MILDRED LAGER -

HISTORY OF HER WORK WITH SOYFOODS
AND NATURAL FOODS IN LOS ANGELES
(1900-1960):

EXTENSIVELY ANNOTATED

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCEBOOK
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BIBLIOGRAPHY AND SOURCEBOOK

Compiled
by
William Shurtleff & Akiko Aoyagi

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Part of the enjoyment of writing a book lies in meeting people from around the world who share a common interest, and in learning from them what is often the knowledge or skills acquired during a lifetime of devoted research or practice. We wish to give deepest thanks...

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This book, now doubt and alas, has its share of errors. These, of course, are solely the responsibility of William Shurtleff.
INTRODUCTION

Brief Chronology of Mildred Lager

1900 Dec. 19 – Mildred Mathilda Lager is born in West Superior, Douglas County, Wisconsin, the only child of Gustav Walfred Lager and Hilda Marie Erickson. Gustav came to the USA in 1890 and Hilda in 1881. They were married on 28 Oct. 1899 in Superior, Wisconsin.

Mildred grew up in Superior at 929 Bay St., then attended Superior State Teachers’ College of Wisconsin. She was active in college affairs and became a member of the Tau Alpha Chi sorority. Graduating with a teaching certificate, she then taught in two different schools, one in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, and one (Washington School, probably a grammar school) in Escanaba, Michigan (Evening Telegram {Superior, Wisconsin}. 1960. “City, area deaths.” Jan. 27. p. 4).

1925 – Mildred starts her lifelong battle with arthritis. Although a healthy child, raised on a sound traditional diet, she began to notice at an early age that her teeth were soft and her legs often ached. While in her teens she had been told by physicians that she had incurable rheumatoid arthritis and would never walk again, her hands and feet being completely alkylosed (locked stiff) at the time.

She soon becomes deeply interested in nutrition, convinced that she could heal herself through changing her diet. This interest eventually led her to soyfoods. Although already underweight, she decides to go on an eliminative diet, using only fruit juices. Five months later her swelling had disappeared and she was making remarkable progress. She decided to spend the rest of her life studying nutrition and trying to help others who suffered as she did from arthritis.

The pain from her arthritis may have forced her to stop teaching. For quite a time she was confined to a wheelchair; she worked for a while as a saleslady in a shoe store in Superior.

1929 – Mildred Lager and August Abraham form a partnership (she is secretary-treasurer and he is president) to buy Giesen’s Shoe Store (at 624 Tower Ave., Superior, where Abrahamson had worked for 18 years). They rename it the Family Shoe Store Inc.

1929 Oct. – The stock market crashes and the Great Depression begins.

1930 – Mildred leaves Superior, Wisconsin, probably headed for California, after doctors gave her only a few years to live (Evening Telegram {Superior, Wisconsin}. 1938. May 27. p. 4; 1960. “City, area deaths.” Jan. 27. p. 4).

1932 Nov. 4 – The Family Shoe Store holds its grand opening after moving from 624 Tower Ave. to its new quarters at 702 Tower Ave. At the time of the announcement, Miss Lager is on the Pacific Coast recovering her health (Evening Telegram {Superior Wisconsin}. 1932. Nov. 4, p. 9).

1932-Oct. 1933 – As a result of intensive study of foods and their value to health, Mildred becomes a demonstrator for Dr. Frank McCoy, noted health specialist of Los Angeles whose health talks appear daily in The Evening Telegram (Superior, Wisconsin) in the column titled “How to keep well.” She travels throughout the United States appearing before large audiences of both men and women showing them how health advocates prepare food (Evening Telegram. 1938. May 27, p. 4).

1932 – Mildred returns to her home town of Superior to conduct a cooking school and institute at Concordia Lutheran Church; large crowds attend.

1933 Oct. 25 – Mildred, now 32 years old, opens The House of Better Living, a large and attractive building surrounded by lawns and gardens at 1207 W. 6th St. in Los Angeles. She later wrote, “My aim was to teach, not to merchandise, and to always make my classes free of charge.”

1934 Jan. – Mildred is given her first radio program on KFAC in Los Angeles – from 7:45 to 8:00 a.m. It is listed at “The Dial” in the Los Angeles Times.

1934 April 20 – Mildred begins writing her long-running column titled “Food Facts” in California Health News (Hollywood, California), owned and operated by Clarke Irvine.
1935 June – Mildred’s first book, titled Food Facts, is published by her House of Better Living (228 + 10 p.). It is based on her column.

1935 Sept. 11 – Mildred starts publishing The House of Better Living, a newsletter. It contains useful information on diet, nutrition, and health, lists of and details about products sold at the store, plus ads for selected products (paid for by the manufacturers). Soy products appear in the first issue and most of the soy products available in Southern California during the 1930s appear in her newsletter or catalog. Mildred calls her food products “natural foods” rather than “health foods.”

1936 March – Mildred publishes The House of Better Living Catalog (14 p., 8.5 by 11 inches), with a green and brown color cover and a wealth of interesting information inside, plus listings for 27 American-style soyfood products.

1937 June 26 – Mildred leaves for a 3-week trip to Hawaii on the Lurline (Los Angeles Times. 1937. June 9, p. 12). There she studied the pineapple industry and how the fruit affects health when used in the diet. She returned on July 17 from Honolulu on the Malolo.

1937 July 19 – Mildred begins broadcasting over radio station KCEA in Los Angeles at her regular time, 7:45 a.m. on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday mornings.

1937 Nov. – Mildred’s morning radio program has returned to station KFAC but at a better time - 8:45 A.M. instead of 7:45. She offers a “cheery philosophy.”

1938 March – Mildred’s new and bigger House of Better Living Catalog: Finer Natural Foods is published (36 pages). It is the single most important document showing the creative development of commercial soyfoods in California in the late 1930s. It contains 26 new soyfood products and a total of 42 such products.

1939 – Mildred is cited by the U.S. Federal Trade Commission for selling Vegeminerals and Oil of Garlic, and for making health claims about each.

1940 – Mildred’s parents move from Superior, Wisconsin, to Burbank, California — presumably to be near their only child, and for the nice weather. From 1940 to 1946, Mildred lived at 1901 West 2nd St., Burbank, California. Her parents lived with her after they arrived. In 1949 they celebrated their 50th anniversary.

1941 Dec. 7 – The United States enters World War II after the Japanese attack Pearl Harbor.


1945 June – The Useful Soybean: A Plus Factor in Modern Living, by Mildred Lager, published in New York and London by McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc. (xii + 295 p). This is one of the most important and innovative books on soyfoods ever written.

1945 Dec. – Mildred sells the House of Better Living to Victor and Marvin Lemon. She has owned and operated it since 25 Oct. 1933. She plans to continue to teach and write.

1946 – Mildred Lager marries Edwin “Ed” S. Jones, a health food salesman and distributor (jobber), who had sold products to her store. It is her first marriage, his second. They live at 122 North Kenmore Ave. in Burbank. Her political party is Republican. Her parents live near her at 1230 North Ontario St. in Burbank.


1955 Nov. 29 – Mrs. Hilda Lager, Mildred’s mother, dies in Burbank, California. He is buried at Forest Lawn in Hollywood Hills.

1960 Jan. 25 (Monday) – Mrs. Edwin S. Jones (Mildred Lager), age 59, dies at her home at 4114 Warner Boulevard, Burbank, California. Funeral services are conducted on Thursday, Jan. 28, at 11 a.m., at the Church of the Hills in Forest Lawn Memorial Park, Hollywood Hills, California. She is buried at Forest Lawn. She leaves husband her, Edwin S. Jones, 4118 Warner Blvd., and two daughters (by Ed’s first marriage), Mrs. Evelyn Mundall of Oakdale and Mrs. Lois Bower of Redding.

1960 Aug. 7 – Edwin S. Jones (age 69) marries Dorothea Van Gundy (age 57). It is her first, his third. They revise and update Mildred Lager’s books, then both work hard for many years to keep them in print - in part as a source of family income.
ABOUT THIS BOOK

This is the most comprehensive book ever published about Mildred Lager. It has been compiled, one record at a time over a period of 34 years, in an attempt to document the history of soy this region. It is also the single most current and useful source of information on this subject.

This is one of more than 50 books compiled by William Shurtleff and Akiko Aoyagi, and published by the Soyinfo Center. It is based on historical principles, listing all known documents and commercial products in chronological order. It features detailed information on:

- 24 different document types, both published and unpublished.
- 136 published documents - extensively annotated bibliography. Every known publication on the subject in every language.
- 7 original Soyinfo Center interviews and overviews never before published.
- 27 unpublished archival documents
- 1 commercial soy products.

Thus, it is a powerful tool for understanding the development of this subject from its earliest beginnings to the present.

Each bibliographic record in this book contains (in addition to the typical author, date, title, volume and pages information) the author’s address, number of references cited, original title of all non-English language publications together with an English translation of the title, month and issue of publication, and the first author’s first name (if given). For most books, we state if it is illustrated, whether or not it has an index, and the height in centimeters.

For commercial soy products (CSP), each record includes (if possible) the product name, date of introduction, manufacturer’s name, address and phone number, and (in many cases) ingredients, weight, packaging and price, storage requirements, nutritional composition, and a description of the label. Sources of additional information on each product (such as advertisements, articles, patents, etc.) are also given.

A complete subject/geographical index is also included.
ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS BOOK

A&M = Agricultural and Mechanical
Agric. = Agricultural or Agriculture
Agric. Exp. Station = Agricultural Experiment Station
ARS = Agricultural Research Service
ASA = American Soybean Association
Assoc. = Association, Associate
Asst. = Assistant
Aug. = August
Ave. = Avenue
Blvd. = Boulevard
bu = bushel(s)
ca. = about (circa)
cc = cubic centimeter(s)
Chap. = Chapter
cm = centimeter(s)
Co. = company
Corp. = Corporation
Dec. = December
Dep. or Dept. = Department
Depts. = Departments
Div. = Division
Dr. = Drive
E. = East
ed. = edition or editor
e.g. = for example
Exp. = Experiment
Feb. = February
fl oz = fluid ounce(s)
ft = foot or feet
gm = gram(s)
ha = hectare(s)
i.e. = in other words
Inc. = Incorporated
incl. = including
Illust. = Illustrated or Illustration(s)
Inst. = Institute
J. = Journal
J. of the American Oil Chemists’ Soc. = Journal of the American Oil Chemists’ Society
Jan. = January
kg = kilogram(s)
km = kilometer(s)
Lab. = Laboratory
Labs. = Laboratories
lb = pound(s)
Ltd. = Limited
mcg = microgram(s)
mg = milligram(s)
ml = milliliter(s)
mm = millimeter(s)
N. = North
No. = number or North
Nov. = November
Oct. = October
oz = ounce(s)
p. = page(s)
P.O. Box = Post Office Box
Prof. = Professor
psi = pounds per square inch
R&D = Research and Development
Rd. = Road
Rev. = Revised
RPM = revolutions per minute
S. = South
SANA = Soyfoods Association of North America
Sept. = September
St. = Street
tonnes = metric tons
trans. = translator(s)
Univ. = University
USB = United Soybean Board
USDA = United States Department of Agriculture
Vol. = volume
V.P. = Vice President
vs. = versus
W. = West
°C = degrees Celsius (Centigrade)
°F = degrees Fahrenheit
> = greater than, more than
< = less than

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HOW TO MAKE THE BEST USE OF THIS BOOK

Here are a few tips to help you get the most out of the information contained in this book.

**Chronological Order**: The publications and products in this book are listed with the earliest first and the most recent last. Within each year, references are sorted alphabetically by author. If you are interested in only current information, you might want to start reading at the back, just before the indexes.

**A Reference Book: Search It with Adobe Acrobat**: Like an encyclopedia or any other reference book, this work is meant to be searched - to find exactly the information you are looking for - more than to be read.

At the small “Find” box (top center) click the down arrow. Click “Open full Acrobat search.” In the box “What word or phrase would you like to search for?” type in your word or phrase. Then click search. The results will appear below. Try clicking the first one - to see how it works.

**How to Use the Index**: A subject and country index is located at the back of this book. It will help you to go directly to the specific information that interests you. Browse through it briefly to familiarize yourself with its contents and format.

Each record in the book has been assigned a sequential number, starting with 1 for the first/earliest reference. It is this number, not the page number, to which the indexes refer. A publication will typically be listed in each index in more than one place, and major documents may have 30-40 subject index entries. Thus a publication about the nutritional value of tofu and soymilk in India would be indexed under at least four headings in the subject and country index: Nutrition, Tofu, Soymilk, and Asia, South: India.

Note the extensive use of cross references to help you: e.g. “Bean curd. See Tofu.”

**Countries** and States/Provinces: Every record contains a country keyword. Most USA and Canadian records also contain a state or province keyword, indexed at “U.S. States” or “Canadian Provinces and Territories” respectively. All countries are listed under their region or continent. Thus for Egypt, look under Africa: Egypt, and not under Egypt. For Brazil, see the entry at Latin America, South America: Brazil. For India, see Asia, South: India. For Australia see Oceania: Australia.

Most Important Documents: Look in the Index under “Important Documents -.”

**Organizations**: Many of the larger, more innovative, or pioneering soy-related companies appear in the subject index – companies like ADM / Archer Daniels Midland Co., AGP, Cargill, Dupont, Kikkoman, Monsanto, Tofutti, etc. Worldwide, we index many major soybean crushers, tofu makers, soymilk and soymilk equipment manufacturers, soyfoods companies with various products, Seventh-day Adventist food companies, soy protein makers (including pioneers), soy sauce manufacturers, soy ice cream, tempeh, soynut, soy flour companies, etc.


**Soyfoods**: Look under the most common name: Tofu, Miso, Soymilk, Soy Ice Cream, Soy Cheese, Soy Yogurt, Soy Flour, Green Vegetable Soybeans, or Whole Dry Soybeans. But note: Soy Proteins: Isolates, Soy Proteins: Textured Products, etc.

Industrial (Non-Food) Uses of Soybeans. Look under “Industrial Uses ...” for more 17 subject headings.

**Pioneers - Individuals**: Laszlo Berczeller, Henry Ford, Friedrich Haberlandt, A.A. Horvath, Englebert Kaempfer, Mildred Lager, William Morse, etc. Soy-Related Movements: Soyfoods Movement, Vegetarianism, Health and Dietary Reform Movements (esp. 1830-1930s), Health Foods Movement (1920s-1960s), Animal Welfare/Rights. These are indexed under the person’s last name or movement name.

**Nutrition**: All subjects related to soybean nutrition (protein quality, minerals, antinutritional factors, etc.) are indexed under Nutrition, in one or more of 14 subcategories.

**Soybean Production**: All subjects related to growing, marketing, and trading soybeans are listed under Soybean Production. E.g. Soybean Production: Nitrogen Fixation, or
Soybean Production: Plant Protection, or Soybean Production: Variety Development.

Other Special Index Headings: Browsing through the subject index will show you many more interesting subject headings, such as Industry and Market Statistics, Information (incl. computers, databases, libraries), Standards, Bibliographies (works containing more than 50 references), and History (soy related).

Commercial Soy Products: All Soyinfo Center sourcebooks that focus on a specific soyfood (tofu, soymilk, tempeh, miso, etc.) or geographical area (Africa, Japan) contain extensive information about every known commercial soyfood product - a unique feature. We list the product name, manufacturer’s name, address, and phone number, year and month of introduction, ingredients, weight-packaging-price, how stored, nutritional analysis, and documentation on sources of additional information on that product.

SoyaScan Notes: This is a term we have created exclusively for use with this database. A SoyaScan Notes Interview contains all the important material in short interviews conducted and transcribed by William Shurtleff. This material has not been published in any other source. Longer interviews are designated as such, and listed as unpublished manuscripts. A transcript of each can be ordered from Soyinfo Center Library. A SoyaScan Notes Summary is a summary by William Shurtleff of existing information on one subject.

“Note:“ When this term is used in a record’s summary, it indicates that the information which follows it has been added by the producer of this database.

Asterisks at End of Individual References.
1. An asterisk (*) at the end of a record means that Soyinfo Center does not own that document. Lack of an asterisk means that Soyinfo Center owns all or part of the document.
2. An asterisk after eng (eng*) means that Soyinfo Center has done a partial or complete translation into English of that document.
3. An asterisk in a listing of the number of references [23* ref] means that most of these references are not about soybeans or soyfoods.

Documents Owned by Soyinfo Center. Lack of an * at the end of a reference indicates that the Soyinfo Center Library owns all or part of that document. We own roughly three fourths of the documents listed. Photocopies of hard-to-find documents or those without copyright protection can be ordered for a fee. Please contact us for details.

Document Types: The SoyaScan database contains 51 different types of documents, both published (books, journal articles, patents, annual reports, theses, catalogs, news releases, videos, etc.) and unpublished (interviews, unpublished manuscripts, letters, summaries, etc.).

Customized Database Searches: This book was printed from SoyaScan, a large computerized database produced by the Soyinfo Center. Customized/personalized reports are “The Perfect Book,” containing exactly the information you need on any subject you can define, and they are now just a phone call away. For example: Current statistics on tofu and soymilk production and sales in England, France, and Germany. Or soybean varietal development and genetic research in Third World countries before 1970. Or details on all tofu cheesecakes and dressings ever made. You name it, we’ve got it. For fast results, call us now!

BIBLIO: The software program used to produce this book and the SoyaScan database, and to computerize the Soyinfo Center Library is named BIBLIO. Based on Advanced Revelation, it was developed by Soyinfo Center, Tony Cooper and John Ladd.

History of Soybeans and Soyfoods: This book has a corresponding chapter in our forthcoming scholarly work titled History of Soybeans and Soyfoods (4 volumes). Manuscript chapters from that book are now available on our website, www.soyinfocenter.com.

About the Soyinfo Center. An overview of our publications, computerized databases, services, and history is given on our website.

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MILDRED LAGER: HISTORY OF HER WORK

   **Summary:** This is Gustaf Lager’s application for U.S. citizenship on 9 March 1894. And to renounce “all allegiance to any foreign prince, potentate, state or sovereignty and particularly to the King of Sweden of which at the time I was a citizen or subject.” His signature appears at least 3 times, the last on 22 Aug. 1906.

   Note: This is the earliest document seen (Sept. 2009) that mentions Mildred Lager.

• **Summary:** This 5 by 8 inch black-and-white photo was probably taken in Superior, Wisconsin, where Mildred grew up. A tiny handwritten note in the lower right corner appears to give the date as 1914, when Mildred would have been age 14.

  Sent to Soyfoods Center in May 1981 by Dr. & Mrs. George L. Bower of Redding, California. Lois Bower was Mildred’s stepdaughter.


• **Summary:** On page 27 are portrait photos and sketches of five students, all seniors. “Mildred Lager–English.
  “She is the embodiment of perpetual motion.”
  “Athena 1, 2, 3, 4. Dream Pictures 2. Joan of Arc 2.”
  Source: Superior Public Library.
  Note: This is the earliest photo seen (Sept. 2009) of Mildred Lager.

5. Mildred Lager as a young lady (Photograph). 1918?
• **Summary:** This 3 by 4 inch black-and-white photo was probably taken in Superior, Wisconsin, where Mildred grew up. She appears to be about age 18. On the back is written: “Mildred Lager, 57 E 2nd St., Superior, Wisconsin.”

  Sent to Soyfoods Center in May 1981 by Dr. & Mrs. George L. Bower of Redding, California. Lois Bower was Mildred’s stepdaughter.


• **Summary:** This black and white photo, 2½ by 3½ inches, shows a man and woman who are probably Mildred Lager’s parents, Gustav and Hilda Lager. Each is wearing a hat and there are woods in the background, as if they were on vacation. On the back is written in ink: “June 19, 1926. Tourist camp. Velva, North Dakota.” A purple stamp reads: “Permanent Highcross Print. Jun 24 1926. Fullmer’s Photo Service. Havre, Montana.”

7. Bessemer Herald (Bessemer, Michigan). 1928. City and township schools open on Tuesday for 1928-29 Term; list of
NELL HIGHFIELD—English
"One who mixed reason with pleasure and reason with mirth."

MILDRED LAGER—English
"She is the embodiment of perpetual motion."
Athena 1, 2, 3, 4. Dream Pictures 2. Joan of Arc 2.

ERNEST JOHNSON—Manual Training
"I have fought a good fight,
I have finished my course,
And I have kept the faith."

GLADYS SCHMIDT—General

CLARA WIGHTMAN—English
"It seems to us that she always looks glad."

• Summary: The teachers are divided among two schools: High School and Washington School. Mildred M. Lager, Superior, Wisconsin, will be teaching at Washington School.


• Summary: This large portrait photo, with a jet-black background, shows Dr. McCoy. The text below it reads: “Every adult individual usually gets the health he deserves. This statement was at first startling, coming from such a health authority as Dr. Frank McCoy, who is perhaps the best known and best loved physician in America.

“Dr. McCoy, who is devoting all of his energy to suffering humanity, is the kindliest of men... To satisfy his desire to multiply the effects of his work, the newspaper writing was started, and then the extensive lecture tours all over America. In a recent tour Dr. McCoy delivered seventy-five lectures within a period of seven weeks, thus personally appearing before millions of people, with lectures being broadcast through the radio at most of these meetings.

“Dr. McCoy broadcasts at least once a week through the KHJ Station of Los Angeles, ad these radio talks are written down and sent all over the country to other broadcasting stations to be read by he local announcers.

“Dr. McCoy is in hearty accord with all of the methods used by any of the thousands of sincere physicians on America. He has never used one line of space in his health articles to criticize any physician or school of physicians,...”

“The marvelous results from the fasting ad diet cure have convinced Dr. McCoy that medicines are generally useless and much of the surgery so commonly advised is unnecessary.”

“A further extension of Dr. McCoy’s work is now being developed. For years he has been training assistants in his own office to take care of his increasing practice. The older of these trained assistants are now being sent into other cities to establish branch offices where those interested in Dr. McCoy’s methods can receive the diagnosis and office treatments which are often indispensable to a complete cure.”

Note 1. Mildred Lager left Superior, Wisconsin, in 1930—apparently headed for California (Obituary 27 Jan. 1960). In Nov. 1932 she was in California recovering her health and was expected to return to the shoe store in Superior of which she was a co-owner (Evening Telegram, 4 Nov. 1932). At some point, “as a result of intensive study of foods and their value to health, she became a demonstrator for Dr. Frank McCoy,...” (Evening Telegram 27 May 1938).

On 35 Oct. 1933 Mildred started her own business, a health food store and teaching center named “The House of Better Living.” Her philosophy of diet and health was very similar to that of Dr. Frank McCoy, but (so far as we know), she never mentioned him, nor did he ever mention her.

But why did Mildred leave Wisconsin for California? And how did she meet or learn about Dr. Frank McCoy? He may have given a lecture in Superior, Minnesota, on the seven-week lecture tour in late 1929 mentioned above. Or she may have heard one of the radio broadcasts described above, or read one of his syndicated columns that were being published in Superior’s Evening Telegram by 27 May 1938.

Note 2. It is not clear whether this is an ad, an article, or an advertorial. For the previous two years, during the first week in January, Dr. McCoy has run what are clearly large, bold ads praising his work. Address: Brack Shops Building, Los Angeles.


• Summary: On p. 180 we read: “Family Shoe Store Inc., A Abrahamson Pres, Mildred M Lager Sec-treas, Shoes and hosiery for every member of the family, repair shop in connection, 624 Tower av., Tel Broad 2421.”


• Summary: “The Family Shoe Store, formerly located at 624 Tower avenue, will hold its grand opening in its new quarters, 702 Tower avenue, Saturday.

“Owners and operators of the Family Shoe Store are August Abrahamson and Mildred Lager. They formed a partnership in 1929, taking over the shoe store known for years as Giesen’s.

“Miss Lager in West: At the present time Mr. Abrahamson is in full charge of the store. His partner is on the Pacific Coast recovering her health. She is expected to return shortly.

“Before forming partnership with Miss Lager, Mr. Abrahamson was with the Giesen’s Shoe Store for 18 years.”


• Summary: “In a year the House of Better Living, conducted by Mildred M. Lager, food economist, 1207 West Sixth, Los Angeles, has become a rendezvous for women who are learning modern health methods.

“Miss Lager conducts three health cooking classes every Monday and Thursday, 1 p.m. She also has the ‘Better Living’ hour on KFAC, 7:45 a.m., Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Her place on Sixth street has a regular exposition room for all sorts of modern health appliances, with a health food store in connection.
“This week she is opening a new library that lines almost one-half of the store. She is installing an air conditioning plant, which will insure fresh, cool air when it is warm. She recommends and uses scores of products from some of the largest manufacturers in the west, and, of course, distributes several hundred copies of California Health News.”

Note 1. This is the earliest document seen (Sept. 2009) concerning Mildred Lager in California (one of two documents).

Note 2. This article was published on the same day Mildred began her long-running column titled “Food Facts” in this periodical.

   • Summary: This column begins: “Listen for Miss Lager’s ‘Food Facts and Recipes,’ every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, KFAC.”

The column is about food combining: “All food is good but all items do not combine for the best digestion and assimilation. If your meal does not agree so well, be a bit more careful about your combinations... Attend Miss Lager’s free ‘Healthful Cooking Classes’ every Monday and Thursday, 1:30 p.m., at The House of Better Living...”

Note 1. This is the first installment of Mildred’s long-running column “Food Facts.”

Note 2. This is the earliest document seen (Sept. 2009) concerning Mildred Lager in California (one of two documents).

Note 3. At the top of page 1: “An impartial journal covering the Western states. No copyright. One dollar a year. 7,000 average circulation. 5¢ on news stands.”

Address: Food Economist and Director, House of Better Living, 1207 West Sixth, Los Angeles.

   • Summary: In the center of this full page memorial is a large portrait photo of Otto Carque (1867-1935) titled “Auf Wiedersehen” [Goodbye]. Surrounding it are the names (and usually addresses) of 77 companies and individuals involved with health foods who wished to say goodbye. These include (listed alphabetically): Alvita Products, American Health Food Stores, Lima and Soya Bean Products (Mr. and Mrs. Bill Baker), California Food and Health Service (5 entries), California Health Food Store, California Health Hotel, Lillian Carque, Cubbison Cracker Co., Inc., Dr. Harry & Lucy Finkel, Defensive-Diet League of America, Health Cafeteria, Health Foundation of California, House of Better Living (Mildred Lager, 1207 West Sixth), Hygienic Food Co., Dr. Philip M. Lovell, Dr. Benedict Lust and staff, Oakland Health Food Store, The Old Mill, Paradise Health Resort, Martin W. Pretorius, Richter’s Live Food Cafeterias, Rosenberg’s Original Health Food Store (San Francisco), Santa Monica Health Food, Sexauer Natural Food, Vegetarian Cafeteria and Bakery (San Diego) [San Diego’s Health Food Center, C.A. Thompson, proprietor; 1125 Sixth St. Phone F. 2744 {see p. 15}].


Pages 67-68 contain a very positive section on soy beans and foods made from them, including whole soybeans, “curd cheese, resembling cottage cheese [tofu], and soy bean milk... Other soy food products are soy butter [no description is given; this is probably soynut butter from T.A. Van Gundy’s La Sierra Foods, but it could be margarine made from soy oil], soy loaf (combined with gluten), soy sandwich spread, soy bologna, soy oil, soy sauce, soy ready-to-serve breakfast foods, coffee substitute, as well as soy flour. Soy flour is yellow and fluffy, and can be used in all baking... Soy macaroni, noodles, spaghetti, bread, and pancake flour are also on the market. Soy beans are also sugar coated for candy and toasted as peanuts. They are a wonderful food for animals and have been used in that way in this country for years. Today the governments of Europe and America are devoting a great deal of attention to the soy bean as human food and the next few years will see an increased consumption, as well as many new soy products.”

Page 75 contains a nutritional analysis of soy beans.

In the chapter on Acid-alkaline balance (p. 22-25), foods with the most acid ash are egg yolk and oysters, followed by eggs, most fish and meats. Foods with the most alkaline ash are lima beans, string beans, dried beans, spinach, raisins, figs, dates, and dried milk, followed by soy beans, soy bean tea, and most vegetables. The author believes that one should keep an alkaline balance in the body. Sleep is a great alkalizer.

The subsection titled “Lima beans: states: “Dr. Sansum of Santa Barbara was instrumental in having lima bean flour made, and Bill Baker of Ojai, California pioneered this field, developing the original lima bean bread and lima bean pancake flour.”

This is not a vegetarian book. Meat and dairy products are discussed at length, and their consumption is not discouraged. However this is the earliest book seen that uses the term “natural foods” prominently—in this case as a chapter title.

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Also discusses (see index for page numbers):
Acidophilus milk, alfalfa (alfalfa tea has alkaline ash, p. 35), almonds, almond oil, aluminum, avocado, bran, carob beans, chufas, cottonseed, cottonseed oil, garbanzas, kephir, lentils, lima beans, linseed, margarine / oleomargarine, olive oil, olives, palm oil, palm kernel oil, peanuts, peanut oil, rape seed oil, sago, sesame oil.

Note 1. This is the earliest document seen (Sept. 2009) concerning Mildred Lager and soy.

Note 2. This is the 2nd earliest document seen (July 2005) that mentions a food or drink product (“alfalfa tea”) made from alfalfa. This is also the earliest English-language document seen (July 2005) that contains the term “alfalfa tea.” It was used for its alkaline ash. Address: House of Better Living, 1207 West 6th St., Los Angeles, California. Phone: Mutual 2085.

- **Summary:** This is a schedule of radio programs in the Los Angeles area throughout the day. Mildred Lager has a program on KFAC from 7:45 to 8:00 a.m. Note: This is the earliest document seen (Feb. 2004) that mentions Lager’s program. However she apparently started on KFAC in Jan. 1934.


- **Summary:** The House of Better Living will be two years old on 25 Oct. 1935. “It was started, and still is, owned and operated by Mildred Lager, whose sole purpose was to teach people about food and healthful cooking. Health is more than food, and that is why she called it Better Living. Miss Lager... started with free healthful cooking classes, then came radio...” [by Aug. 1935].

The House of Better Living “is not a health food store, it carries only natural foods minus the highly advertised “Health Food Products... Tune in to KFAC [radio] every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday A.M. at 7:45, and listen to Miss Lager. Come to the free educational class every Wednesday P.M. at 1:30. Address: 1207 West Sixth St., Los Angeles, California. Phone: MUtual 2085.

- **Summary:** Gives 5 recipes using natural foods. “Soy or lima bean waffles may be made with Bill Baker Waffle Flour.” Ice box dessert calls for “24 Cubbison Melba wafers, or Whole Wheat Vanilla Wafers, as made by the Grist Mill.”

Melba toast dressing and bacon calls for “2 cups Cubbison’s Melba toast crumbs.” Address: 1207 West Sixth St., Los Angeles, California.

- **Summary:** “One hundred per cent whole wheat cookies, crackers and bread. Have you tried Olson’s 100% whole wheat raisin bran bread?

“We also have all the Soy Bean products, soy cookies, crackers, and Bill Baker’s soy and lima bean bread.

**Summary:** “Natural Foods, as Nature provided them, supply all our needs. All food is good. Use the proper amounts, properly prepared and combined.

“Natural foods contain what Nature intended they should contain. They may not be as good looking, keep as well, or be as palate tickling as devitalized foods, but are better from a health standpoint. Refined foods have part or all of the minerals removed, and minerals are what we need. Vitamins go hand in hand with minerals and if one is destroyed the other is also. Natural foods contain both the minerals and vitamins.

“Many minerals are found in the outer layers of foods, such as seeds, cereals, etc., and should not be removed. That is why brown rice, whole grains, 100% whole grain meals and flours are the best to use.

“Natural foods are ‘live foods’ and do not keep well. Bugs leave devitalized foods alone. For this reason it is best to buy small quantities as needed.”

“Natural foods do not have to be called Health Foods. To many it suggests sickness, diet, food fads, etc., and one does not have to be sick to use them. All natural foods are health foods.” Address: 1207 West Sixth St., Los Angeles, California.


**Summary:** “Let Smiling Through be your theme song.” “Change your thoughts and you change your life.”

“Soy beans are one of the most economical proteins.”

“High alkaline ash foods: Lima beans, spinach, string beans, parsnips, potatoes, soy beans, celery, raisins, figs, dates, dried milk, almonds.”

“Quality always pays. It is not what you pay but what you get for what you pay that counts.” At the top of this column is a portrait photo of Mildred Lager.

Note: On page 4, col. 3, is a section about sesame oil. Address: 1207 West Sixth St., Los Angeles, California.


**Summary:** The issues are numbered sequentially from 1 to 59. An original copy of each issue of this newsletter up to and including No. 36 (Dec. 1938) is owned by Soyinfo Center. Held in a 3-ring binder, they are preceded by Mildred Lager’s personal 6-page handwritten index (by subject, in pencil, on lined paper) to important articles, recipes or information in all the issues. For example (using all those that mention soy plus a few others): Breads–Soy wheat germ muffins, [issue] #11, #14. Soy ginger muffins #19. Meats and dressing–Soy-vegetable hash, loaf, and patties #25. Natural foods #1. Proteins–Vegetable #3, #5. Pancakes–Soy and cornmeal #14. Soy beans–#22, #25, #29. Salads and dressing–Soy bean, celery, corn, carrot #21. Vegetables–Soy bean loaf #10. Soy beans, plain cooked #11.

After No. 36, Soyinfo Center owns only photocopies of No. 42 (June 1939), No. 46 (Oct. 1939), No. 49 (Jan. 1940), No. 53 (May 1940), and 59 (Nov. 1940).

In Oct. 1940 the address of the House of Better Living changed to 3477 West Sixth St. The phone no. changed to EXposition 8144. Address: 1207 West Sixth St., Los Angeles, California. Phone: MUtual 2085.


**Summary:** “$2.00 per copy.” On the same page is a small ad for “Bill Baker’s Soy and Lima Bean Waffle Flour, Bread... Cookies.”

On page 4 is a small ad for the “Grist Mill, 524 West Eighth Street. Health bakery and freshly ground whole grain products.”


**Summary:** “There will be free classes open to the public Monday and Wednesday afternoons at 1:30 P.M., and Thursday evening at 8:00 P.M. The subject and guests of the next 3 classes are given.

Note: Mildred, always an excellent businesswoman, has now started to use her newsletter (page 1) to promote the cooking classes offered inside her store. Address: 1207 West Sixth St., Los Angeles, California. Phone: MUtual 2085.


**Summary:** “Mildred Lager. Every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday.” Tells the subject of each program and her guest for the month of October and for “Anniversary week” (Oct. 21-31). Subjects include: Food fundamentals. Herbs and their use, with Dr. P. Rotondi. Cooking class, lesson No. 1. Course on child diet, with Dr. Virginia Hoeppner.

Note 1. Mildred has now started to use her newsletter (center of page 1) to promote her radio program. This feature will continue in all subsequent newsletters.

Note 2. Over the coming years, Dr. Pietro Rotondi was the most frequent guest on her radio program. Address:
we go to press
in this our first appearance
of a periodical, in which . . .

We hope to better acquaint you with the HOUSE of BETTER LIVING.
How do you like it? If you do, we will continue making it a monthly publication that you can file with your recipes and menu sheets (please notice the punched holes for this purpose). In this publication we hope to give you notice of our activities, helpful ideas, recipes, etc. Any suggestion or requests that you have will be greatly appreciated. If you desire we can have an open forum, etc. It’s another idea and let’s see how it works out.

history of the house of better living

THE HOUSE OF BETTER LIVING is still an infant. It will be two years old October 25, and we suggest that you watch for that date. The House of Better Living is just the development of an idea, and many of you have watched its birth and growth. It was started, and still is, owned and operated by Mildred Lager, whose sole purpose was to teach people food and healthful cooking. Health is more than food, and that is why she called it Better Living. Miss Lager, who thoroughly understands her subject, started with few healthful cooking classes, then came radio, and so The House of Better Living has been one development after another. Today it is still in a real need, and has thousands of friends.

It is not a health food store, it carries only natural foods minus the highly advertised “Health Food Products.” Miss Lager is very careful of what she indorses, and stresses food facts so everyone can judge for themselves.

Tune in to KFAC every Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday A.M. at 7:45, and listen to Miss Lager. Come to the free educational class every Wednesday P.M. at 1:30. In October, Miss Lager will open her cooking classes for the year. Watch for further announcements on these.

The House of Better Living at the present time carries every type of natural food, reasonably priced, plus better kitchen ware, heavy pans of all kinds, ovenware, pottery, vegetable juicers, food choppers, etc. as well as the Gaffers & Statter gas range and Leonard refrigerators. And now a better book department. You are what you eat and think. The House of Better Living has both physical and mental food.

activities for september


September 25: “Daily Doses of Mental Tonics.” Mary Simpson of New Zealand.


healthful and different recipes

whole wheat waffles
1/2 cup whole wheat pastry flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 cup cream
2 eggs
pinch salt
Beat egg yolks, add cream, then flour, baking powder and salt. Beat until smooth. Fold in whites of eggs that have been beaten stiff, but not dry. Bake in ungreased waffle iron until golden brown all the way through. This will make three medium sized waffles. Soy or lima bean waffles may be made with Bill Baker Waffle Flour.

buttermilk date ice cream
1 pint Knudsen’s buttermilk
1 pkg. Vanilla Junket powder
1/2 cup chopped dates, or
1/2 cup date sugar
This may be called a non-fattening ice cream, as no cream is added. The buttermilk and date is an especially good combination, as the acid of the buttermilk helps digest the date. Mix junket powder and buttermilk well, add dates or date sugar, and freeze.

olive oil honey dressing
1/2 cup olive oil
1/2 cup lemon or grapefruit juice
Mix in electric mixer, or shake well until white in color and thoroughly emulsified. Keep in refrigerator. If all separates, shake before using.

ice box dessert
1 pkg. strawberry Jell-well
1/2 cup whipping cream
2 tbsp. minced parsley
Cubbin Melba wafers, or Whole Wheat Vanilla Wafers, as made by the Grist Mill
Dissolve Jell-well as usual and cool until it starts to congeal. Beat until frothy and add whipped cream. Place a layer in a glass loaf pan and let become firm. On top place eight cookies and cover with more beaten Jell-well and cream, another layer of cookies, etc., until three layers of each are used. Place in refrigerator for several hours, or until next day. Slice and serve topped with whipped cream and a sprinkling of Barker’s Date Sugar.

melted toast dressing and bacon
2 cups Cubbinson’s Melba toast crumbs
1 cup chopped celery
2 tbsp. minced parsley
1/2 cup minced green ripe olives
1/2 cup minced mushrooms
Moisten with vegetable or mineral broth until it holds together. Season as desired. Place in buttered baking dish, cover with strips of bacon and bake in oven until bacon is crisp. If one does not wish to use bacon, use butter, soy butter, or mashed avocado may be used. Serve as sauce over dressing.
• **Summary:** “October is a big month at the House of Better Living. It is the beginning of our year’s work and it is also our anniversary month. Two years ago, October 25th, Miss Lager opened the House of Better Living. It was then an idea, today an institution.

Note: The house is owned and operated by Mildred Lager. Address: 1207 West Sixth St., Los Angeles, California. Phone: MUtual 2085.

• **Summary:** “Science has at last found an amazing new way to put the vegetable mineral salts and health-giving vitamins into the body! The greatest utensil of the age.

“Food specialists and doctors agree that fresh, raw vegetable juices are builders of rich, red, healthy blood. With this new Live Food Vegetable Juicer you can take a carrot, put in juicer, turn the handle, out comes the life-giving carrot juice.”

An illustration shows the hand-turned juicer. Note: This company is owned by Paul C. Bragg. This ad appeared in almost every subsequent issue of this newsletter, until at least June 1939. Address: Box 428, Burbank, California; 126 Liberty St., New York, NY.

• **Summary:** “Wholesome natural meatless fluids, including Kar-Kay (imitation) vinegar, along with quality spices and pure vegetables enter into its competition.”

A circular logo with diagonal slash through the middle shows the company’s name. Note: This ad also appeared in the Jan. 1936 issue (p. 3).

• **Summary:** “A delicious concentrated Food Source, unusually high in vitamins B and E; also a good source of vitamin A, B, D, E and G.” “Large 20-ounce can (five weeks supply), one dollar.

Note: This nutritious liquid is a completely different product than the electric kitchen appliance of the same name that first appeared several years later. Address: Noted health authority and lecturer.

• **Summary:** “… on the Chicago Board of Trade. Iowa University is experimenting on recipes. We have been doing that right along. New soy products are toasted soy beans, called Beanuts.”

• **Summary:** On the front cover is a large illustration of the exterior of the House of Better Living, and a 4-stanza poem about the House by Mildred Lager. Below the poem we read: “Catalog. The most unusual store in Southern California. Owned and operated by Mildred Lager, food economist, author, and radio lecturer.”

The first section, titled “The origin of the House of Better Living!” (p. 1) begins: “Is it fate? Often the handicaps and obstacles that we have to overcome lead us into our life work, help us to find ourselves. A few years ago a young school teacher was forced to give up her chosen profession because of arthritis deformans. It was a severe obstacle to overcome, but it was that experience that led Mildred Lager into the study of foods and their relation to health, and led to the founding of the House of Better Living. No one has gained recognition as rapidly as Miss Lager. In a little over two years she has won her place among the ‘leaders,’ has received both national and international recognition, and has established the House of Better Living as an institution in Southern California... Her perfect radio voice reaches thousands who cannot attend her classes.

“Miss Lager is teaching the ounce of prevention, the health insurance that pays dividends in years of health and happiness. Her slogan is that Pure Air, Pure Water, Pure Food and Constructive Thought plus exercise and sunshine build health.

“The House of Better Living is more than a Health Food Store. It is a bureau of food information and a place and means where Miss Lager can conduct her classes free of charge—and that is her goal. Two years ago it seemed an
THE House of Better Living

To some it's a house
To some just a store,
But many have found it
A little bit more.

Its shelves may be stocked
With things that you eat,
But it aims to have more
Than just physical meat.

Its aims are to teach
Of nature's great wealth,
Air — water — food — thought,
That really build Health.

Its motive is service,
Both helping and giving —
That's why it is called
House of Better Living.
—Mildred Lager.

CATALOG
The most unusual store in Southern California
Owned and Operated by Mildred Lager, Food Economist
Author and Radio Lecturer

The House of Better Living
1207 W. 6th St. Los Angeles
Copyrighted 1934.
impossibility—very few thought it would ever succeed. They
did not know the sincerity and the spirit behind it... It is but
two and a half years old. We cannot predict its future nor
that of its charming founder—we can only wait and see,
knowing that achievement and not time is the measure of
success.—By one who has watched the growth from the
start.”

At the top of page 2 in large letters: “The House of
Better Living offers you: 1. The best of natural foods at
reasonable prices. 2. Free delivery of all $3.00 orders in Los
Angeles. 3. Free cooking classes every Wednesday
afternoon at 1:30. 4. Food classes Monday and Thursday
afternoon at 1:30 (except during June, July and August). 5.
Miss Lager’s Radio talks every Monday, Tuesday,
Wednesday and Thursday morning at 7:45 over KFAC.”

Product categories and products mentioned include:
Coffee substitutes (Soyco, Hollywood Cup, Breakfast Cup,
Ficgo, Sipp). Broths (Vegebroth, Vegemineral Broth
Concentrate, Hauser’s Meatless Bouillon). Nut butters—
Freshly ground (Soy Bean Butter, Almond butter, Cashew
butter, peanut butter—dextrinized). Whole grain flour, meal,
etc. (Soy Bean Flour, Bill Baker’s Prepared Lima Bean
Pancake or Waffle Flour, Bill Baker’s Prepared Soy Bean
Pancake or Waffle Flour {2 lb for $0.30}, whole wheat
flour, wheat germ, bran, buckwheat flour, dextrinized flour,
gluten flour, breakfast cereals—to cook {Cubbison’s cracked
wheat}). Ready to serve cereals (Soy bean breakfast food,
whole wheat, wheat germ). Macaroni, noodles, etc (Soy bean macaroni,
garbanza shells). Legumes (soy bean {imported}, garbanza
peas, natural brown rice, sesame seeds). Melba toast,
cookies, crackers, etc. (Bill Baker’s Soy Toast {$0.30/lb},
Cubbison’s Melba Toast, Cubbison’s Melbetts, Soy bean
flour, whole wheat crackers, Soy bean gluten cracker,
Cubbison’s whole wheat crackers, Melba cookies, Soy bean wafers, soy bean cookies, Bill Baker’s 100% Soy Bean Fruit Cookies {$0.18/dozen}, Bill Baker’s 100% Lima Bean Fruit Cookies {$0.18/dozen},
Olson’s soy bean bread, sliced {$0.12}, Bill Baker’s soy
bean bread—unsliced {$0.16}, Bill Baker’s Lima Bean
Bread, unsliced {$0.16}). Natural aids (Agar, flaxseed,
psyllium, Burbank kelp, kelp, Green kelp, Santay sea
greens). Oils (Soy bean oil, sesame oil, Lindsay Cold
Pressed California Oil). Meat substitutes (11 products, 5
with “Soy” in the name, such as Soyatose). Soy bean
products (25 products! Makers incl. La Sierra, Loma Linda,
etc.).

The 27 different soy products are: La Sierra Soy Beans,
plain or with tomato sauce; Loma Linda Soy Beans, plain or
with Proteena; Soy Beans, imported; Soy Beans, roasted;
Soy Bean Loaf (meat substitute); Soy Bean Bologna; Soy
Bean Spread; Soy Bean Butter (like peanut butter); Loma
Linda Soy Mince Sandwich Spread; Soy Bean Sauce; Soy
Bean Milk; Soy Bean Oil; Soy Bean Noodles, Macaroni,
(2) Mildred conducting a free cooking class in her kitchen at The House of Better Living. Many men and women, all wearing hats, are seated around the perimeter of the kitchen (p. 6-7).


A small ad (3½ by 2½ inches, p. 6) by the Cubbison Cracker Co. (3417-19 Pasadena Ave., Los Angeles, California) states: “Dextrinized and whole wheat products: Melba Toast, Melbetts, Cracked Wheat, Whole Wheat Crackers and Cookies.” Note: This is the earliest document seen (June 2004) concerning the work of Sophie Cubbison with soyfoods.

A ¼-page ad (p. 12) titled “Hain 100% pure foods,” describes Vege-Jell Puddings, Mal-Ba-Nuts (a powdered beverage), Potassium broth, and Col-Lax (whose ingredients are: Powdered psyllium, Powdered agar, and lactose). Address: 1207 West Sixth St., Los Angeles, California.

• Summary: “If every ailing person would overcome four conditions, they would feel 100% better, and in most cases, be well. The conditions are: Constipation, sluggish liver, acid and toxic system, fermentation and putrefaction of foods—all can be aided by food or diet.”

“Proper food, properly combined, overcomes this condition. Food does not cure. Food merely gives nature what she needs... Nature cures.”

Note: Calavo means “California avocado” (May 1936, p. 3).

• Summary: “Legumes such as peas, beans, soy beans, etc. are a good source of protein. Also nuts and some cereals. Legumes are a splendid food, ad popular during the Lenten season. Below is a list of their protein content:” A table shows: Soy beans 33 to 42%. Lentils 25.7%. Peas 24.6%. Beans 22.5%. Lima beans 18.1%. Garbanza (Chick pea) 13.0%.

“Some legumes are highly alkaline, as the lima bean, soy bean and garbanza.”

• Summary: All three photos are black and white, each is 2½ by 3½ inches, and each is interesting more for what is written on the back than for the photo itself.

(1) Aug. 1936. Mildred in a white coat standing outside of Big Basin Inn.

(2) Aug. 1936. Mildred in a white coat and the same dress as in (1) sitting on a bench with a man wearing a coat and tie seated behind her.
(3) Mildred standing on a ship’s deck, with many lei’s (of flowers) hanging around her neck, probably on the way home from Hawaii in July 1937.

• Summary: “... Melba Toast, Melbettes, Whole wheat crackers and cookies.” Note 1. This is the earliest document seen (Feb. 2004) in which the spelling “Melbettes” appears; formerly they were called “Melbetts.” Note 2. A similar ad appears in the June 1939 issue of this periodical (p. 4).
Address: [Los Angeles, California].


On page 4 are recipes for Soy bean loaf (with 1 can Loma Linda Soy Beans) and Soy bean thousand island dressing (with Loma Linda soy mince spread). Address: 1207 West Sixth St., Los Angeles, California.

• Summary: Price 25¢ each–30¢ by mail. Including postage and sales tax. (1) Give nature a chance. (2) Menus and aids for the arthritic.

• Summary: “... with a pleasing taste, and full of nutrition, Soy Milk is one of several Loma Linda Soy Products.” A logo, with “Loma Linda Foods” written on a black oval background, shows the company’s name. Address: [California].

• Summary: “On nature’s eternal law of compensation: for every effort there is return, that in the give and take of the world, everyone receives his just reward, Mildred Lager has developed herself and her activities into an institution of national distinction. She is one of the few in the U.S. today who is giving a continuous large amount of health education through various means, all free. This is her idealistic goal.”

Mildred is a natural teacher, having graduated from the Superior State Teachers’ College of Wisconsin. She is the author of several books; the best known is Food Facts. She is the best known woman speaker on radio in Los Angeles, with her own show on KFAC (Monday to Thursday, 7:40 a.m.). “Thousands listen to her breakfast hour and start the day with her cheerful, healthful philosophy. She is teaching the ‘ounce of prevention’ to many... In Health News, her column has become a regular feature. She writes for many women’s magazines... As a speaker she is continuously in demand for club, church and other meetings.” She gives her free classes and carries on her work at The House of Better Living (1207 West Sixth)–which opened in 1933. Her slogan: “Pure air, pure water, pure food, constructive thought, plus exercise & sunshine build health.” She started by having 2-3 free classes a week, conducting most of them herself. Later, she added guest speakers. “Today Miss Lager gives a cooking class every Wednesday, also a food class every Monday at 1:30 p.m.” She now has a stone buhr mill, so that “all kinds of fresh wholegrain flours are available, also freshly ground nut butters.”

“The House of Better Living has become a food prescription store. Doctors send patients here knowing they will not only get what they should have, but receive authentic advice on its preparation. Miss Lager’s latest venture is a food class for doctors and nurses, meeting the second Thursday evening of each month.

“Miss Lager also edits an attractive healthful monthly which is distributed free at the House of Better Living. They also have an outstanding catalog. Because of her own trouble, arthritis, and her great interest in its cure, Miss Lager is organizing one of the first arthritic clubs in the U.S., also free of any charges, first meeting is Monday, Oct. 26, 1:30 p.m.

In celebration of her third anniversary in this work, KFAC is conducting a program honoring Miss lager on the evening of Wednesday, Oct. 28. Recently Southern California Business, monthly of the L.A. chamber of commerce, described the House of Better Living as one of the outstanding institutions of the state.”

A large, excellent portrait photo shows Mildred Lager. Address: Food Economist and Director, House of Better Living, 1207 West Sixth, Los Angeles.

• Summary: Recipes for: Plain cooked red soy beans. Eggless soy wheat germ muffins (with soy pastry flour).

• Summary: “... 100% whole wheat bread, plain or raisin. Sliced soy bean bread 12¢.”

Note 1. It is not known whether the soy ingredient in this bread is soy flour or cooked whole soybeans that have been mashed or pureed.
Note 2. This small ad ran for many years. In the March 1937 issue the title was changed to “Better Breads... Olson’s” and the bread name to “Sliced soy.” The price was still 12 cents.


**Summary:** These natural foods are sold at the House of Better Living. “Stone ground flours: Wholewheat bread, Wholewheat pastry, also Soy–Lima–Rice–Gluten...

“All the better cereals: Whole and cracked wheat, Crushed and Scotch oats, Brown and wild rice, Wheat germ.


45. Van Gundy, Dorothea. 1936. La Sierra recipes. Campus and Maitland, Ontario, California: Published by the author. 47 p. 19 cm.

**Summary:** Most (but not all) of the recipes in this book call for soy-based ingredients. Contents: Dedication. “This book is lovingly dedicated to the memory of my father.” Foreword: “Due to the increase of disease in the animal kingdom, the diet should be as free as possible from these elements, including meat, eggs, and milk.” Approximate composition for La Sierra Products: Soy butter [soynut butter] (27.6% protein, 47.1% fats). Soy breakfast food. Soy flour. Cooked soy beans. Soy loaf. Milk. Bean sprouts. Soy cheese [tofu]. Soy spread. Soy bologna. Dry soy beans.

1. The soy bean as a human food: Nutritional value, varieties of soy beans, flour, soy milk, soy milk from flour, soy milk from raw beans, soy cream (made by homogenizing / blending equal parts of soy milk and soy oil or other vegetable oil), soy cheese, soy bean sprouts, soy sauce.

soymilk).

Use of soy beans in the diet: Outline for 3 meals. Suggestion for 3 days’ menus, using soy products.


Soyament brand bean sauce. This soya bean sauce is “prepared from soya beans by splitting up the bean protein by a special process which thoroughly decomposes it into Amino Acids. A number of Amino Acids, each possessing a sweet taste, is the most remarkable feature of the Soyament Sauce and makes it different from many of the so-called soy sauces... On sale at all grocery stores or write to Soya Bean Products Co., 3522 East Third St., Los Angeles.”

In the section on “Soy milk” (p. 8) is a long quotation from Dr. [Walter] Siegmeister: “So well has the Soy bean served as a source of vegetable milk, that the records tend to show that it has proven superior to cow’s milk in certain important respects. The most marked of these is the almost complete absence of rickets in China, which is quite probable in view of the fact that not only is the Soy bean rich in Vitamin D, but also in Calcium and Phosphorous, the chief requirements for healthy bone development.”

Note: This is the earliest document seen (Dec. 2003) that mentions a soy-based shake. It is also the earliest English-language document seen (Dec. 2003) that uses the term “Milk Shake” to refer to a non-dairy soy milk shake or that contains the term “Soy Milk Shake” (p. 41). The recipe with that title states: “Soy Milk may be mixed with any of the fruit juices and beaten with a small amount of chipped ice. It fluffs up and is very palatable. Soy Milk and orange juice combine splendidly.” Address: Dietitian, Box 203, Ontario, California.

• Summary: This photo shows a portrait of Mildred Lager. The lower caption notes that this week, she started her 4th year of broadcasting on KFAC. She gives household hints at 7:45 a.m.


10¢ each. Complete set $1.00. Also 32 cooking lessons 25¢... 30¢ by mail.”

Note: This ad ran until at least June 1939. Address: 1207 West Sixth St., Los Angeles. Phone: MUtual 2085.

• Summary: “Milk can be made from soy beans and it is a common food in Asia. You can buy it or make it. When bought, it comes in cans, usually unsweetened, sweetened with dextrose, or with chocolate flavor. It also comes in powdered form and then one only needs to add water. It can be made from soy flour. Use 1 cup flour to 4 cups water. Mix and cook in double boiler 20 minutes. Strain.

“Almond milk is made from raw almond butter. Use 1 tablespoon to 1 cup water.”

• Summary: “… is a very inexpensive protein. Use as is on crackers, whole wheat bread, etc., or mix with ground dried nuts, honey, or minced green ripe olives for sandwich spreads. Thin with cream or vegetable broth and use as gravy over vegetables or mix with tomato juice for salad dressing.”

Note: It is not clear whether this is commercially available or not.

• Summary: Includes recipes for: Wholewheat muffins. Eggless wholewheat muffins. Entire soy flour muffins (with soy flour, and no other flours). Soy-wheat scones.

• Summary: “No chocolate is added to real soy chocolate. The dark color is from the browning of the bean. We have soy cocolette as well as the soy candies. We also have new banana soy milk powder.”

• Summary: “Mildred Lager, food authority, author and radio personality,” heard Monday through Thursday over KFAC at 7:45 p.m. [sic, a.m.], will leave for Hawaii on the Lurline, June 26.

53. List or manifest of in-bound passengers (citizens) for immigration officials at port of arrival. 1937.
Los Angeles, California. Port of Departure: Honolulu, Hawaii.

Note: The Aug. 1937 issue of her House of Better Living (Newsletter, Los Angeles; p. 1) states that she just returned from a wonderful 10-day trip to the Hawaiian islands. “I studied the tropical foods first hand, saw them grown, learned what the University of Hawaii had to say about them, saw them picked, canned and gotten ready for shipment.”

• Summary: “Singing the praises of Hawaii, Mildred Lager has just returned to her House of Better Living, 1207 W. Sixth, after a three-weeks trip.”

“Her radio fame having preceded her, Miss Lager was invited to speak over KGU, NBC station where Skipper Irvine presented “Roaming in the South Seas” for two years... A delightful luncheon visit was with Mrs. Agnes B. Bonnell, Battle Creek Health Food store, 183 S. King street, Honolulu... The trip to Hawaii was on the Lurline, return on the Malolo.” A large portrait photo shows Mildred Lager.

• Summary: Includes a recipe for: Soy ginger muffins or bread (eggless, with soy flour and whole wheat pastry flour).

Note: In the Aug. 1937 issue (p. 1) is a recipe for “Soy bean salad.”

• Summary: “Starting July 19 Miss Lager began broadcasting over station KECA at her regular time, 7:45 A.M. She will talk every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings. Tune in for these educational talks. KECA–1450 kilocycles...”

• Summary: “New candies, many of them soy. Chocolate coated raisins.

“Soy malted milk in almond, banana, chocolate, and mocha flavors. Two sizes–40¢ and 70¢.”

• Summary: “Theradophilus: A condensed pure culture of Bacillus Acidophilus in Soy Bean Milk. For intestinal poisoning.

“Theradiet: A food supplement permitting safe reducing.

“Therabroth: A delicious uncooked vegetable concentrate—for broths, sandwich spread or as seasoning for soups and gravies.

“Therallium: A concentrated garlic and parsley tablet. Tasteless and odorless.

Note: Apparently only the first of these four contains soy. Address: Pasadena, California.

• Summary: “No food known to science has the protein value of soya bean. According to Dr. A.A. Horvath, of the University of Delaware, a recognized soy bean authority in this country, soy beans have the following qualities:

1. The soy bean protein is similar in composition and nutritive value to the proteins of milk, meat and eggs, and is readily assimilated.

2. The soy bean oil is assimilated to the extent of 95% to 100%.

3. The soy bean is rich in phosphatides (lecithin and cephalin), averaging from 1.65% to 3.18%.

4. The soy bean is rich in vitamins A, B, and E, and contains also a substantial amount of vitamins D and B-2.

5. The soy bean ash is rich in phosphates and is strongly alkaline.”

• Summary: Mildred’s morning radio program has returned to station KFAC but at a better time–8:45 A.M. instead of 7:45. Up until last month her program was on KECA at 7:45 A.M.

• Summary: This portrait photo shows a youthful-looking Mildred Lager. The lower caption states that she invites you to “tune her House of Better Living today (KFAC–8:45 a.m.).”

• Summary: Includes recipes (p. 4) that all include quick-cooking cracked soy beans (Cook for 10 minutes). Soy sandwich spread (with cooked cracked soy beans; May be made into patties, broiled, and served as meat balls). Soy vegetable hash (baked). Soy vegetable loaf (baked).

Note: On the same page is an ad titled “Mildred Lager’s quick cooking family,” that includes Cracked soy beans. 1 lb package–18¢. 2 lb package–35¢. 5 lb bulk–80¢.
63. **Product Name:** Mildred Lager’s Quick Cooking Cracked Soy Beans.

**Manufacturer’s Name:** House of Better Living.

**Manufacturer’s Address:** 1207 West 6th St., Los Angeles, California.

**Date of Introduction:** 1938. March.

**New Product–Documentation:** House of Better Living Catalog. 1938. March. p. 16. 1 lb for $0.18, 2 lb for $0.35, 5 lb bulk for $0.80. Listed under the heading “Breakfast Cereals.”

64. Lager, Mildred. 1938. The House of Better Living Catalog: Finer natural foods. Los Angeles, California: Published by the author. 36 p. March. 23 x 10 cm.

**Summary:** The single most important document showing the creative development of commercial soyfoods in California in the late 1930s. This catalog contains a large section on Diabetic Foods, consisting mostly of soyfoods, and an even larger section titled “Soy Bean Products.”

The Foreword (p. 1) begins: “The House of Better living is as unusual as its name. Its aim is to teach better living, and has made possible Mildred Lager’s free educational program by radio and class work. Become a member of our ever-growing family. Secure one of our creed cards—Realize life can be a game and not a battle, and if you give to the world the best you have, the best will come back to you.

“The House of Better Living has grown in four years from what was called a brain storm to an institution. It is outstanding, unique, and built on the ideals of sincerity and service. It is teaching the ounce of prevention—the health insurance that pays dividends in years of health and happiness. It carries for you, Finer Natural Foods, selected by Mildred Lager.”

A full page of delivery and order information (p. 2) shows that Mildred was shipping foods (such as California nuts and fruits, fresh and dried) all over the United States.

This catalog contains a total of 42 soyfood products, including 26 such products not found in the 1936 catalog. Soy (and other interesting) products are listed as follows (prices and weights are given for each): Beverages—Coffee substitutes: Radcliff’s soy bean, Soy-Co. Other beverages: Dr. Fearn’s Proteinized Cocoa, Radcliff’s Malted Soya Milk, Radcliff’s Soya Bean Cocolette, Soy-Malt (plain or chocolate). Sugars and syrups: Radcliff’s Golden Soya Honey Spread (4-oz. glass). Natural sweets—Candies: Carque’s health candies, bar, 5¢, Halvah bars, Sesame brittle, Soya candy sticks, 1¢ each, Soy milk “chocolate” bars, in Bavarian, cocoanut, mint, cherry, pineapple, and creme de mint flavors, Soy milk “chocolates,” ½-lb. box or 1-lb. box, Soy chocolate, 1¢ square, ½-lb, 1 lb, 60¢, or bulk.

Desserts: Agar–Parfait mix, Agar–Hain Vege-Jell, Agar–Sanitarium vegetable gelatin. Diabetic foods: Gluten flour, Soy bean flour, 10¢ lb, Soy Bean Pancake and Waffle Flour (Bill Baker’s Prepared; 2-lb. pkg. 30¢), Dr. Fearn’s Soya Cereal, Dietetic Soyrina Cereal, Dr. Fearn’s Soya-Date Breakfast Food, Battle Creek Dietetic Bran, Battle Creek toasted gluten bran flakes, Soy breakfast food, Cubbison’s soy-gluten crackers, Soy-gluten wafers, Loma Linda soy bean wafers, Bill Baker’s 100% soy-fruit slices, Bill Baker’s soy bean bread, Olson’s soy bread, Soy bean macaroni, spaghetti and noodles, Soy beans—imported, Soy beans—cracked, Soy beans—red, Soy beverages (without sweetening), Bill Baker’s soy melba toast, Cubbison’s soy melba toast.

Nut butters: Almond butter, Almond meal, Cashew butter, Peanut butter (dextrinized or raw), Pecan butter, Soy bean butter (lb or 8-oz. can). Whole grain flours, meals, etc.: Lima bean flour, Soy bean flour (1 lb, 3 lbs, or 10 lb), Soy bean pancake and waffle flour (Bill Baker’s prepared), Soy bean pancake and waffle flour (Mrs. Hauser’s), Whole wheat flour, wheat germ. Breakfast cereals (to be cooked): Mildred Lager’s quick cooking cracked soybeans, Dr. Fearn’s soya cereal, Dietetic Soyrina Cereal. Breakfast cereals (ready to eat): Battle Creek Zo, Dr. Fearn’s soy-date breakfast food, Soya breakfast food, Bill Baker’s 10% soya cereal. Melba toast, crackers, cookies: Cubbison’s soy toast, Bill Baker’s soy toast, Cubbison’s Soy-Gluten crackers, Soy-gluten crackers, Loma Linda soy bean wafers, Cookies: Cubbison’s soy cookies, Bill Baker’s 100% soy fruit slices. Bread: Olson’s soy bean bread (sliced loaf), Bill Baker’s soy bean bread (unsliced loaf 16¢). Macaroni noodles: Soy bean macaroni, spaghetti and noodles.

Legumes: Soy beans—imported, Soy beans—cracked, Soy beans—red. Meat substitutes: Nuteena (7 oz. can 15¢), Nut Meat, Nuttose (Battle Creek), Proteena, Protose, Soy bean butter (30¢ lb.), Soy mince sandwich spread, Soy bean spread, Soy bean ravioli (12¢ and 20¢ can).

Soy bean products (40 products; those mentioned above may be omitted here): Loma Linda soy beans (plain or tomato flavored, No. 1 can), Loma Linda soy beans with Proteena (No. 1 can), Dry soy beans (quick cooking red), Soy bean spread, Soya bean honey spread, Loma Linda soy mince sandwich spread, Soy bean sauce (5 oz or 2 oz bottle), Soy bean oil (45¢ pint bottle), Soyoco (Soy coffee), Soya bean milk powder, Milk of soya bean (6 oz or 12 oz can), Soy-Malt, Proteinized cocoa, Radcliff’s 100% soya bean beverage (1 lb package), Cubbison’s soy bean cookies, Cubbison soy-gluten crackers, La Sierra Soy breakfast cereal, Diamel Soyarina cereal, Diamel breakfast cereal.

There are ads for the following: Battle Creek Sanitarium Foods (p. 5; ask for literature). Ficgo coffee substitute (display ad, p. 6). Racliffe’s Soya Products (p. 9, 21). Mildred Lager’s quick cooking family (incl. cracked soy beans), Bill Baker’s soy and lima bean products (photo display, p. 16). Therapy, Ltd.–Foods for Better Living (Theradophilus, soy bean milk, p. 19, 29).

A photo (p. 1) shows Mildred Lager. Address: 1207 West Sixth St., Los Angeles, California.


● Summary: Mildred Lager, who left Superior after doctors gave her only a few years to live, is now manager of a health food store in Los Angeles, California, “supplying special nutritive aids to patients under doctor’s care.”

A graduate of Superior State Teachers’ College, Miss Lager was active in college affairs and a member of Tau Alpha Chi sorority. She “became a saleslady in a shoe store in Superior soon after her graduation, then became a co-partner in the store when ill health forced her to quit.

“As a result of intensive study of foods and their value to health, she became a demonstrator for Dr. Frank McCoy. noted health specialist whose health talks appear daily in The Evening Telegram [this newspaper in Wisconsin] in the column, ‘How to keep well.’

“Traveling throughout the United States appearing before large audiences of both men and women showing how health advocates prepare food, Miss Lager returned here six years ago [i.e., about 1932] to conduct a cooking school and institute at Concordia Lutheran Church. Large crowds attended.

“Four years ago, Miss Lager left the McCoy institute to go into business for herself, opening a health food store [named The House of Better Living, on 25 Oct. 1933] in Los Angeles, the largest of its kind in the United States.

“The store handles special canned foods for diabetics, imported flour and fruits, fruit juices and other products not in stock at the regular grocery store. Patients on special diets are sent to the store on advice of their physicians. A mother in Texas sends regularly for special almond milk, necessary for her child’s health because it has an allergy to cow’s milk.

“Two years ago Miss Lager went to Honolulu to spend several months studying the pineapple industry and how the fruit affects health when used in the diet. She herself is strict in her own food desires.

“In connection with the store, Miss Lager conducts a cooking school once a week supplemented by talks by prominent foot specialists, chiropractors, dieticians and doctors. A writer of note herself on nutrition, one of her articles was printed recently by a magazine in England.

“She conducts a 15-minute radio program [in Los Angeles] five times a week which is rated by critics as having one of the largest followings for a program of its kind on the west coast.”

A portrait photo shows pretty Miss Mildred Lager.

Note: Frank McCoy’s “health institute” was in Los Angeles, where he lived from roughly 1924 to 1931; he wrote a book on health and had a column in the Los Angeles Times.


● Summary: “Since last writing you I sent for McBride and had him come to the office.” He brought “samples of the items that he was manufacturing, and... it was a very comprehensive Dr. C.E. Fearn line.”

“He denied absolutely, in his talk to me, that he was turning out any of your products at the present time... At the same time the catalogs of a great many of the retail distributors do have his material under your name as was evidenced by the clipping of The House of Better Living catalog which I sent you.”

Mr. Rhodes, Vitona’s regular attorney, will do this work for Dr. Fearn at no charge. “I doubt that McBride has the guts to resist a court action...”

You [Dr. Fearn] “say that you found McBride unreliable. This is the same identical statement that he made about you... I had two stenographers taking down every word he said.”

“He stated explicitly that you were unreliable, that you didn’t know your business, and that your products were not worth a damn... He more-over stated that you did not manufacture any of the merchandise you offer but bought it second hand and then distributed it... He told us that he taught you all you know about it” [this business]. It “is my opinion that he is extremely illiterate, unprincipled, unscrupulous, and a damned poor business man.” Address: Vitona Health Products Inc. of California, 527 West 7th, Los Angeles. Phone: Tucker 1317.


● Summary: “... the House of Better Living first opened its doors to the public.” “My aim was to teach and not merchandise, and to always make my classes free of charge.”
“The House of Better Living aims to be far more than a food store—as a store it has a policy of quality, service, and fair prices. Its aims are to teach Better Living—to teach you to help yourself—to help you to realize that sensible living pays big dividends and is the secret of a healthier, happier, and more prosperous life.” Recipes for October (p. 1) include: Soy bean loaf. Soy vegetable hash.

Sidebar: “Start your day with Mildred Lager’s cheery philosophy. KFAC [radio]—8:45 A.M. Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings.” Address: 1207 West Sixth St., Los Angeles, California. Phone: MUtual 2085.

• Summary: Includes recipes for: Soy bean loaf (with 1 can soy beans), Soy vegetable broth (with 2 cups cooked cracked soy beans).

• Summary: “Inexpensive menus featuring soy flour have been Mildred Lager’s topic at Wednesday afternoon cooking classes, House of Better Living, 1207 W. Sixth, L.A. Attendance has been large.”

• Summary: Today’s luncheon of the Soroptimist Club will honor new members, including Mildred Lager.

• Summary: “Sliced 12¢ loaf. Makes delicious toast. We also carry the Olson 100% Whole Wheat Breads, Raisin Bran, Raisin Nut and Soy Breads.”

• Summary: She is scheduled to attend the National Health Food Association’s convention in Chicago, Illinois, Aug. 29 to Sept. 1. Miss Lager, of the House of Better Living, will make the trip by plane.

• Summary: “I was one of the speakers at the recent Health Food Dealers convention in Chicago [Illinois]. I went back there and had my eyes opened. We are apt to think that California ranks tops as to interest in the food field, but I think others are right up there with us. There is a tremendous interest all over the United States. The East Coast is wide awake—so is Washington, DC; the mid-west and even parts of the south.” Address: 1207 West Sixth St., Los Angeles, California. Phone: MUtual 2085.

• Summary: “Los Angeles–E.M. Bisalski of Madison Foods [Tennessee] sponsored a big dinner for local dealers at Sanfords, November 14, featuring his company’s products. ‘The purpose was to introduce Milo Frank as California distributor of their foods. ‘The turnout, large, enthusiastic, included about 100 dealers. The meal was delicious. Barney Edelman, Sanfords manager, was chairman.

“Bisalski praised local and national dealers’ organizations, urged scientific food study, praised Edelman’s cooperative attitude. Clarke Irvine, Health News publisher, and Mildred Lager, local dealers’ president, also voiced optimism for progress through cooperation.”

• Summary: “Los Angeles–Members of the local Health Food Dealers’ Association plan a dinner at Sanfords cafeteria, 720 S. Hill, Friday, December 1, at 8 p.m., announces Mildred Lager, president. ‘This will be purely a social, not business, gathering,’ she states. ‘There will be an excellent speaker with a message important to every dealer in Southern California.’ The association is working on a twofold program: to educate the public through radio and food shows, and to train dealers to improve merchandising methods.”

• Summary: This small column is 5¼ column inches. Address: Teacher and Director, House of Better Living, 1207 W. 6th, Los Angeles.
Liquefying foods have become popular with the new electric mixers. They are fine and a boon to the person with flour or milk powder, 1 tsp honey or plain Joyana. soy milk. Ingredients: 1 cup carrot juice, add 1 tbsp. soy milk drinks.” A portrait photo shows Mildred Lager.

Note 1. A section titled “Soyburgers” on p. 4 explains that the Soyburger and Canned Soy Cheese mentioned above are both made by Madison Foods of Tennessee. Separately, soy chocolate is mentioned.

Note 2. A small ad on p. 3 is for waffles: Soy wheat-germ. Soy corn (contains no wheat). Address: 1207 West Sixth St., Los Angeles, California. Phone: MUtual 2085.


• Summary: A large photo shows Miss Lager, next to a KFAC microphone. For 6½ years she has been broadcasting over the radio four times a week on station KFAC is Los Angeles. “She is the founder of the House of Better Living, and a tireless worker for better living. Her weekly free classes draw hundreds of people for instruction in healthful cookery and healthful living.”

She writes that now is a good time “to cut down on rich foods and the acid-forming foods, using instead the alkaline-forming foods and the bulk foods for the natural eliminative effects... With a liberal intake of the alkaline-forming foods, one may be assured of the natural alkalinizers which neutralize body acids and in this way assist in the protection of health... Acid wastes produce fatigue; alkaline-forming foods neutralize the acid wastes to restore the normal body tone and stamina.

“The summer diet must necessarily contain adequate complete proteins, for protein foods are necessary for cell repair and growth... A lack of protein may cause retarded growth, lack of vigor, and poor appetite... The vegetable proteins are nuts, soy beans, legumes, and in general they are found in all vegetables. The proteins of nuts and soy beans are classed as complete proteins and are therefore especially desirable. The animal proteins are acid-forming, whereas the vegetable proteins are alkaline-forming. Animal proteins are also more putrefactive than vegetable proteins. The soy bean and nuts can be used in a great many tasty ways.”

Among the many recipes for summer the following include soyfoods: Cocktails–Soy milk and carrot (“Soy milk is a fine, alkaline, soft food. Excellent for those with sore conditions of the digestive tube).” Protein salads–Soy bean salad. Soy cheese [tofu] tomato salad. Mock shrimp salad (with Zoyburger). Entrees–Soy cheese cutlets. Zoyburger and mushroom sauce. Mock turkey legs (with Vigorost as the main ingredient). Broiled Vigorost with ripe olive sauce. Platter of cold cuts (Vigorost and Zoyburger). Hot Zoyburger sandwich. Stake-Lets (canned) for picnic dinner.

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SOY BEAN RECIPES

By

MILDRED LAGER

150 WAYS TO USE SOY BEANS AS MEAT - MILK CHEESE & BREAD

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Alkaline breakfast food—Wheatasoy. Alkaline beverage—Zoy-Koff (coffee substitute). Soy bean milk (Kreme O’Soy). Complete protein foods: Zoyburger, Vigorost, Stake-Lets, Not-Meat (made with unroasted peanut meal and seasoning), Soy Cheese, and Soy Beans. A brief description, nutritional analysis, and price is given for each product. “None of the Madison Foods contain animal products.” A portrait photo shows Mildred Lager next to a KPAC radio microphone. The caption states that for 6½ years Miss Lager has been broadcasting over the radio in Los Angeles. “She is the founder of the House for Better Living, and a tireless worker for better living. Her weekly free classes draw hundreds of people for instruction in healthful cookery and healthful living. Miss Lager is the author of Food Facts.”

Note 1. This is the earliest document seen (June 2007) that mentions or gives a recipe for a soy-based meatless turkey. Vigorost, a meatless / vegetarian roast introduced by Madison Foods in 1932, used wheat gluten and tofu as its two main ingredients.

Note 2. This is the earliest English-language document seen (Jan. 2007) that contains the word “Zoyburger,” an early, popular vegetarian burger in the United States. Although this issue is not dated, it contains the reprint of a current article published in March 1940.

• Summary: Begins with a cheery poem by an unknown author. A portrait photo shows Mildred Lager.

A display ad on this page shows a box of Ficgo coffee substitute, made by the California Ficgo Company, Los Angeles. “If coffee disagrees—stop! but do not break away from it abruptly, if it discomforts you. Use ‘half Ficgo and half coffee’ at the start and gradually get the Ficgo-drinking habit.” Address: 1207 West Sixth St., Los Angeles, California. Phone: MUTual 2085.

• Summary: This handsome display ad shows an electric Zippy Juicer, round, with a stainless steel top. Juice is flowing out of a spigot on the left and an electric cord is going off to the right. “At last! Pure fresh fruit and vegetable juices in your home—made possible by a machine of splendid speed and efficiency!”

Note: The name and address of the juicer’s manufacturer are not given. Text in the center column of this page states: “A silent effective machine with a 1/6 Horsepower General Electric motor, fully guaranteed for one year The Zippy sells for $49.50... Let us demonstrate it to you.”

• Summary: “Try our new soy noodle, artichoke noodles, soy noodle quick soup...” “If you cannot tolerate milk, why not try soy milk? It comes in cans and can be used as regular milk. The Madison soy milk is homogenized, thick and creamy, with lots of food value. Comes plain or chocolate flavor.” A portrait photo shows Mildred Lager.

Across the bottom of the page: “We serve fruit and vegetable juices—5¢ and 10¢ a glass. Try carrot and cocoanut.”

Note: With this issue, the House of Better Living has a new address (3477 West Sixth St., Los Angeles) and phone number (EXposition 8144). It is still owned and operated by Mildred Lager. Address: 3477 West Sixth St., Los Angeles, California. Phone: EXposition 8144.

• Summary: Items are listed by category in 2 full-page columns. Bakery goods: Penna 100% soy cookies, pkg. 18¢ (Lemon, almond, vanilla and chocolate flavor). Soy orange drops, doz. 15¢. Bill Baker’s 100% soy bean cookies, pkg. 10¢.

Breakfast foods: Soy grits, lb. 20¢.
Juices—unsweetened: Soy and carrot juice, 8-oz. 10¢; 16-oz. 15¢.

Kitchen equipment: Zippy juicer, $49.50. Juice-O-Mat, $3.29. Hollywood Liquifier, $24.75. Note 1. This is the earliest English-language document seen (July 2006) that uses the word “Liquifier” to refer to an electric blender, or that mentions the “Hollywood Liquifier,” an early brand of electric blender, or that contains the word “Hollywood” in the name of an electric blender.

Meat substitutes: Vegelona, 10¢, 25¢ can. Yum, 10¢, 25¢, 50¢ can. Gluten steak, 17¢, 27¢ can. Note 2. This is the earliest English-language document seen (Feb. 2005) that contains the term “Gluten steak.”


powder, sweetened, 1-lb. can 25¢. Soya roast, 15-oz. 25¢. Soya sauce, 4-oz. 12¢; 8-oz. 19¢; 16-oz. 35¢. Soya virgin oil, 4-oz. 15¢; 8-oz. 23¢; pint 37¢; quart 67¢; ½-gallon $1.05; gallon $1.95. Soya cookies, 100%, pkg. 18¢.

Salt: Bragg Sprinkle, can 50¢. Soy-B-Malt, Cubbison, 8-oz. 25¢.

85. Los Angeles City. 1940. Index to register of voters: Los Angeles City Precinct No. 998. Los Angeles, California. Los Angeles, California. 1 p.

• **Summary:** Under the letter “L” we read: “Lager, Miss Mildred M., 1901 West 2nd St., Merchant, R” [Republican].

Note: This is the earliest document seen (Sept. 2009) that shows Mildred Lager living at 1901 West 2nd St. We do not know where she lived before moving to this address.


• **Summary:** This directory is organized alphabetically by state. Within each state, the entries are arranged alphabetically by city; for each is given the name of the store, its address and phone number. A bold dot before the city means that the store also serves health meals. The states are: Arizona (4 stores). Arkansas (1). California (66). Colorado (2). District of Columbia (1). Florida (2). Georgia (2). Hawaii (1). Illinois (10). Indiana (3). Iowa (1). Kansas (2). Michigan (10). Minnesota (2). Missouri (8). Nebraska (3) New Jersey (1). New York (18). Ohio (9). Oklahoma (1). Oregon (3). Pennsylvania (9). Texas (7). Utah (1). Washington state (11). Wisconsin (5).

Thus, the states with the most stores listed are:


Fifteen of the stores have the term “Natural Food(s)” in the store name; most of these are in California. Only one has the word “Vegetarian”–San Diego, California. Vegetarian Cafe & Bakery, 1125 6th St. Phone: Main 3159. Well-known stores include: House of Better Living, Los Angeles. Richter’s Cafeteria, Los Angeles. The Food Mill in Oakland. Sexauer Natural Foods in Santa Barbara. Huni Health Products and Lust’s Original Health Foods in New York City.


Masthead of *Let’s Live*. 1944. March, p. 2. “Published by Clarke Irvine. Since 1933 at 4657 Hollywood Boulevard, Hollywood 27, (Los Angeles), Calif., monthly on the 1st, (deadline 5th of preceding month). Subscriptions $1 a year, Canada and foreign $2. Phone NOrmandy 9017... No Copyright; any matter may be reprinted but kindly give credit. Advertising rates upon application. None accepted for drugs, liquor, tobacco.”

This magazine was sold by Clarke and Alice Irvine to Godfrey Thomas in about Feb. 1949. The last issue published by the Ivines was the Feb. 1949 issue, which (along with the Jan. 1949 issue) was half the typical height and width, and with many fewer pages. The March 1949 issue was full size and was titled *Godfrey’s Let’s Live*–the word “Godfrey’s” remaining in the title for many years.

The Sept. 1953 masthead of Godfrey’s *Let’s Live*: Godfrey Thomas, publisher. Kay K. Thomas, editor. Editorial and business office, 1133 N. Vermont Ave., (Hollywood) Los Angeles 29, Calif. Phone: NOrmandy 3-2121. Published monthly on the first by Godfrey Thomas Publishing Co. Subscriptions: $2.00 per year in advance (USA); $3.50 for two years. Thomas wrote a regular editorial which contained his small portrait photo. He was tall, stately, retired, balding, and wore glasses. Godfrey Thomas was publisher from 1949 to 1958. He was succeeded by his wife, Kay. In Aug. 1961 the address was still 1133 N. Vermont Ave., (Hollywood), Los Angeles 29, California.

Murray, Frank; Tarr, Jon. 1984. *More than one slingshot: How the health food industry is changing America.* See p. 55. “Let’s Live, based in Los Angeles, was started in 1933 [as *California Health News*]. Mrs. W.J. Basset is publisher; Peggy MacDonald, associate publisher; John DeDominic, general manager and art director; and Keith Stepro, managing editor.”

As of Nov. 2003 *Let’s Live* is published by Franklin Publications in Santa Monica, California. Phone: 310-445-7504. They still have all back issues. For many years (starting on 20 April 1934), Mildred Lager wrote a column titled “Food Facts,” which she later compiled into a book. Every year Clark Irvine would host a big healthy Christmas dinner at a Methodist church. Sometimes there would be a Christmas issue printed with green ink and red ads. During World War II the magazine contained fewer pages, was printed on newsprint, and with no color. By the 1960s it became less interesting as most of the ads were about...
protein powders and vitamins. By the 1990s it was mainly about food supplements and the implicit message was: Buy food supplements for good health and long life.

Talk with Beth Salmon. 2003. Nov. 20. They print more than a million copies of each issue. Many of these are mailed to health-minded people who have a GNC Gold Card. Address: Hollywood, Los Angeles, California.


• Summary: “The following recipes are taken from Soy Bean Recipes [2nd ed.], a 48-page booklet by Mildred Lager of the House of Better Living, 3477 West Sixth St., Los Angeles, California, that gives more than 150 ways to use soybeans as meat, milk, cheese, or bread. The booklet is well worth the 55¢ by mail asked for it.

“Miss Lager, who has been talking soy foods over Radio Station KFAC for eight years, writes, ‘At the present time [during World War II] I am teaching nutrition at the American Women’s Volunteer Service and you can be sure that soybeans will be given their proper place in the diet. I am not a vegetarian, a food faddist or a soybean nut of any kind, but I do believe that the soybean belongs in our present nutritional program from the economy standpoint.’”


89. Lager, Mildred. 1942. Soy bean recipes: 150 ways to use soy beans as meat, milk, cheese, & bread. Los Angeles, California: House of Better Living. 43 p. Index. 21 cm.


A photo (p. 1) shows Ms. Lager and notes: “I want to acknowledge the aid received from Madison College, Tennessee; Loma Linda Food Company, El Molino Mills, Penna Soya Products Company, and from the many friends who gave me suggestions and recipes.” Address: 3477 West 6th St., Los Angeles, California.


A photo (p. 1) shows Ms. Lager and notes: “I want to acknowledge the aid received from Madison College, Tennessee; Loma Linda Food Company, El Molino Mills, Penna Soya Products Company, and from the many friends who gave me suggestions and recipes.” Address: 3477 West 6th St., Los Angeles, California.

91. Los Angeles City. 1942. Index to register of voters: Los Angeles City Precinct No. 998. Los Angeles, California. Los Angeles, California. 1 p.

• Summary: Under the letter “L” we read:

“Lager, Gustaf, 1901 West 2nd St., Retired, R [Republican].

“Lager, Mrs. Hilda M., 1901 West 2nd St., Housewife, R [Republican].

“Lager, Miss Mildred M., 1901 West 2nd St., Merchant, R” [Republican].
92. Portrait of Mildred Lager (Photograph). 1942?
• Summary: This 7 inch diameter black-and-white photo was taken by Arthur Mitchell, whose name is written in black pen in the lower right corner. Mildred looks quite young—but she always looked younger than her real age. Nothing is written or stamped on the back.
   Note: This photo first appeared in print (as far as we know) in 1942 in Mildred’s book Soy Bean Recipes.

• Summary: This book sells for $0.55 by mail. Address: 3477 West 6th St., Los Angeles, California.

Sent to Soyfoods Center in May 1981 by Dr. & Mrs. George L. Bower of Redding, California. Lois Bower was Mildred’s stepdaughter.

- **Summary:** Gives a partial list of companies that retail products containing soya, the names of the products distributed, and their areas of distribution. Address: Washington, DC.

95. Los Angeles City. 1944. Index to register of voters: Los Angeles City Precinct No. 998. Los Angeles, California. Los Angeles, California. 1 p.

- **Summary:** Under the letter “L” we read:
  
  “Lager, Gustaf, 1901 West 2nd St., Retired, R [Republican].
  
  “Lager, Mrs. Hilda M., 1901 West 2nd St., Housewife, R [Republican].
  
  “Lager, Miss Mildred M., 1901 West 2nd St., Merchant, R” [Republican].


- **Summary:** The section titled “She knows beans” is about Mildred Lager (who has been a cooking authority for more than 8 years) and her new book “The Useful Soybean.” She says the “red points” are unnecessary if we use soybeans, and that they provide protein for more than half the world’s population.


- **Summary:** This very favorable review of Mildred Lager’s book titled The Useful Soybean, which contains 350 recipes, says of Miss Lager: “The author conducts a health food store in Hollywood, has had her own [radio] program on the air, is past president of the Health Food Dealers of Southern California and past vice president of the National Dietary Association... The author, who says that soybeans originally were ‘thrust upon’ her, has her own dietary philosophy. She gives little comfort to a public currently trying to solve all dietary problems by taking a few food pills daily. She says, ‘Synthetic vitamins and minerals will never equal the intricate combinations of natural foods... We must go back to the use of more natural, unrefined foods with their known and unknown vitamins. We must replenish our soils and strive to produce foods that contain what nature intended them to contain.’”


- **Summary:** “House of Better Living, health food store in Los Angeles, which had been owned and operated by Mildred Lager for 14 years [since 25 Oct. 1933], has been sold to Victor and Marvin Lemon. Miss Lager, who is the author of The Useful Soybean, announces that she will continue to teach and write.”


- **Summary:** One of the most important and innovative books on soyfoods ever written. Contents: Preface. 1. Agriculture’s Cinderella: America discovers the soybean, our wonder beans, soy as a food in the United States, soy in rehabilitation food programs, soybeans as an emergency crop, soybean terminology. 2. World-wide use of soybeans: A real antique, monarch of Manchuria, soybeans in mechanized warfare–Germany, soybeans in other countries (USSR, Italy, Spain, Belgium, Holland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Great Britain, Canada), soybeans in Lend-Lease and United States Agricultural Marketing Administration, Food for Greece, soybeans and the Mexican Indian, soybeans in Hawaii (Mr. C.G. Lennox). 3. Soybeans and industry: The versatile soy, uses of soybean in industry, soybean paint (from soy oil, incl. Duco finishing), soybean protein (used in making plywood, plastics, water paints, paper sizing, leather finishes, and insecticide sprays), Henry Ford and soybeans, soybean glue (I.F. Laucks and the firms he has licensed turn out some 30,000 tons of soybean glue annually), rubber substitute (Norepol), paper industry (Glidden), plastics, soy-cotton helmets, firefighting compounds, lecithin, fertilizers. 4. Nutritional nuggets: Food value of soybeans and soy products (vegetable or edible types of soybeans, protein, fat & carbohydrate, minerals, vitamins, lecithin, alkaline ash, economy, exaggerated claims), principal uses of soybeans and soy products (meat substitutes, meat enrichers, fortifying foods with soy flour). 5. From soup to nuts: Green beans, dry beans, frozen beans, roasted soybeans, sprouted soybeans, the cow of China–soy milk, the meat without a bone–tofu or soy cheese, the little giant among protein foods–soy flour, soy grits, puffed grits, soy oil, miscellaneous soy products (soy butter [soynut butter, p. 99-100], sandwich spreads, malts, coffee substitutes, soy sauce, soy albumen–a new product, greatly improved during the past two years, is now used to “replace egg albumen in candy manufacture” [as in marshmallows]).

Note 1. This is the earliest English-language document seen (March 2001) that refers to tofu as ‘the meat without a bone.’ In 1938 Horvath called tofu ‘the meat without the bones.’ Note 2. This is the second earliest document seen (Aug. 2002) in which the soybean is called the “cow of China.”

Note 3. This is the earliest English-language document seen (Aug. 2003) that uses the term “soy albumen” (or “soy albumens”) to refer to isolated soy protein as a product.
6. The blazed trail: Introduction (history and pioneers), our tardy acceptance, food pioneers (health-food stores, Dr. W.D. Sansum of Santa Barbara and soy bread, allergy studies, vegetarians, Seventh-day Adventist food companies, meatlike products, Madison College of Tennessee, Loma Linda Food Co., the International Nutrition Laboratory and Dr. H.W. Miller, special dietary concerns and diabetic diets), establishing soybeans in the kitchen (The Edison Institute and Henry Ford, the USDA and the U.S. Bureau of Home Economics, the Agricultural Marketing Administration, U.S. railroads, the Soy Products Division of the Glidden Co., the Soy Flour Association). 7. The challenge of nutrition: The dangers of hidden hunger, nutrition and health, corrective nutrition, starch-restricted diets, meatless diets, allergy diets, bland diets, building diets, reducing diets, acidophilus culture, lecithin. 8. Our wonder crop: Jack and the beanstalk, early history, new varieties, aids to the industry (Regional Soybean Industrial Products Laboratory, American railroads, American Soybean Association, Fouts Brothers of Indiana, Soybean Digest and George Strayer in Hudson, Iowa, Soy Flour Association with Edward Kahl as first president, Soya Kitchen in Chicago (Illinois) opened in Jan. 1943, National Soybean Processors Assoc., National Farm Chemurgic Council), educational program, restrictive regulations. 9. Soybeans and the farmer: Varieties, sources of information, seedling and inoculating, harvesting, grading, soybean diseases, crop rotation, damaged beans. 10. Tomorrow: Acreage and production, soybeans on the farm, soybeans in nutrition, postwar industrial uses, future improvements. 11. A few suggestions for better living: Kitchen diplomacy, personal opinions, soybeans for everyone. Recipes: Green soybean, dry soybeans, sprouted soybeans, toasted or toasted soybeans, meat-substitute dishes, soy-enriched meat dishes, soy noodles, macaroni, spaghetti, sauces and gravies, soups, salads, dressings, soy spreads, soy milk, tofu or soy cheese, soy butter, soy cereals, soy desserts, soy candies, soy beverages, soy-flour recipes, bread and muffins, pancakes and waffles, soy gluten recipes, baking-powder biscuits, pastry, cookies and doughnuts, cakes. Contains recipes for “Soy milk molasses shake (p. 238). Soy puddings. Soy ice cream (p. 250; “Soy milk may may be used in place of milk in ice-cream recipes... adding whipped cream”). Soy fruit ice cream. Soy chocolate dessert (Eggless) (p. 250-51). Soy shake (“p. 254, made in a ‘liquefier or mixer’”).

The story of Allied aid to Greece [p. 24-26] is one of the great mercy stories of World War II. Starting in March 1942, as many Greeks were starving, the first mercy ship sailed to Greece with food and medicine. Up to Nov. 1943, the United States through Lend-Lease sent 82 million pounds of food to Greece. A number of these foods (including soup powders, stew mixes, and spaghetti) were based on soy flour and grits, and specifically developed to suit Greek tastes.

Concerning Henry Ford (p. 35-38), his “first experiments were made in a laboratory in connection with the Edison Institute in 1930. In these experiments, several tons of wheat were used, also several thousand bushels of carrots; sunflower seeds, which have a high oil content; cabbages; onions; and cornstalks. It was not until December, 1931, after a long series of experiments with the soybean, that Mr. Ford and his chemists felt that they were at last approaching a solution to the problem of finding a basic farm material from which the ordinary farmer could develop a commercially profitable product.”

Note 4. This is the earliest English-language document seen (March 2007) that uses the term “Soy ice cream” (p. 250).

Note 5. This is the earliest document seen (July 2007, one of two) that uses the word “Cinderella” in connection with the soybean. The author, however, does not elaborate on this idea.

Note 6. This is the earliest English-language document seen (Oct. 2001) that uses the term “soy-flour.” Address: Southern California.


• Summary: “The soybean is a bean with a past, present, and future—a vital present and a tremendous future. Yet, the average American knows very little about it; in fact, he hardly knows what it looks like. He has not been interested in a bean raised for cattle food, hay, or soil improvement. He has never dreamed that one day the humble soybean would be classed as one of the five great protein foods, and that its bodybuilding and life-sustaining powers would be recognized along with those of meat, milk, eggs, and cheese. Neither has he realized that soybeans could be made into flour, flakes, grits, and a host of other products that can be added to everyday foods without his being aware of their presence.

“The soybean came to this country as a stray immigrant about 1804. It took us over a hundred years to realize its value. Up to twenty-five years ago, soy pioneers who saw commercial, industrial, and nutritional possibilities in the beans were classed as fanatics. As far as the general public was concerned, the Chinese bean did not register at all. Even growers saw it only as a hay crop, a cattle food, or a soil improver. Industrial uses were merely dim possibilities, and its nutritional merits were left entirely to food-minded individuals and the so-called ‘food cranks.’

“The First World War gave soy its first real chance. Fats and oils are precious in wartime and, because the soybean
Edible soybeans are not new in Hawaii. They have been experimentally grown since 1908 but have never been a food crop of the Islands. Growing conditions in Hawaii are suitable for year-round production of most vegetable crops but not of the soybean. It is a plant whose time of flowering responds to the length rather than the temperature of the day. Mr. Lennox gives the following explanation of why it has not so far been grown successfully the entire year:

"The soybean is one of a large group of plants which flowers under the stimulus of a long period of darkness. Although the day length of the shortest day in Hawaii is only two and one-half hours shorter than the longest day this is quite sufficient to have a profound effect on the soybean. During the summer season the plants come into flower in exactly the same length of time as recorded on the mainland, but as the days shorten the flowering commences sooner. Nearly all the flower bloom at the same time on the soybean plant and if the flowering is initiated before a full-sized plant has developed, the number of flowers is proportionately reduced. The reduction in number of pods per plant results in a reduced yield per acre. It is this stimulus of the short day resulting in small crops that has retarded the interest in soybeans as a vegetable crop for Hawaii."

Address: Southern California.


**Summary:** The food situation in Hawaii, since it has become the front line in a war zone, opens up new territory for the soybean to conquer. The Hawaiian Islands are now faced with the necessity of increased home food production to make their population more self-sustaining.

"Hawaii must select crops that can be grown, and of these she must pick those that contain the necessary nutriment to meet the present emergency. The soybean can fulfill these requirements and ranks as a food crop for wartime Hawaii."

"C.G. Lennox, in a discussion of the edible soybean in Hawaii says: 'The edible soybean assumes a position of prominence as a source of substitutes for animal proteins and oils in Hawaii's program of self sustenance."

"'The high protein content of the green shelled beans, quickness in developing a crop, freedom from serious insects, pests, and diseases, and cheapness of planting, cultivating, and harvesting in terms of man-days per ton of green beans, all contribute to the value of the soybean as an emergency food crop.

"Success with the year-round production of soybeans in Hawaii hinges principally upon the correct choice of varieties for planting in the different seasons; secondly, upon sufficient fertilization with nitrogen and phosphorus.'"

"Edible soybeans are not new in Hawaii. They have been experimentally grown since 1908 but have never been used because of the..."
operated entirely by student labor and is also self-supporting. The student canning factory was started when the college was in its infancy, almost forty years ago; and several years of research in food chemistry have resulted in many new products built around the soybean. Madison College is largely responsible for making soybeans appetizing. They have developed a soy milk that has received world recognition; observers have come from Africa, India, and other countries where milk cows are scarce, to study the methods of Madison's soybean dairy. They also make soy cheese [tofu] and several meat substitutes, as well as a soybean beverage. These foods are now well distributed over the United States and some foreign countries, including South Africa. Address: Southern California.


• Summary: "The Loma Linda Food Company of California was originally established to supply nutritious vegetarian foods to institutions and hospitals, but it soon outgrew that field. Its sales in the last 3 years has grown by leaps and bounds. The first 6 months of 1943 almost double 1942; and today the company has national distribution of a complete group of soy products including canned beans, soy milk, cheese, several meat substitutes, a soy coffee-like beverage, and soy-fortified cereals." Address: Southern California.


• Summary: "The railroads of the soybean states have perhaps done more to further the industry than any other group; and they have sponsored huge educational projects to improve the quality and quantity of the soybeans and to further their use.

"As early as 1926, soy-processing mills needed increased acreage to enable them to operate throughout most of the year. They asked the cooperation of the railroads in interesting the farmers in growing beans, and as a result various soy trains and soy exhibits toured the states of the corn belt.

"In 1926 [sic, 1927], the Illinois Central in conjunction with the crops department of the University of Illinois organized a three-car train of soy exhibits and two picture cars, in which moving pictures were shown to demonstrate the then recognized practices for growing the crop. This train made some ninety stops in Illinois and was visited by thousands of farmers. The project helped to stimulate an increase acreage of 44,000 the following year. Later, the program was carried out in Iowa with excellent response.

"Another such project was the Pennsylvania Railroad Soybean Exhibit Car, prepared in cooperation with the American Soybean Association, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the state agriculture colleges in the 18 states through which it operated, for the purpose of acquainting industry, agriculture, and consumers with the importance and possibilities of the soybean in our national life.”

"Russel G. East, general agricultural agent of the Pennsylvania Railroad, gave the following report on the car’s itinerary:

"Probably no exhibit with a rural background has reached and held the interest of so many urban people. A large supply of literature, including annual reports of the American Soybean Association, bulletins from state experiment stations, United States Department of Agriculture publications, miscellaneous educational material prepared by local interests, and recipes for the soybean and its products were distributed extensively.

"This traveling exhibit covered 17,643 miles in 18 states and was visited by 198,286 interested people.

"The Soybean Exhibit Car started its tour at New Brunswick, New Jersey, August 16, 1937. Dr. J. G. Lipman, Dean of the College of Agriculture, very appropriately dedicated the exhibit to the service of the soybean industry in honor of Mr. James Neilson, who was for 50 years a trustee of Rutgers University and grew the first commercial crop of soybeans in America on what is now the New Jersey Experiment Station grounds. Inspection of the soybean experimental plots in the field where the crop was first grown by Mr. Neilsen in 1878 was a feature of the dedication ceremonies.

"The nation’s Capitol was the next objective of the exhibit car, after which it began a tour including New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois.

"Arrangements were made by the University of Illinois Agronomy Department to place the display on the university campus for the occasion of the annual meeting of the American Soybean Association. This was the climax of the exhibit car’s first scheduled tour, traveling from the place where soybeans were first grown commercially and concluding its schedule in the greatest soybean production center on the American continent.

"In its travels this display proved so popular that it was found necessary to extend the operation into other sections. The new itinerary included visits to fairs, expositions, soybean processing plants, and industries using the soybean in their production programs.

"Three railroads availed themselves of the opportunity to take this exhibit into their territories. This broadened the scope of the exhibit until it reached from South Dakota on
the West to Florida in the South. The interest manifested shows the wide field to which the soybean has become adapted.

“The Minneapolis and St. Louis Railroad, through their industrial and agricultural department, handled the display over their lines through Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and South Dakota. So great was the interest, their original schedule had to be increased to take care of the insistent demands of the people in those states.

“The agricultural department of the Seaboard Air Line Railway arranged a schedule covering the South Atlantic states. In Florida the Tampa and Orlando Fairs included the display among their agricultural exhibits. Unusual interest was noted in Georgia and the Carolinas. Soybeans were found to be increasing in these states and in eastern Virginia. More than 32,000 people visited the exhibit while on the Seaboard Railway.

“A final tour was made through the dairy and poultry districts of the East, particularly emphasizing the place of the soybean in feed rations. The largest attendance, outside of fairs and expositions, was found on this trip. Included in this was the time spent on the Coudersport and Port Alleghany Railroad.

“This exhibit car was dismantled after the tour and was replaced by two portable exhibits that have been visited by some 3,000,000 people. During recent months, owing to the burden of wartime transportation, these exhibits have been kept off the road.

“Another railroad educational project was the Baltimore & Ohio ‘Soybean Special’ of 1941. This was made possible through the cooperation of the Agricultural Extension service and Agricultural Experiment Station of the University of Illinois, American Soybean Association, National Soybean Processor Association, Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and Alton Railroad and spent 6 weeks on tour throughout the soybean-producing territories of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. The train consisted of six coaches, three devoted entirely to soybeans, and the other three for living accommodations for the staff of 20 persons. The three exhibit cars consisted of a general soy exhibit car that covered the field of production and utilization; a farmer lecture car, a program of motion pictures and lectures on soybean varieties, production, and marketing; and a woman’s lecture and exhibit car in which a cooking school was conducted and meatless soy loaf, soy date muffins, and soy fudge were served, supplemented by an exhibit of more than 200 food products made from soybeans.

“Two brochures, ‘Soybean Recipes’ and ‘The Magic Plant,’ prepared by the Agricultural Development Department of the railroad were distributed from the ‘Special.’” A photo (p. 112) shows the interior of the soybean exhibit car, Pennsylvania Railroad. Address: Southern California.


• Summary: The section on “Soy flour” states (p. 91-92): “Soy bread is the best known and the most widely used of all soy-flour products, and it is sold in many grocery stores; but even so, its use so far has been more or less restricted to certain areas, and it has been consumed only in small quantities. A small amount of soy bread has been on the market ever since the making of soy flour.

“Bill Baker of Ojai, California, famous for his sugar artistry and his ‘White House cakes’ (he sent the President an elaborately decorated fruitcake every Christmas for many years), was one of the early pioneers in soy bread, and his efforts have done much to establish it in the American diet. About fifteen years ago [i.e., ca. 1930] Mr. Baker started making a few loaves of soybean bread for special diet cases. The results convinced him of its nutritional value, and he set out to make a loaf that would have universal appeal. Today his establishment devotes its entire time to the making of soy- and lima-bean products and ships them to all major cities of the West. Even now, the bread is shipped as far east as Chicago; before the war it was sent as far as New York, Hawaii, and Alaska. Bill Baker bread contains more soy flour than the average loaf of soy bread, and its only sweetening is honey.

“Bill Baker and his devotion to soy products have put the little city of Ojai, Calif., on the map. He had first to perfect his formula and then to convince doctors, grocers, and the general public of its merit. It is one of the ironies of fate that Bill Baker could not live to see the fulfillment of his prophecies.”

Note: He died in May 1942. Address: Southern California.


• Summary: Last, but not least by any means on the nutritional side, is the fact that soybeans are alkaline in their ash, being rich in potassium and other alkaline-bearing salts. This reason alone has gained them much favor. Since the majority of our protein foods are acid in ash, the alkaline soybean provides a welcome balance. Its alkaline ash has made it extremely valuable in corrective and special diets as an aid in relieving acidosis. Also, soybeans have often been suggested in place of such animal proteins as meat, fish, and eggs for the same reason. Soybeans are the only complete protein that are highly alkaline in its ash.” Address: Southern California.

• Summary: “We of the occidental world are just discovering that soybeans are indeed nuggets of gold in our modern civilization. During the last twenty-five years [i.e., since 1920], they have mushroomed from an almost unknown forage crop to one of our most important cash crops, vital to the fields of agriculture, commerce, nutrition, and industry. Nutritionally soybeans have become a vital food for a world at war and a postwar world at peace. Industrially they are a challenge to the chemists’ flasks and test tubes; for more than two hundred commercial products have been made from the little beans. Hence soybeans and soybean products are indeed destined to be a vital plus factor in our world of tomorrow.

“Food has always been my hobby. When Fate, that unseen hand that sometimes guides us to our rightful groove in life, gave me firsthand experience with the miracles of proper diet, teaching fundamental facts on nutrition became my goal. I have tried to pass on the message of better eating via the platform, the printed page, and the radio, and for the last dozen years have enjoyed the unusual opportunity of occupying a vantage point on a busy crossroad of nutrition. I have seen, too, the value of soybeans in the so-called ‘corrective regime,’ and it has convinced me of their rightful place in the average diet.

“I experimented with soy as a food, secured special soy products for special diets, made up recipes, and in my classes taught the cooking of soybeans when they were practically unknown, when soy was eaten because it was soy and regardless of taste or palatability. In 1942, when soybeans became prominent as a war emergency food, a collection of these recipes was published under the title of ‘150 Ways to Use Soybeans.’

“Because my main interest in soybeans and soy products is nutritional, the purpose of this book is to help bridge the gap from the unusual to the usual. I have tried to present the story of Asia’s ancient food in a true, authentic manner—to give credit where credit is due. I am not a vegetarian, not affiliated with any organization or group advocating a meatless diet. I believe that proper nutrition and common-sense living are man’s best medicine.”

Address: Southern California.


• Summary: “To anyone interested in unusual foods soy cheese is indeed fascinating. While it will never become popular in this country it is worth knowing about and trying at least once.

“Soy cheese or curd is known to the Chinese as tofu and it has been aptly described by them as ‘the meat without a bone’... The bean curd or soy cheese is the coagulated casein of the soybean and is made from soy milk very much as we make cottage cheese. The result is a white, very soft, watery substance, that can be pressed into a cake or soft cube. It is an easily digested food, fairly high in protein, and can be used as a meat, egg, or fish substitute, as a cheese, or as a topping or dessert.

“Every Oriental settlement has its tofu factory or factories which supply the restaurants and markets with fresh cheese. The methods used in some of them are very crude and primitive but the result is an excellent cake of cheese. There is an interesting little place in the heart of new Chinatown in Los Angeles run by two old Chinese who claim no knowledge of English, and can’t be bothered with curious visitors. They did, however, allow me to watch from a distance. A large size coffee mill run by a little motor ground the beans. The curds were cooked in a clean wash tub and the cakes were pressed between two boards held down by a wooden bar which was attached to the wall at one end and weighted at the other end with a pail of sand. Naturally their output was limited but their product was excellent. Here was the old world working in the midst of the new making an ancient food that was yet new and novel.”

Describes how to make tofu at home, how to store it, basic preparatory techniques, and serving suggestions. It is delicious as a dessert “Some ingenious cooks even use it for cheese cake.” Canned tofu is more in demand than fresh because it is more widely available. “Canned it is known as soy cheese, soy food or soy curd and the taste, texture and moisture varies with the different brands.”

“Soy cheese will never become popular in this country. A certain amount will always be used, however, by the vegetarian, especially by those who do not use any animal products whatsoever [i.e., vegans], and by those who have developed a taste for it. It is an unusual food that does not appeal to everyone. It is becoming more and more popular in corrective nutrition because it often fills a need in the special diet.

“The meat without a bone’ is one of the interesting variations of the versatile bean. This ancient food is gaining a toe hold in our American diet and is filling a dietary need for many persons.”

A photo shows a woman in a Korean market selling cakes of tofu on an round woven bamboo tray. Address: Author of “The Useful Soybean” [California].

109. Two photographs of Mildred Lager and Ed Jones (Photograph). 1946?

• Summary: Both photos are black and white, and taken in Los Angeles, California-probably in 1946, the year that Mildred and Ed Jones were married.

*Summary:* Soymilk was prepared by the Chinese philosopher Whai-Nan-Tze well before the Christian era. Its production was described by Champion (1885), Li Yu-Ying (1905), Miller (1941), Mildred Lager (1946), and others. Starting in 1888 many authors (Balland, Cazalis, Dujardin-Beaumetz, Graux, Labbé, Lecerf, Maurel) and other partisans of vegetarianism, right up until the present (1930-46, Dr. Dresses, Donela, and Yen 1933) have recommended the use of soy flour or milk in infant feeding.

111. Los Angeles City. 1948. Index to register of voters: Los Angeles City Precinct No. 1486. Los Angeles, California. Los Angeles, California. 1 p.

*Summary:* Names are listed alphabetically by surname. Under “Jones” we read:

“Jones, Edwin S., 123 N. Kenmore av. R [Republican].

“Jones, Mrs. Mildred Lager, 122 N. Kenmore av. R” [Republican].


*Summary:* Mr. and Mrs. Gusaf W. Lager (formerly of Superior, Wisconsin) recently celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in Burbank, California. They both came to Superior in the early days. “Mrs. Lager (Hilda Erickson) was one of the children who attended the little red school house in West Superior before the Matt Carpenter [school] was built. They were married here in 1899 and moved to California in 1940. Their daughter, Mildred Lager Jones, known in the nutritional field, is living in Los Angeles.

“After a family dinner, open house was held at the Lager residence, 1230 North Ontario street, Burbank, for their friends.” Eastern visitors who attended the celebration were Mr. and Mrs. Adolph Erickson (Atkinson, Minnesota) and Mrs. Emma Oswell (Barnum, Minnesota); they are the brother and sister of Mrs. Lager. Also, Mrs. Alice Wondra (St. Paul, Minnesota), sister of Mr. Lager. And Mrs. Florence Anderson (Superior).


*Summary:* Names are listed alphabetically by surname. Under “Jones” we read:

“Jones, Edwin S., 123 N. Kenmore av. R [Republican].

“Jones, Mrs. Mildred Lager, 122 N. Kenmore av. R” [Republican].


*Summary:* “Under separate cover I have mailed you a copy of the book ‘Infant Feeding.’ I am sure that you will be very interested in reading it through from cover to cover. It is written in very simple language and well within your vocabulary as a dietitian... It is a resume of the latest on infant feeding and familiarizes one with all of these various infants’ foods. It also makes a very ready reference book in case any questions come up.

“I plan that you will have to do with a good deal of correspondence that comes in regarding infant feeding in the future... You will gradually get familiar with our Soyalac and its use... Of course, our scope of work goes way beyond infant feeding because we are working on the feeding of the masses of people, obtaining our nutrition from vegetable sources... Yours very sincerely, H.W. Miller, M.D., Research Director, International Nutrition Research Foundation.”

Note 1. This letter is typed on the letterhead of the International Nutrition Laboratory, Inc. Above the Laboratory’s name are printed: “Miller’s Soya Foods. Soyalac–Sandwich Spread–Vegetable Cheese–Green Soya Beans–Cutletburger–Cutlets.” Above that is hand-stamped: “International Nutrition Research Foundation, P.O. Box 388, Mt. Vernon, Ohio.”

Note 2. In November 1952 Miss Dorothea Van Gundy began to work for Loma Linda Foods in Arlington, California, as a dietitian and food demonstrator. In August 1960 she was married (her first marriage) to Ed Jones, a health food salesman and distributor, who was 13 years older than she. Ed had previously married to Mildred Lager. Address: M.D., International Nutrition Lab., Inc., P.O. Box 388, Mt. Vernon, Ohio. Phone: 1195.


*Summary:* “Health food stores do the pioneering in the health food field and are five to 10 years ahead of the grocery stores in many products... Examples of such products are wheat germ, brewer’s yeast, molasses, yogurt, whole grain cereals, unsweetened juices and fruits, etc.” Recipes include “Peanut butter or other nut butter” sandwiches. A small portrait photo shows Ms. Lager. Address: Los Angeles, California.
• Summary: “Choose soy powder.” Soy flour and soy powder are often confused. “Soy flour is flour made from soy beans. It may contain the oil of the beans and may be a full fat flour or the oil may be removed and it is a low fat flour. Soy powder is a blend of powdered soy beans, milk solids, minerals, etc., that when added to water will result in a product with the food value of milk. Soy powder has more food value than soy flour. Many persons will think them the same but reading the label on the package will show the difference.”

“Soy bean scores: One of the easiest and least expensive ways to add protein to the diet is the use of the little soy bean or soya bean. It is available in many forms and is very delicious in taste. Soy malt for instance, can be added to milk, hot or cold, for a delicious protein rich drink. Soy powder can also be used in this way. Soy cereal has more protein than cereal grains, and you can also get a soy wheatless cereal for those allergic to wheat. Pre-cooked grits are also sold which can be used in meat loaves, vegetable roasts, and it is an easy and very inexpensive way to add protein to a vegetable soup. If you have never used soy products find out about them the next time you are in a health food store. And if you wish an interesting folder, write to Mary McBride’s Products, Box 19, South Pasadena, California.”

Recipes include: Soy stuffed tomatoes (with soy grits, seasoned with a dash of soy sauce). Soy cereal pudding. Also discusses carob powder (made from the seeds only), which is superior to carob flour (made from the seeds and pods). Address: Los Angeles, California.

• Summary: Two publications which are good sources of information are Illinois College of Agriculture Extension Circular No. 664 (“Recipes for using soy flour, grits and flakes, and soybean oil” by F.O. Van Duyne, 1950), and The Useful Soybean by Mildred Lager. Soy flour is not available in most grocery stores because of limited public acceptance and consequently small volume. The product may be obtained in some health food stores in a small retail package. Most of the edible soy flour produced is sold in carload lots to food blenders, bakery chains and packing houses. Food blenders include the product in cake, dough, sweet doughs, dark breads and recently, in the Cornell or McCay bread which is gaining headway in the East. Packing houses consume soy flour as a binder in bologna, wiener, chili, and in some cold cut loaves. Address: Soy Flour Dep., Spencer Kellogg & Sons, Inc., Decatur, Illinois.

118. Portrait photograph of Mildred Lager. 1953?

• Summary: This 3¼ by 4½ inch photo shows Mildred at her best, pretty and happy.

Note: This photo first appeared in print (as far as we know) in 1942 in Mildred’s the Oct. 1953 issue of Let’s Live, in Mildred’s column “Nutritional News and recipes.”

Sent to Soyfoods Center in May 1981 by Dr. & Mrs. George L. Bower of Redding, California. Lois Bower was Mildred’s stepdaughter.

• Summary: “Agar, known as agar-agar, is a natural sea vegetable product that forms soft bulk and is gelatinous in nature. It is often called vegetable gelatin and can be used as a gelling agent in cooking.” It is “a natural laxative.” Contains recipes. Address: Los Angeles, California.

• Summary: “There is no term as misunderstood as health foods. To most persons it is an oddity, a pill, something to stay away from until you are forced to use it. Health foods are our natural foods, those that have more nutritional value because they have nit been refined, bleached, highly processed, etc... Health food stores are one step ahead in nutrition, and the person who knows the value of natural foods is also one step ahead.” Also discusses complete and incomplete proteins. Soybeans are “partially complete proteins.” They are “vegetable proteins and while they are complete some of the amino acids are inadequate in amounts.” The complete proteins are expensive animal proteins, while the incomplete are generally the inexpensive vegetable proteins. “An incomplete protein may be made more complete by the addition of a food high in the essential aminos: for instance, adding milk to cereals... It is very easy to get adequate amounts of essential amino acids if you know your proteins.

“One of the cheapest protein fortifying foods is the soybean and it may be added in many ways. If soy grits are added to a vegetable soup instead of barley you have a better protein dish.” Discusses the symptoms of protein deficiencies, and gives recipes. Praises “Nut butters” as concentrated foods. “Health food stores carry almond, cashew, pecan as well as peanut butter. Try eating them on apples, celery and salad vegetables. They are delicious.” A small portrait photo shows Mildred Lager. Address: Los Angeles, California.

• Summary: Gustaf W. Lager, 84, resident of Superior, died in Burbank, California Dec. 24 after a short illness. He was buried Dec. 27 at Forest Lawn, Hollywood Hills.
“Mr. Lager came to Superior in 1891 and left in 1940 to live in California. He was an engineer at the Great Northern Elevator Co. for many years.

“He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Hilda Lager and daughter, Mildred, now Mrs. E.S. Jones of Burbank. He was a member of the Acacia Masonic Lodge of Superior.”


Contents: Part I. Introduction. Types of arthritis (inflammation of the joints; rheumatoid and osteo-arthritis). Causes of arthritis. Suggestions. Foods for the arthritic (diet can make a big difference). My own case. Juice diet. Kind of juices. How to take juices. Limited diet: Breakfast, lunch, dinner. Salisbury diet. General diet: Breakfast, lunch, dinner, dessert. Other suggestions: Heat, baths, sweets, etc., massage, digestive aids (natural laxative foods and bulky foods), supplements, vegetarian diet. Mental attitude (positive mental attitude and healthy emotions are very important). Additions August 1955 (p. 28; “It is now more than 30 years since I began my battle with arthritis... Thanks to my diet I have led a very active life. I am still on the fundamental diet because I do not know of anything better... Cortisone and ACTH have been heralded as miracle drugs. I do not believe these drugs are the solution to the problem.

In many cases they have brought temporary relief...”)


“My own case” (p. 10-14). Note: Mildred M. Lager was born on 19 Dec. 1900 at Superior, Wisconsin, of Swedish parents, who immigrated to America. In 1925 she started her lifelong battle with arthritis. “As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. "As diet was the greatest factor in my recovery, I am going into detail about my lifelong battle with arthritis. “I felt as if my body were nothing but ‘sore joints.’”

So she started a strict diet of natural unsweetened fresh fruit juices only. She found orange, grapefruit, tomato, pineapple, and apple to be the best for her. One month later she took a teaching job in northern Michigan, arriving there in twenty degrees below zero. Within 9 months she had won her battle. There follows a list (p. 13) of six foods to avoid plus two general tips. Also, when using dried fruits, use only the unsulphured kind. “Liquified [sic] drinks: A liqueur is a blessing to any one who for some reason cannot tolerate raw green leafy vegetables” (p. 35).

By 1955 Mildred had already authored two books on soybeans and soyfoods, the first one (The Useful Soybean, 1945) a classic. This book contains soy in many of the menus and recipes: Soy oil for salad dressing (p. 18-19).


• Summary: “We all have so much to be grateful for, as there is an abundance of wonder and loveliness in the world if we will but look at it. Gratitude brings both healing and comfort. Start your day with gratitude...”


• Summary: “Mrs. Hilda Lager, old time resident of Superior, died Nov. 29 at the home of her daughter, Mildred, in Burbank, California, according to word received here. Mrs. [Hilda] Lager came to Superior in 1884 and was one of the pupils who marched into the Matt Carpenter School when it was completed.
“She was married to the late Gustaf Lager, also of Superior, in 1899 and they lived here until 1940 when they moved to California.

“Mr. Lager died last December. Mrs. Lager is survived by one daughter, Mrs. E.S. Jones, of Burbank, California; two brothers, Carl and Adolph Erickson of Atkinson, Minnesota, and one sister, Mrs. Anna Oswell of Newman, California.”


A so-called “second edition” of this book was published in 1959, but it was identical to this first edition.


**Summary:** “Funeral services for Mrs. Mildred Lager Jones, 59, lecturer and writer on nutrition who died yesterday, will be conducted Thursday at 11 a.m. in the Church of the Hills, Forest Lawn Memorial Park, Hollywood Hills, Calif. Mrs. Jones was born in Superior, Dec. 19, 1900. She was the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. G.H. Lager. She left Superior in 1930 and from 1937 to 1945 was a radio broadcaster and writer in Los Angeles where she conducted a series on nutrition.

“Mrs. Jones was a teacher in Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin, and Escanaba, Michigan, and later went into the shoe store business as part owner of the Family Shoe Store in Superior.

“She owned and operated a health food store in Los Angeles during those years.

“She was married to the late Gustaf Lager, also of Superior, in 1899 and they lived here until 1940 when they moved to California.

“Mrs. Lager died last December. Mrs. Lager is survived by one daughter, Mrs. E.S. Jones, of Burbank, California; two brothers, Carl and Adolph Erickson of Atkinson, Minnesota, and one sister, Mrs. Anna Oswell of Newman, California.”


Part III: 25. The art of loving. 26. The power of prayer. 27. The will to live.

Page 10: Most dog food is more nutritious than human food. A typical dog food contains soybean grits.

Page 12: The human body is replaced every year. Dr. Paul G. Aeberson of the Atomic Energy Commission, who has used radioactive tracers to study the body, states: “In a single year 98% of the old atoms will be replaced by new atoms which we take into our bodies from the air we breathe, the food we eat, and the water we drink.”

Page 67: Home-sprouted soy beans are free from pesticide contaminants.

Page 139: Unsatuated fats are found in vegetable oils, including soybean oil.

Page 145-46. What raises our cholesterol level? One food that does is butter. When one-seventh of the ½ ounce of butter served at each meal was replaced by soy sterol (probably lecithin), the average cholesterol level of subjects dropped 11%.

Page 148: Tests by Dr. Lester Morrison (1958) found that “soy lecithin granules succeeded in lowering cholesterol and reversing atherosclerosis in thousands of his patients.”

In the chapter on “Wonder foods” we read (p. 170): “Soy beans and products made from soy beans such as soy flakes, soy grits and soy flour, are rich in the only complete vegetable protein.” In the same chapter, Dr. Clive M. McCay notes (p. 177) that many people “use soy milks. These soy milks are now very attractive to taste. They are also being sold in various modifications such as malted milk. With the growing interest in the consumption of unsaturated fatty acids which are rich in these soy milks, the future may see a real challenge to the dairy industry.”

A long section titled “Meat-eating vs. vegetarianism” (p. 182-88) attempts to look at both sides of the issue from a nutritional viewpoint only. In “The case for the vegetarian” we read (p. 184): “A few nuts are complete protein. The soybean, a legume, is the only complete protein vegetable. In all other cases, some of the amino acids are missing. Because of the nature of the soybean, it is being recognized more and more, by vegetarians and others, for its high nutritional value. Other complete proteins include brewer’s yeast, cottonseed, and cereal germ such as wheat germ.”

Page 218-20: Beverages—Milk is also a problem since it may contain radioactive strontium 90, iodine 131, penicillin, wax, pesticides, etc. “Many nutritionists prefer raw certified milk.” To offset the cost of raw milk, “powdered skim milk” can be used for cooking. Yogurt or kefir can be made from either kind of milk. “As a milk substitute, soy-bean milk (Lager 1955; Chen 1956), an oriental staple, has been suggested.”

The section on healthy skin (p. 262) states: “Cold pressed soy oil, because it contains so many elements found to occur naturally in skin tissue, is excellent.” Address: M.A.


• Summary: The copyright page states: “Note: This is a revised and updated version of a privately printed book, How to Use the Soybean, by Mildred Lager which was first printed in 1955 and reprinted in 1959.” This lacto-ovo-vegetarian cookbook contains over 350 recipes, including 72 tofu recipes.


The chapter titled “History of the Soybean” (p. 3-7) discusses: W.J. Morse and the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Dr. J.A. LeClerc, the American Soybean Association (which has held a national convention every year since it was founded in 1920), its publication Soybean Digest, Henry Ford and his work with both industrial and edible soy products, T.A. Van Gundy, Harry W. Miller, M.D., Dr. Clive McCay of Cornell University (Ithaca, New York, NY: Devin-Adair Co. xiv + 240 p. Foreword by Ruth Stout. Index. 22 cm.

• Summary: The copyright page states: “Note: This is a revised and updated version of a privately printed book, How to Use the Soybean, by Mildred Lager which was first printed in 1955 and reprinted in 1959.” This lacto-ovo-vegetarian cookbook contains over 350 recipes, including 72 tofu recipes.
Concerning T.A. Van Gundy we read (p. 5): “The father of one of the authors, T.A. Van Gundy, became interested in the nutritional value of soybeans while attending the World’s Fair in San Francisco in 1915, where they were featured in the Oriental exhibits. Upon going home he purchased some soybeans and began experimenting in them. As far as we know he was the first person on the Pacific Coast to develop a line of commercial foods from this wonder bean. By 1927 he had developed a number of palatable products which he manufactured and sold through health food stores. Soybean foods were virtually unknown at this time, and it took courage and perseverance to put them across.”

Recipes for “Soy Ice Cream” (p. 175-76) now include vanilla, maple nut, orange, and strawberry flavors. A recipe for “Granola” (p. 161) calls for 1 cup soy flour. The rest of the ingredients (such as wheat and barley flour) appear to be similar to those found in the earliest granola recipes of the mid-1800s. Address: Southern California.


• Summary: This lacto-ovo-vegetarian cookbook is identical to the 1963 edition published by Devin-Adair except: (1) Mildred Lager, who died in Aug. 1960, is no longer listed as the author. Note: Mildred’s husband, Ed Jones, married Dorothea Van Gundy, the present author. (2) The dust jacket is white, yellow, green and black on a blue background. A face, made of yellow and green soybeans, is wearing a chef’s hat. (3) The publisher of the hardcover edition is now Gramercy rather than Devin-Adair. The copyright date (written in hard-to-read roman numerals) is 1963, the same as the Devin-Adair edition. The date of publication is not given, but it must have been after 1963. We have taken the liberty of giving it as 1964. (4) The title of the second preface has been changed to “Preface to the revised edition” from “Preface to the 1963 edition.” Both were written by Dorothea Van Gundy Jones of Arlington, California. Address: Arlington, California.


Mildred wrote that proper diet was the greatest factor in her recovery from arthritis. Based on her own experience and that of many others who she helped, she strongly opposed the use of dairy products, and thus used dairylike soy products in their place, especially soymilk, tofu, and soy flour or grits.

Mildred wrote in Aug. 1957 that it has been 32 years since she began her battle with arthritis. In a Feb. 1961 update to this book Dorothea wrote that Mildred died on 25 Jan. 1960. “Hers was a very remarkable life in that while still in her teens she was told, after examination at a noted medical clinic, that she had incurable arthritis and would never walk again, her feet and legs being completely anklosed at that time. In spite of this verdict Mildred went home with a determination to show those doctors they were wrong, and show them she did, for before long she was back on her feet again. You already know her story. For the next forty years she battled arthritis, never quite winning but keeping it under control to the extent that she lived a normal life and made a remarkable contribution to the field of nutrition as, health food store owner and operator, author, lecturer, radio commentator and dietary consultant. She taught many arthritics how to overcome their handicaps, and if that was not possible, how to live with them. Her life made a real contribution and she left many friends as a result.” Address: Riverside, California.


• Summary: This is the first paper in Session I, titled “Potentials for soybean production and use as related to world protein needs,” Nevin S. Scrimshaw presiding. Contents: Introduction: “It is generally agreed by students of world food problems that the shortage of protein is the most critical need now and in the foreseeable future.” Historical overview: Piper and Morse, Mildred Lager. An overview of worldwide soybean production: USA, Europe, Production in Eastern Asia: China, Indonesia, Japan, Taiwan, Thailand, India, Soviet Union, Latin America (Brazil, Paraguay), Mexico, Colombia, Argentina, Australia (no statistics given), Europe (European Russia, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Rumania, and Czechoslovakia). Prospects for further production: USA, southeastern Europe, Russia, Thailand, Japan, Brazil, Colombia, Argentina, Mexico. Summary.  

“In southern European Russia, commercial soybean plantings were reported in the 1870s. In the Far East, soybean cultivation may be even older as a part of the
culture of the local Chinese. Before the revolution, acreage was small, however.”

“Latin America is a relative newcomer in soybean production. Brazil is the only country where large acreage has been planted for more than a decade. In recent years soybeans have been planted in Argentina, Colombia, Mexico, Paraguay, and Surinam. Brazil is the major exporter with smaller amounts coming from Paraguay and Surinam. Venezuela is a major importer and Mexico imports some.

“Estimates for 1965 show that Brazil produced 16,610,000 bushels (453,000 metric tons), Mexico produced 2,482,000 bushels (67,690 metric tons), Colombia produced 1,835,000 bushels (50,000 metric tons), Paraguay 660,000 bushels (18,000 metric tons), and Argentina 360,000 bushels (9,800 metric tons). Total production of Central and South America would be only slightly more than 1 percent of world output. In Brazil about 90% of the production is concentrated in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, the southern-most part of the country. The balance is grown in nearby Santa Catarina and Parana. The climate is similar to some of our southern states... A major processing plant has been built near Porto Alegre.”

“In Mexico, production began very recently. Almost all acreage is in the State of Sonora, bordering Arizona and Southern California. Here plantings started in 1959... In the Yaqui Valley, soybeans are always grown under irrigation where they fill in successfully as a second crop following wheat and cotton.” In Colombia, acreage is concentrated in the Cauca Valley on the western slope of the Andes. In Argentina, acreage up to a few years ago amounted to about 1,000 hectares, most of which is grown in the state of Misiones, the far northeast area bordering upon Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil. In recent years there has been expansion in the pampas.

In the USA, “some expansion to the West is possible under irrigated conditions. Research trials in Oregon, Washington, and California show yields as high as 80 bushels an acre. But where water is limited, the highest value crops will be favored.” Address: Dean, College of Agriculture, Univ. of Illinois.


• Summary: This lacto-ovo-vegetarian cookbook is identical to the original 1963 paperback edition by the same title except that this is a hardcover edition and the publisher is listed as Arc Books rather than Arco Publishing. The publisher’s address is the same. Address: Arlington, California.
to the stores in droves seeking the natural vitamins and supplements.

“From her first book, written in story-book fashion, and called You Can Get Well in 1939, Adelle Davis became the queen of the health food movement.

“Hauser’s books, Kordel’s books, Bragg’s books, Ancel Keys book, N.S. West, Mildred Lager, Dr. Wm. Howard Hay, and H. Curtis Wood, M.D., all wrote interesting and well studied books that brought lots of business to our stores across the nation. Linda Clark, Rachel Carson. Dr. Jarvis and many others have written books that bring customers to your door.”

Concerning the history of the NNFA, in 1937 Anthony Berhalter had a consumer organization started called the American Health Food Association. Berhalter, a man of great foresight, operated a bakery and health food shop on North Clark Street in Chicago. He made fresh-fruit coffee cakes from whole wheat flour, which he procured from Elam Mills on Damen St. in Chicago. The Association’s first convention was in the spring of 1937 in Chicago. About 150 people attended. Walter Hodson was one of the speakers. Companies that exhibited included Live Food Products, Alberty Products, American Dietaiads (at that time known as Tam Products, Inc.), Battle Creek Scientific Foods, Chippewa Spring Water Co, Dietetic Food Co. of New York (Diamel), Elam Mills, Health Food Jobbers, H.W. Walker Company, Loeb Dietetic Foods, Modern Diet Products, Inc., Natural Health Products of New York, Nutty Brown Mills of Texas, Parkelp of California and Vegetable Juices Inc. of Chicago.

After the 1937 meeting a new organization was formed named the National Health Foods Association. Its first convention was in the summer of 1938 in Chicago, which then became its headquarters. The convention lasted 3 days and the 800 to 900 attendees listened to speakers like Paul Bragg and Edward McCollum. Thereafter conventions were held each year; retailers, manufacturers, and distributors all met. 1947 was a low point in the association’s history, then Stanley Phillips stepped in and helped create a comeback. The 1948 meeting was in Coronado, California. In 1948 the Association was named the National Dietary Foods Assn. In 1964, with $30,000 in the treasury, the Association acquired its first full-time secretary. *Health Foods Retailing* magazine, published originally by Lelord Kordel and then by Jack Schwartz, became designated as the association’s official publication. In 1966 Phillips resigned from the NDFA and helped start a new retailers organization, ADRA, which merged back into NDFA in 1970. The new organization was called the National Nutritional Foods Assoc. (NNFA). The 1975 convention at the MGM Grand Hotel in Las Vegas was a highlight of the NNFA in its heyday. Throughout its history, and especially in more recent decades, the industry’s greatest adversary has been the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).
How did others see her? “She was extremely likeable and friendly, but very thrifty, almost stingy. Her parents were immigrants from Sweden. She was rather sharp; nobody would take advantage of Mildred.

Mildred wrote *The Useful Soybean*. When Ed married Dorothea he probably said, “You know about soy too. Why don’t you rework it and we’ll re-issue it and keep it alive as a source of family income.” Ed was at work selling those books long after Mildred died. Address: 825 Redbud Drive, Redding, California 96001.


• **Summary:** Mildred Lager “was certainly a go-getter. And she got Ed [Jones] the same way.” “I will say Ed was good to his wives—tho’ the first two were very sick.” “Mildred was a Unitarian, yet Ed took her to the White Memorial Church on Sabbath, but she never accepted the [Seventh-day Adventist] faith. I believe she was quite crippled before she died & suffered greatly... Ed was 13 years older than Dot [Dorothea Van Gundy] when they married, so Mildred died at age 51 (?) and Ed was 19 years older than Mildred. Ed was 77 when he died in 1968–March. He was a twin.”

Note: Mildred Lager died on 25 Jan. 1960 for various factors, but mainly from the increasingly large doses of steroid hormones, cortisone derivatives, she was taking to treat her severe arthritis. She also had severe osteoporosis at the time of her death. Address: California.


• **Summary:** A comprehensive history of the subject.


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• **Summary:** In the late 1920s and early 1930s physicians in Los Angeles: Bill Baker, Mildred Lager, El Molino Mills, Ben Kahan, and Joseph Lessin (Interview). *SoyaScan Notes*. Nov. 30.

In late 1931 Ben Kahan started selling soy bread, made by Bill Baker, to 16 stores in Los Angeles. He would drive his model A truck from Los Angeles to Ojai, load it up with Baker’s bread, then distribute it. Bill Baker’s bakery, built around the turn of the century, still exists in Ojai. Bill Baker was Alan’s godfather; he baked Alan’s parents a 250-pound wedding cake.

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about 1945. Ben also knew Mildred Lager. She was one of his first customers.

Ben, who is now age 69 and in good health, lives in North Hollywood and is still vitally interested in Kahan & Lessin, and the health food industry. He entered the industry when he was 17 years old, selling Bill Baker’s bread. On the side of his truck was a large illustration of a package of Bill Baker’s bread. Then he grew into a distributor named the Ben Kahan Co., which also sold dried fruit packs. In 1934 Joseph Lessin was selling healthy foods out of his car. Joseph and Ben met, but they didn’t merge to become Kahan & Lessin until 1945, when an accountant put the two men together.

Alan knew Harold Hain. Mr. Vandercook of El Molino Mills started with soy in about 1927 [sic, 1926]. At his mill in Alhambra near Los Angeles, he ground grains on a stone burr mill. Address: Kahan & Lessin Co., Compton, California.

143. Kahan, Ben. 1983. Recollections of the early health foods industry in Los Angeles: Bill Baker, Mildred Lager, El Molino Mills, Harold Hain, Henry Borsook, Gayelord Hauser, Clark Irvine (Interview). Conducted by William Shurtleff of Soyfoods Center, Dec. 4. 3 p. transcript. • Summary: Ben, age 69, was one of the founders of Kahan & Lessin. He has been in the health foods industry since 1932. He became involved with soyfoods through Bill Baker (of Ojai), who pioneered the use of soy flour in Los Angeles bakery products. Bill had the flour ground by El Molino Mills, by elder Vandercook. Starting in about 1936 he developed and started to sell soybean bread. At about the same time he started to make soybean cookies, cereal, pancake flour, and related products. Ben Kahan was the first distributor of Bill Baker’s soybean products. Before this, he developed lima bean flour, bread, and pancake and waffle flour, then he switched to soybean flour. Bill Baker got El Molino interested in soybeans. El Molino started in about 1927 with whole-wheat flours. Mr. Vandercook came from Holland, worked for Sperry Mills, was disenchanted, left Sperry and came to Alhambra, where he set up a stone burr just as he had known as a child in Holland. Kahan was also the first distributor for El Molino.

Mildred Lager had one of the first free-standing health food stores (i.e., not in a department store) but she also did promotional work for the health food industry direct to consumers via radio. She was retained by a number of pioneer health food organizations which sponsored here, including Bill Baker. Ben knew here and distributed products to her. Mildred was a slight woman, medium height, former school teacher from Wisconsin, arthritic since youth [about age 16]. Doctors told her to go to California since the weather might help her. She decided to help herself through nutritional means. She was enthused in discovering the relationship between nutrition and health, and she wanted to spread this knowledge to the public. So she started a store, radio broadcast, and classes. She would hire a hall in the Royal Pals Hotel (at 6th and El Dorado), invite people to lectures and cooking classes, and publicize it through her radio program. Bill Baker would bake fresh soybean breads and cookies for the demos.

Bill Baker entered America as a poor immigrant from Prussia. He worked as a baker at some of the most prestigious hotels and restaurants in America. His last jobs were as chefs in the White House [sic] for many years. The last administration was the Harding administration. After that each Christmas he would send the official holiday fruit cake, continuing until Franklin Roosevelt’s 3rd administration. After retirement in the early 1930s he was in Ventura, then he moved to Ojai; he baked conventional breads and pies for the Thatcher School and other schools in the Ojai Valley.

Then a group of doctors at the Cottage Hospital in Santa Barbara asked him to try to develop an alkaline bread for nutritional treatment of patients with hyperacidity. Baker researched the problem and came up with lima bean bread, using flour from dried immature baby limas. Also lima bean pancake and waffle flour. He then tried to get this out to the doctors’ patients. It was the middle of the Great Depression so it was hard to introduce new products. Kahan, a new distributor in need of products, tried to get the new bread into stores, but only health food stores were interested. Others laughed him out of the store. Mildred Lager was one of his first customers. Bill Baker did his promotions through her.

Bill Baker died in about 1945. The heyday of his baked goods was during World War II. Kahan distributed 1,200 loaves a day. Baker probably also sold through many other distributors in other regions. He shipped his bread to San Francisco, Seattle, and as far east as Colorado. The formula was a secret but probably 16-20% soy flour and the rest a high-gluten unbleached white flour.

The Los Angeles health food movement originated in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Clark Irvine was one of the founders. He published Health Food Digest [sic, California Health News], which later became Let’s Live. Kahan, Irvine, and a few others founded the Health Food Dealers Association, which later became the National Dietetic Foods Association.

The key health food people in Los Angeles were Clark Irvine, Bill Baker, Mildred Lager, Van Gundy, Vandercook, La Sierra Industries (founded by T.A. Van Gundy in Arlington, California), and Loma Linda Foods. Kahan knew of T.A. Van Gundy, and he knew Dorothea Van Gundy well. Harold Hain canned the first commercial soybeans in about 1924. His Hain Health Foods company later became today’s Hain Food Group. Dr. Fearn was a pioneer but not a mixer in the industry; not at the National Health Food Dealers Association.
Vitamins: Dr. Henry Borsook, a biochemist at the California Institute of Technology (commonly referred to as Caltech) pioneered vitamins in the early 1940s. He attended health food meetings. This is one reason for the rise of the health food industry in Los Angeles. Borsook was the first on the West Coast to do this. The first U.S. vitamins in a health food store were sold by Joe Bishop, manager of the Vegetarian Cafeteria in San Diego, in about 1941. He sold those made by W.T. Thompson Co.—powdered vitamin B-1 sold in little envelopes. The Seventh-day Adventists also played a big role in Los Angeles. In the early days, many stores were marginal operations in private homes, run by women. The manufacturers were primitive. They catered to poor, marginal people, during the Depression, who couldn’t afford to get to doctors, so they tried health foods. They also catered to diabetics, people with allergies, and the teachers who preached against salt. Some of the earliest out-of-the-home health food stores were concessions in markets. So, in this sense, now its not new for health food stores to be in supermarkets. Some of the leaders were those disenchanted with the medical profession. Gayelord Hauser played a leading role in making health foods acceptable; before him they were associated with the nuts, kooks, and freaks. Hauser, who associated with Hollywood and Greta Garbo, gave health foods a big image boost. He created the first big chain, the forerunner of the modern health food industry, in the late 1940s. He and his books and charisma gave the industry a new image. Suddenly health foods were seen as being used by people in the know—not just by nuts.

He recalls four stages of health food stores: (1) In private homes run by women. (2) Concessions in larger food markets or stores. (3) Small stores in secondary retail stores, out of the way, because they couldn’t afford stores in main shopping districts. (4) A handful of free-standing health food stores. Mildred Lager’s store was not a prime location. After that she was a school teacher in Wisconsin. Address: 5530 Goodland Ave., N. Hollywood, California 91607. Phone: 818-701-6632.


• Summary: A history of the National Nutritional Foods Association (NNFA) and their decades of legal battles with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). This is one of the only supportive (non-critical) histories of the health foods movement in America.


Frank Murray got involved with the health foods movement in 1963, working for Jack Schwartz at Syndicate Publications. The book was written for the NNFA and not released commercially. Several thousand copies were printed in paperback, selling for $4.95. A copy was sent to each member of Congress.

The health food industry was born out of the discovery of vitamins and the devitalization of the American food supply (especially white flour since the late 1890s, and white sugar) by large corporations. A few early companies started in the 1920s but most began in the 1930s. It grew on the issues of chemicals and pesticides in foods.

“The National Nutritional Foods Association (NNFA), which has had several names since its inception, has been the spokesman for the health food industry since 1938” (p. 6).

Companies: Akin’s Special Foods (Tulsa, Oklahoma, p. 30-31), Eichenauer’s (Phoenix, Arizona, p. 34-36. Opened in 1938. Early lines included Paul Bragg products, Dr. Walker’s Vegetable Juice Hydraulic Press and books, Gayelord Hauser products and books, Martin Pretorius products and Waring Blender), Vita Food Co. (Washington, DC, p. 34-36. Opened in 1928. A list of products sold in an early catalog includes Lust’s Peanut Butter, Carque’s Almond Butter, Black Mission Figs, Kadota Figs, Manukka raisins, Carque California Health Bars (5¢ each), Live Food Juicer ($5.95), Vic Boff’s (Brooklyn, New York, p. 36. For 48 years he has been associated with the pioneers of Physical Culture), House of Better Living (now owned by John Quinn and called Quinn’s, p. 38), General Nutrition (Pittsburg, Pennsylvania; David Shkarian), Kahan & Lessin Co. (Compton, California), The Landstrom Co. (South San Francisco, CA), Balanced Foods, Inc. (North Bergen, New Jersey), Wm. T. Thompson Co. (Carson, CA), El Molino Mills (City of Industry, CA), Ener-G-Foods, Inc. (Seattle, Washington), NatuRef Products (Paramount, CA),

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People: Dr. Linus Pauling, Dr. Roger Williams, Dr. Albert Szent-Gyorgyi, Paul C. Bragg, Gayelord Hauser, Adelle Davis, Anthony Berhalter (founded the American Health Food Assoc. and the National Health Foods Assoc., predecessors of the NNFA in 1937), Ben Kanan, Otto Carque, Lelord Kordel, George Spitzer, Milton A. Bass (lead attorney), Max Huberman, Dave Ajay, Stanley N. Phillipps, Martin Pretorius, William T. Thompson, Jack Schwartz; Wayne Walker, Eugene Schiff, and Herb Bristol started the NNFA and kept it going during hard times; Milt Okin. Address: New York.

Pages 66-67: Patricia Woodward, an affiliate of the Committee on Food Habits (CFH), studied a government cafeteria to test the appeal and possible widespread use of soybeans. Not surprisingly, it revealed that “people showed little interest in, an even overt suspicion of, such an unfamiliar food.” But Americans were receiving conflicting messages: (1) Reassuring images of the meat-dominated meal, indicative of a strong country, and (2) Government urgings to consume more soybeans, casseroles, and meat substitutes. To help promote good nutrition, government nutritionists designed the Basic Seven food groups. No. 5 was “Meat, poultry, fish, or eggs... or dried beans, peas, nuts, or peanut butter.”

Page 70: In her cookbook, The Useful Soybean, Mildred Lager made it clear (p. 175) that it was the woman who was responsible for her family’s health.

The chapter titled “Meat and sugar,” notes (p. 99-101) that government bulletins recommended “variety meats” and beans, especially soybeans, as protein-rich alternatives. Eating these foods, which were ration-free, highly nutritious, and in plentiful supply, helped America win the war. Yet this advice receive a lukewarm reception, and overall only small quantities were eaten by mainstream, middle-class Americans. In the government cafeteria studies, employees “consumed soybeans only as an unidentified ingredient in a familiar food item, such as soup or bread.” Most programs touting protein substitutes were aimed at women. In The Useful Soybean, Mildred Lager sang the soybean’s praises calling it a “little round bean roll[ing] forth to play a spectacular and gigantic role in our agriculture, commerce, industry, and nutrition (p. 1). Lager saw the American male and his carnivorous desires as the main obstacle to getting soybeans on every table across the country. So she showed ways that the woman could sneak them in to the meal—until the war was over. During World War II, as today, something felt “wrong” if one found a half-eaten soybean casserole on the dinner table (p. 113).

Chapter 5, about Victory Gardens and canning, is very interesting—but does not mention soybeans.

Epilogue: Today, more than 50 years after the end of World War II, Americans consume less red meat, much less whole milk, and fewer eggs, as well as more vegetables, soy products, grains, yogurt, and low-fat milk—“a noticeably healthier shift.” Address: Asst. Prof., Dep. of Nutrition and Food Studies, New York Univ.

• Summary: The article begins: “In the preface of The Soybean Cookbook [1963], Mildred Lager tells us that ‘soybeans are perhaps the world’s oldest food crop, and for centuries, nutritionally they have meant milk, cheese, bread and oil to the people of Asia. Economically, they have meant gold, a cash crop, something to sell for exchange for other necessities. We of the Occidental world have also discovered that soybeans are indeed nuggets of gold in our modern civilization.”

There follows a discussion of tofu, including the different types, and a recipe for “Indian tofu rice cakes.” Ends with 7 references to books about tofu.

• Summary: This book is about food and food policies and programs in the USA during World War II. Page 25: Two of psychologist Kurt Lewin’s Iowa Food Habits (IFGP) studies were attempts to persuade Americans to consume—and like—soybeans and organ meats as alternative sources of protein.

Pages 39-40: In her cookbook The Useful Soybean, Mildred Lager echoes the popular advice that “what we eat does make a difference... the cook holds the health of the family in her hands” (p. 175). And healthy families are one key to winning the war.
superb recipes and stories about Hollywood celebrities and glitterati. In carefully researched and well-written sidebars, it documents the history of health foods in Hollywood and southern California. The introduction to each chapter tells the history of that type of food, and every recipe has a long and interesting historical headnote. The acknowledgments show vividly Chef Akasha’s high and wide circle of Hollywood friends. The introduction—“The Road to Hollywood” tells the story of how Akasha got interested in and researched this subject. History is woven into every page of this book—in the most palatable way. In short, this is a cookbook with a remarkable tale to tell—one to read and study—as well as one to cook from.

Her parents were Gustav Lager (one of 20 children in the family in which he was a child in Sweden; all but one emigrated to the USA) and Hilda Marie Erickson, both born in Sweden. He arrived in the United States in 1891 and worked as an engineer (drove a locomotive) for the Great Northern railroad in an elevator yard. She arrived in 1893. They were married on 28 Oct. 1899 in Superior, Douglas Co., Wisconsin. Most of this information came from online genealogical records; Jodie subscribes to Ancestry.com. The 1891 date comes from both the census and from Gustav’s obituary—or maybe their 50th wedding anniversary. Jodie has not yet been able to find the name of the ship on which Gustav came to the USA. Jodie does not know the cause of either of Mildred’s parents’ death.

Mildred grew up at 979 Bay Street in Superior. At age 12 she went to Sweden with her parents, perhaps to attend her grandparents’ funeral. Mildred went to college in Superior; she graduated with a teaching certificate, then taught at two different schools, one in Michigan and one in Chippewa, Wisconsin. At one point she worked at a shoe store in Superior named The Family Shoe Store.

Jodie’s husband is Mel Ditch. His mother was a Lager, and Mildred Lager was her cousin. Jodie’s mother-in-law’s father, Joel Lager and Gustav “Gus” Lager were brothers. Gustav was Mildred’s father.

Jodie has ship’s passenger records showing when Mildred returned from Hawaii to California.

Jodie also has a 1938 article from the Evening Telegram (Superior, Wisconsin, May 27, p. 4) titled “Superior girl success as manager of ‘health store,’” that tells a lot about Mildred and mentions Dr. Frank McCoy, a noted health specialist in Los Angeles and the author of Fast Way to Health. McCoy had a column in the Los Angeles Times titled “Health and Diet Advice” from about 1928 to 1931. Jodie got a lot of valuable information about Mildred from the library in Superior, Wisconsin.

California voter rolls show that from 1940 to 1946 Mildred lived at 1901 West 2nd St., Burbank, California. In 1948 and 1950, after her marriage, she lived at 122 North Kenmore Ave., in Burbank. She was a Republican. Her parents lived near her in from 1942 to 1946 at 1230 North Ontario St. in Burbank. Mildred’s father died in 1954 and her mother died in 1955; Jodie has obituaries for both.

Concerning Mildred’s father: Jodie has his birth date, the names of his parents and his brothers and sisters, his marriage date, occupation, death date, and cemetery where he was buried. Concerning Mildred’s mother: Jodie has (so far) her birth date, death date, and cemetery.

Jodie also has an obituary of Mildred from Superior, Wisconsin, titled “Mrs. Edwin Jones, ex-Superiorite, dies in California;” it is much different from Mildred’s California obituary.

Jodie has recently tried unsuccessfully to contact both of Mildred stepdaughters.

Concerning arthritis: It seems to run in the Lager family. Mildred, Jodie’s husband’s mother, and Jodie’s husband’s brother all had arthritis. Mildred had no children. Jodie is not aware that either of Mildred’s parents had arthritis. There was also a lot of ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also called Lou Gehrig’s Disease in the USA) in families close to Mildred.

Summary: Mildred’s dad: Gustav Walfred Lager: Born 21 May 1870 in Sweden, (don’t know where in Sweden yet have some of his brothers but not his) to Karl August Anderrson Lager, born 17 April 1839 in Sweden [Karl’s father was Lager Anderson; his mother is unknown at this time], and Josephine Albertina Engholm born 14 Feb 1843 in Sweden. (Josephine parents Lars Peter Engholm & Klara Gustava Landedal married 1842 in Sweden). Karl and Josephine married 1863. My understanding is that they had 20 children–2 sets of twins died at childhood age. Gustav out of 16 is the 5th child born. He came to the USA in 1890.

Her mother: Hilda Marie Erickson born 8 Nov. 1875 in Sweden (have not found parents yet). According to the 1900 census she came to the USA in 1881.

Gustav and Hilda married on 28 Oct 1899 in Superior, Wisconsin. Mildred M. Lager, their only child, was born 19 Dec. 1900 in Superior, Wisconsin. They lived at 979 Bay Street, Superior, WI.

Gustav and Hilda celebrated their 50th anniversary in California (attachment The Evening Telegram 21 Nov. 1949, page 13 column 5). Gustav became a U.S. citizen on 22 Aug. 1906. He was an engineer at the Great Northern Elevator Co. Hilda was a housewife.


Mildred died 25 Jan. 1960 Burbank, Calif. Cemetery: Forest Lawn, Hollywood Hills. I also have the day they where laid to rest and location in the cemetery if you need that. Address: Chehalis, Washington state.


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It contains 333 pages and a portrait of Dr. McCoy, but has no biographical information. It recommends fasting as the quickest and best way to restore health.

1924 April 20—Health Food Products Co. (946 W. 7th St., above Figueroa, Los Angeles), announces in an ad in the Los Angeles Times that Dr. Frank McCoy, in a return engagement, will continue his Wednesday evening lectures at 8 o’clock P.M. Subject: Diet.


1925 May 25—Health Food Products Co. announces in another ad in the Los Angeles Times another free lecture Dr. McCoy, who will “deliver his famous lecture that has started thousands on the road to regained health and happiness.”

1926 Aug. 23—Rudolph Valentino’s estate (on this date) included at least three pieces of property. One of these was unimproved acreage on Beverly Terrace, consisting of approximately 6.8 acres of scenic hill-top property, beautifully situated, overlooking Beverly Hills, located in Los Angeles County, adjacent to the estates of Francis Marion and Fred Niblo. It was sold to Dr. Frank McCoy of Hollywood for $21,000.

1927 July 4—Dr. Frank McCoy’s first column titled “Health and Diet Advice” appears in the Los Angeles Times. The subject: “A new kind of health service.” A small photo showing his head and shoulders is at the top of each column. His column of July 17, titled “Ice cream: It’s what’s for dinner,” argued that ice cream “should at all times be considered a real food and not a delicacy.” Was he caught in a bootlegging scandal the previous week? In his column dated 1928 Aug. 8, in the section “Cheese without pie,” he discusses tofu. Another column dated 1928 Nov. 29 contains a recipe for “Soy bean muffins with peanut butter.” His column of 1930 May 9 contained a recipe for “Muffins made of soy bean flour.” Another column of 1931 April 7 gave a detailed discussion of the many foods made from soybeans in Japan.

In 1932 Dr. Frank McCoy had a radio program in Los Angeles.

Dr. Frank McCoy has a health institute in Los Angeles (see 1938, below).

1938 May 27—An article in the Evening Telegram (Superior, Wisconsin; p. 4) explains that Mildred Lager was once a student of Dr. McCoy and that he had an institute, which she attended. It states “As a result of intensive study of foods and their value to health, she became a demonstrator for Dr. Frank McCoy, noted health specialist whose health talks appear daily in The Evening Telegram [Wisconsin] in the column, ‘How to keep well.’

“Four years ago, Miss Lager left the McCoy institute to go into business for herself, opening a health food store [named The House of Better Living, on 25 Oct. 1933] in Los Angeles, the largest of its kind in the United States. Note: Therefore Lager must have left McCoy’s institute in 1933.

1948 Aug. 1—Dr. Frank McCoy’s business (“McCoy Health System”) is now owned and run by Dr. R.L. McMaster at 1151 West 6th St. in L.A.

1954 Jan. 2—Last mention of “Dr. Frank McCoy” in the L.A. Times. His business is now owned and run by Dr. R.J. Simon at 1233 W. 6th St. in L.A.


• Summary: Jodie is doing genealogical research on Mildred Lager and she has recently sent Shurtleff many valuable documents.

I’ve gotten about 40 non-genealogical documents + his obituary and funeral notice from the Los Angeles Times. I now have a theory as to how he met Mildred Lager (perhaps in person) and influenced her to leave Superior in 1930 and to go to his medical clinic in California.

I am almost certain that Dr. McCoy never lived in Wisconsin.

Have you been able to find out anything about him yet? No hurry!

The earliest document I have for him is Aug. 1920, at which time he was in Los Angeles. He was born in Milan, Ohio in about 1888–plus or minus one year. Hope you can find a birth record. His mother, named Adelaide McCoy, lived in Port Clinton, Ohio, at time of his death. He had brothers named James (of LA at time of death) and Arthur (of Cleveland, Ohio, at time of death). He got his medical training in Chicago, Illinois, but don’t know from what institution he graduated–probably a school of chiropractic.

He first practiced in Chicago, then in the state of Washington.

He was married, but don’t know to whom, when or where. They had several kids: Mrs. Bernice Francisco (at time of death) and two grandchildren at time of death. He was in the Los Angeles area (where he lived the rest of his life) by 1920, maybe as early as 1911-1912–can you look in census records? He died on 31 March 1940 at his home at Uplifters Rancho in Santa Monica Canyon near Los Angeles. Obituary said he died of an old liver injury. A death certificate would allow us to verify that.

I have many photos of him, but all from the newspaper.

He was a very famous man from 1923 to 1940.


Summarizing:

We need a better relative chronology and absolute chronology of Mildred’s life, both before and after she arrived in California; after she started the House of Better Living in Oct. 1933, our knowledge of her life and work is quite good.

Was her middle name Mathilda?

When did Mildred enter college and when did she graduate? From when to when, and at what schools did she teach in Wisconsin and Michigan? Why did she change schools?

When did she start work at The Family Shoe Store in Superior? Why? When did she become a co-owner of the store?

When did Mildred arrive in California? Why did she come to California? Was she influenced primarily by her doctor or by Frank McCoy? If by McCoy, how? By reading his column in her local newspaper or otherwise? Did she first meet McCoy in Michigan or in California.

Where did Mildred first live in California and what did she do to earn a living?

How and when did she meet Frank McCoy? What was the name of his institute? When did Mildred enter that institute, what did she learn, and how long did she stay? How and when did McCoy get his column in the Superior newspaper? When did Mildred start to travel around the United States teaching about and demonstrating foods? How often and for how long did she do this?

When and how did Mildred first meet Gilbert Thayer? Was he in Indiana or southern California at the time? What did he do to help her and her work?

Add to history chapter the 3 key dates related to her two radio programs.

Try to get a marriage certificate for her marriage to Ed Jones. Exactly when in 1946 were they married? Who was present?

The California Marriage Index states that Martha D. Van Gundy married Edwin S. Jones on 7 Aug. 1960 in Riverside, California. He was age 69 (born about 1891) and she was age 57 (born about 1903); Dorothea’s formal first name was Martha.

Try to get a death certificate for Mildred Lager.

An asterisk (*) at the end of the record means that SOYFOODS CENTER does not own that document.
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