beef broth and coffee concentrates in liquid form are already on the market in sturdy, pliable, easily disposable containers. Reclosable pouches for cheese are easy to open, easy to reseal with their protected pressure-sensitive tape. Nebraska's Department of Agriculture has an experimental plant for edible packaging of amylose corn 'film' in operation in Central City.



family living in 1965 ?

FASHION AND ENSEMBLES CLOTHING KEYNOTE

The retail price of clothing will probably edge up. Higher prices for articles of wool and leather could be offset somewhat by lower prices of cotton and silk. Fiber mixes will probably include more cotton and less wool. Emphasis seems to be on fashion and ensembles in both clothing and household textiles.



No new fibers of markedly different properties are being introduced. Thus, it appears that for the next few years the greatest improvements in textiles will come from modifications of existing fibers. Research continues on the processing for wash-wears to eliminate seam puckering and improve finish retention after laundering and during wear.

Stretch fabrics are of interest for not only apparel but also household textiles. Work is being done on the design of garments to make full use of the new stretch properties, rather than simply substituting a stretch for a non-stretch fabric.



Outdoor living brings about need for textiles for outdoor use. Such fabrics are being treated for tents, tarpaulins, sleeping bags, boat covers and similar articles to make them mildew-, rot-, and weather-resistant. Improved flame retardants are being used for coats and trousers for firemen, circus tents, patients' gowns. Other potential applications for fire safety include mattresses and tickings, bed linens and awnings.



New tanning techniques impart softness and perspiration resistance to leather. These qualities are desirable in work shoes, nurses shoes, certain types of athletic shoes -- skating shoes and hunting boots. Another use, which has not yet been tested, is in garments and as bed sheets in hospitals to prevent bed sores.

All in all the consumer can expect to have clothing with increasingly higher product performance and wear resistance.

CONSERVING FURNITURE WOOD



The furniture and furnishing shopper will find a wide variety of choice in styles, sizes and finishes of furniture, and types of fabrics. Woven or matted paper fabric has now been developed for use in home furnishings. For rugs, it is foam backed. For draperies and upholstery it is treated to achieve washability and stain resistance; for wall coverings and lamp shades it can have either vinyl, polyethylene or polypropylene lamination.

Some changes in the use of woods are expected. Walnut, most popular wood for U.S. furniture, may be seen in thinner veneers. Artificial finishes to resemble wood grains may increase. These are an attempt to stretch the present supply of walnut.

IMPROVEMENTS IN HOUSEHOLD EQUIPMENT

Both supply and demand for household equipment appear to be optimistic. Much interest is in evidence in food waste disposers, dishwashers and room air conditioners. Replacements of washers, refrigerators, and radios tend to be in upgraded models.

WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

- . . . Be alert in changing your buying skills and habits to keep up with the new merchandise and get your money worth.
- . . . Patiently work out a realistic spending plan to find the "bugs" in your budget.
- . . . Involve the whole family in the making of your budget. Encourage team approach to help children learn the value of money.
- . . . Review your retirement plans. Are they in keeping with the increasing cost of living?
- . . . Attempt to buy when prices are down - follow the sales. But know the prices before the sale too.
- . . . Make sure your installment payments (not including mortgage) never exceeds 25% of monthly income.
- . . . Pay cash whenever you can.
- . . . Check your automobile insurance policy. Is it large enough to be of real protection? Insure for disaster rather than small nuisance amounts.
- . . . Use and care for appliances and furnishings properly to extend their life and avoid repair service bills.
- . . . Be selective about convenience foods. Some cost little or no more, and are genuine time savers.
- . . . Read the label, follow instructions, whether it's a cake mix, an automobile or an electric slicing knife.

If you want some assistance or an account book to help you in working out your farm and home plans, ask your county Extension agents.
