

National Archives Traveling Exhibits Service



What's Cooking, Uncle Sam? The Government's Effect on the American Diet

Exhibition Overview: "What's Cooking, Uncle Sam?" debuted in 2011 as one of the National Archives' most popular exhibits, generating excitement and dialog among visitors and in the media. "What's Cooking's" eclectic records were all produced in the course of Government efforts to ensure that Americans enjoy an ample, safe, and nutritious diet. Spanning the Revolutionary War to the late 1900s, the letters, photographs, pamphlets, posters, films, and radio programs echo many of our current concerns about Government's role in the health and safety of our food supply. The exhibit is a winning combination of nostalgia, humor, and intriguing insights about the history of the government's that helped our diet.



Exhibition Details

Content:

4 free-standing aluminum frame units with fabric panels

Curator:

Alice Kamps, Curator, National Archives, Washington, DC

Supplemental Materials:

- Print-ready press and marketing materials including logos, rights-free images, and press releases, Exhibition eGuide
- Catalog, cookbook and a variety of wholesale products designed for "What's Cooking, Uncle Sam?" available for resale

Rental Fee:

\$1,500 for 7-week display

Security Requirements:

Limited security & environmental controls

Shipping:

Exhibitor is responsible for outgoing shipping costs

Size:

1,000 square feet

Number of Crates:

2

Insurance:

Insured by the National Archives

Tour Dates:

"What's Cooking, Uncle Sam?" will be available for tour 2015 through 2018. Dates are subject to change.

Contact:

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More About this Exhibition

"What's Cooking" explores four areas of Government activities: Farm, Factory, Kitchen, and Table. Farm introduces the vital links between our diet and changing agricultural processes. Factory shows that the U.S. Government began protecting us from unsafe foods in the Industrial Age of the 1800s. Kitchen reveals the importance of government-sponsored research, how our knowledge of nutrition has expanded, and how our eating habits have been influenced by world events. Table investigates the effects of military food, school lunch, and Presidential preferences on daily dinner tables.

Farm: From local 4-H programs to omnibus farm bills, a wide variety of government activities influence what American farmers grow, how they grow it, and how much they earn selling it.

Factory: As Americans came to rely on processed foods during the Industrial age, dangerous additives and spoiled ingredients crept into the food supply. This section includes evidence of toxic candy and exploding ketchup bottles and documentation of efforts to clean up factories and seize toxic foods.

Kitchen: In his crusade to improve the nutritional quality of meals produced in American kitchens, Uncle Sam has funded groundbreaking research, deployed an army of home economists into kitchens and classrooms, and plastered public spaces with pie charts and pyramids.

Table: There are two groups of Americans routinely called to Uncle Sam's table: soldiers and school children. In addition, Uncle Sam served dinners for the Presidents of the United States, their families, and their guests.

National Archives Museum
700 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
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