



Source 1

GENERAL NOTE ON RATIONING  
AND ITS PLACE IN FOOD CONTROL

Ministry of Food

1. A Minister of Food has been appointed to take charge, as from the outset of the war, of the food supplies of the country as a whole.

The need for food control was shown by the experience gained in the last war. Economy and orderly distribution at fair prices are vital to the Home Front in war.

During 1917 schemes for the distribution of the main commodities were in process of formation. The difficulties were also growing. In the autumn of 1917 successive shortages appeared in several important commodities, apart from sugar which had been in short supply for many months. The visible result of these shortages were the queues outside retail shops. They began in a few places for tea and bacon. The main commodities in short or irregular supply were butter, margarine and potatoes, and finally meat.

Rationing began for sugar in January, 1918, was extended gradually and locally during the next few months to meat, including bacon and fats. It did not become general even for those foods until July, 1918. It developed piecemeal out of schemes administered by local Food Control Committees.

Rationing

3. Individual rationing is the final stage of orderly and organised distribution. The objects are to secure a definite standard of economy in the use of food and to divide supplies fairly among the population and among traders.

*Notes on the need for food control and the reasons for rationing*



# EVERYDAY LIFE

'Why was rationing introduced?'

Source 2

ON HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE

OFFICIAL PAID

# Your Ration Book

Issued to safeguard your food supply

Name.....

Address.....

NATIONAL REGISTRATION NUMBER.....

Date of Issue.....

if found, please return to

Serial Number of Book  
BL 796254

FOOD OFFICE.

R.B.2 [Child].

*Example of a Ration Book*



# EVERYDAY LIFE

## 'Why was rationing introduced?'

Source 2 (pg2&3)

PAGE 2

**NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF RETAILERS.**

**RETAIL BUTCHER. (Page 5)**

Name .....

Address .....

**BACON RETAILER. (Page 6)**

Name .....

Address .....

**SUGAR RETAILER. (Page 7)**

Name .....

Address .....

**BUTTER RETAILER. (Page 8)**

Name .....

Address .....

**MARGARINE RETAILER. (Page 9)**

Name .....

Address .....

**RETAILER OF COOKING FATS, INCLUDING LARD AND DRIPPING. (Page 10)**

Name .....

Address .....

PAGE 3

### How to use this Ration Book

**INSTRUCTIONS TO PARENT OR GUARDIAN**

1. Write the child's name in BLOCK letters in the space provided on the reverse leaf (page 14).
2. To buy any food that is rationed you must register the child with a shop which sells that food.
3. How to register with a shop. Write the name and address of the shopkeepers with whom you intend to register the child in the spaces inside the front cover.
4. Write your name and the child's name and address (in BLOCK letters) and the date on the counterfoil at the top of the pages of coupons numbered 5, 6, 7, 8 and (if margarine and cooking fats are rationed) 9 and 10.
5. Then take this book to the shops from which you mean to buy the child's butcher's meat, bacon and ham, sugar, butter and any other foods which may be rationed. The shopkeeper with whom you are registered for each of these foods will write his name and address on the counterfoil, which he will cut off and keep.
6. Every time you buy rationed food for the child you must hand this ration book in at the shop, and the shopkeeper will cut off the correct coupon. (You cannot use coupons which you yourself have taken off).
7. To save trouble you may tell the shopkeeper to take a whole page of coupons. If you do so you must first write the child's name and address and sign your name in the space provided on this page, and the shopkeeper must write the words "Page deposited", the number of the page and the date, below his name and address inside the cover.
8. BUT do not have a whole page taken out if you expect the child to go away from home to a boarding school or on holiday.
9. COUPONS **NOT** USED IN THE WEEK FOR WHICH THEY ARE INTENDED **CANNOT BE USED LATER.** Cut them off and destroy them.
10. If the child lives in a hotel, boarding home, or similar establishment, do not take this book to a shop yourself—hand it to the manager or whoever is responsible for the feeding

PAGE 4

arrangements; he or she will see the coupons and return the book when the child leaves.

11. If the child goes to a boarding school, hand this book to the head of the school for use there during term.

12. Leaving home on holiday or removal.—The procedure for a child who goes away from home on holidays or moves to another district will be the same as that set out in paragraphs 12 and 14 of the instructions in the General Ration Book (R.B.1).

13. If the child leaves home suddenly, because of an air raid or other emergency, the person accompanying the child should take this ration book with him if possible. In any case they should go to the nearest Food Office for an emergency card on arrival.

14. If the child is leaving Great Britain, the procedure is the same as that set out in paragraph 16 of the instructions in the General Ration Book (R.B.1).

15. Spare coupons. Do nothing with the pages numbered 11, 12 and 13 until you are told what to do.

16. Spare counterfoils. Do nothing with the counterfoils on page 15 (marked S.C.1, S.C.2, S.C.3, and S.C.4) until told what to do.

17. Penalties for misuse. Any false statement, misuse of this book or breach of these instructions renders you liable to a penalty.

**This book may only be used by or on behalf of the person named on the cover**

MEAT COUNTERFOIL CHILD S.B.E. PAGE 5

Child's Name (BLOCK LETTERS) .....

Parent's or Guardian's Signature .....

Address (BLOCK LETTERS) .....

Date .....

Name and Address of Retailer .....

BL 796254

PAGE 5		MEAT		MEAT		MEAT	
Child's Name (BLOCK LETTERS)	c 18 18c	c 12 12c	c 6 6c	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT
Address (BLOCK LETTERS)	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT
Parent's or Guardian's Signature	c 17 17c	c 11 11c	c 5 5c	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT
	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT
	c 26 26c	c 22 22c	c 16 16c	c 10 10c	c 4 4c	MEAT	MEAT
	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT
	c 25 25c	c 21 21c	c 15 15c	c 9 9c	c 3 3c	MEAT	MEAT
	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT
	c 24 24c	c 20 20c	c 14 14c	c 8 8c	c 2 2c	MEAT	MEAT
	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT
	c 23 23c	c 19 19c	c 13 13c	c 7 7c	c 1 1c	MEAT	MEAT
	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT	MEAT

(pg4&5) Example of a Ration Book



# EVERYDAY LIFE

'Why was rationing introduced?'

Source 2 (pg6&7)

BACON AND HAM COUNTERFOIL, CHILD R.R.2. PAGE 6

CHILD'S NAME (BLOCK LETTERS):

PARENT'S OR GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE:

ADDRESS (BLOCK LETTERS):

DATE:

NAME AND ADDRESS OF DETAILER: BL 796254

PAGE 6 CHILD'S NAME (BLOCK LETTERS):

ADDRESS (BLOCK LETTERS):

PARENT'S OR GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE:

C BACON & HAM 18 18 BACON & HAM C	C BACON & HAM 12 12 BACON & HAM C	C BACON & HAM 6 6 BACON & HAM C
C BACON & HAM 17 17 BACON & HAM C	C BACON & HAM 11 11 BACON & HAM C	C BACON & HAM 5 5 BACON & HAM C
C BACON & HAM 26 26 BACON & HAM C	C BACON & HAM 22 22 BACON & HAM C	C BACON & HAM 16 16 BACON & HAM C
C BACON & HAM 25 25 BACON & HAM C	C BACON & HAM 21 21 BACON & HAM C	C BACON & HAM 15 15 BACON & HAM C
C BACON & HAM 24 24 BACON & HAM C	C BACON & HAM 20 20 BACON & HAM C	C BACON & HAM 14 14 BACON & HAM C
C BACON & HAM 23 23 BACON & HAM C	C BACON & HAM 19 19 BACON & HAM C	C BACON & HAM 13 13 BACON & HAM C
C BACON & HAM 9 9 BACON & HAM C	C BACON & HAM 3 3 BACON & HAM C	C BACON & HAM 8 8 BACON & HAM C
C BACON & HAM 4 4 BACON & HAM C	C BACON & HAM 2 2 BACON & HAM C	C BACON & HAM 7 7 BACON & HAM C
C BACON & HAM 1 1 BACON & HAM C	C BACON & HAM 1 1 BACON & HAM C	C BACON & HAM 1 1 BACON & HAM C

## HOW TO CHOOSE YOUR FOOD

CHOOSE ONE FOOD FROM EACH GROUP EVERY DAY

By using the chart below you can be assured of a good, balanced diet.  
Ring the changes within the groups, according to the supplies in the shops and markets and according to your tastes.

<p><b>Group 1</b></p> <p><b>BODY-BUILDING FOODS</b></p> <p>They build the body and prevent the tissues wearing out.</p> <p>MILK · CHEESE · EGGS MEAT · FISH</p> <p>Many vegetable foods such as peas and beans, bread and potatoes, help in body-building, but they are not such good body-builders as these five.</p>	<p><b>Group 2</b></p> <p><b>ENERGY FOODS</b></p> <p>They provide fuel for the human body.</p> <p>BACON AND HAM · BREAD BUTTER OR MARGARINE CHEESE · DRIED FRUIT DRIPPINGS, SUET &amp; LARD · HONEY GATHREAL · POTATWES · RICE SYGOD · SUGAR · TREACLE</p>
<p><b>Group 3</b></p> <p><b>PROTECTIVE FOODS</b></p> <p>They protect us from disease.</p> <p>MILK · BUTTER OR MARGARINE OILS: EGGS · LIVER HERRINGS SALMON (fresh or canned)</p>	<p><b>Group 4</b></p> <p>POTATOES · TOMATOES GREEN VEGETABLES &amp; SALADS FRUIT (fresh or canned) · CARROTS WHOLEMEAL OR BROWN BREAD</p> <p>Protective foods are needed if we are to be properly nourished. They build the teeth and bones and help us to resist infection.</p>

Example of a Ration Book



Source 3

*New File.*

### MINISTRY OF FOOD,

GREAT WESTMINSTER HOUSE, HORSEFERRY ROAD,  
LONDON, S.W.1.

1. The Ministry of Food announce that His Majesty's Government have decided to extend the rationing scheme to sugar and meat.

The public are earnestly enjoined not to make increased demands on retailers before rationing begins. Issues of sugar to retailers up to 8th January will not be more than sufficient for sales of 1 lb. per head per week.

3. The rationing scheme will therefore, on its introduction on the 8th January, include bacon and ham, butter and sugar. It will subsequently be extended to meat. These arrangements are in accordance with the plans previously prepared for controlling the distribution of essential commodities down to the consumer. They are designed to ensure to every member of the community an equal share.

For these foodstuffs, included in the rationing scheme, our country is dependent to a large extent on overseas sources of supply. The amounts of the rations are based on the present import programmes, which are determined in the light of available resources in foreign exchange and shipping space. Requirements of other imported commodities, especially armaments and raw materials for our factories, make large demands on these resources. By economy in the use of foodstuffs, where economy can be practised prudently and without detriment to efficiency, and by so restricting the demand for imported foodstuffs, our resources are made free for the needs of our Services. In this way every consumer will make an important contribution to the national war effort.

28th December, 1939.

*Notice has been given out today*  
*Perse food issue told*  
*002*

*Ministry of Food circular announcing the extension of rationing to include sugar and meat*



Source 4

AHJ/JET

28/10/51

## RATIONING CAMPAIGN

### PROGRAMME FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION

The first consideration is that all action must be through constant liaison with the Ministry of Food.

*Clear definition of Mofl - - - X*

#### MATERIAL POINTS

1. The announcement that ration cards are to be ~~given out~~ <sup>issued</sup> will be made next Wednesday (1st November).

2. Action is, therefore, urgent.

3. Three main points must be put over in the immediate publicity campaign :-

- i) that rationing is a method of winning the war,
- ii) that the issue of cards is purely precautionary because the food position is good and rationing, when it is introduced, is primarily a method of securing equal distribution of the food supplies available. As a corollary it must be put across now that it is necessary to be fully prepared for rationing at short notice.
- iii) The working of a rationing system must be explained.

It is necessary to obtain from the Ministry of Food their answers to the following questions :-

- (a) Why rationing at all?
- (b) Why these precautionary steps of issuing books?
- (c) Is there any real stress or shortage of butter and bacon :
  - i) actual, or
  - ii) anticipated?

*The government's action plan for introducing food rationing*



### Source 5

452  
H. Hope Jones.

M. of I.  
2 NOV 1939  
EMPIRE PRESS NOTES FILE CHARGING  
HP/170  
10th November, 1939.

No. 9.

Rationing in Germany and in Britain.

The announcement that rationing in Great Britain will initially embrace only butter and bacon, of which the weekly allowance will be 4 oz. each per week per head, with a caution that not more than one pound of sugar per head per week should be purchased, permits some comparison between the British and German rationing systems:

1. The German system was introduced before the outbreak of war; the British is not expected to come into operation until mid December. If official foresight is accurate in both cases a less pressing food problem may be expected in Great Britain than in Germany throughout the length of the war.
2. In Germany, the existing butter ration is 112.5 gr. per week for the normal consumer; the total fats ration is 268.75 gr. per week - not including cheese. In Great Britain the butter ration is to be 125 gr. per week; all other fats will be unrationed and therefore the total fat ration will be unlimited.
3. The total meat ration per week for the normal consumer in Germany, including all pig products, is 500 gr. The British ration is 125 gr. of bacon, with all other meat unrationed.
4. Sugar in Germany is rationed at 250 gr. per week, with the possible addition of 40 gr. of the converted jam ration. In Great Britain both commodities are unrationed, although an official request limits weekly purchases of sugar per head to 500 gr.
5. It would hardly be an exaggeration to say that every other obtainable foodstuff is rationed in Germany, while in Great Britain it is officially stated that initially all other foodstuffs may be freely purchased.

The 'Frankfurter Zeitung' reports that all diet foodstuffs which are the products of oats, barley, rice and groats, are subject to rationing. Children's foodstuffs prepared from potatoes are similarly subject to rationing, as are also zwieback (rusks) and French rolls. The latter may be obtained on the Bread Card at the rate of 75 gr. for 100 gr. of bread. A report in the 'Angriff' showed that each German was able to obtain one egg in the six days from the 23rd October to the 29th October.

### *Comparison of the rationing schemes used in Britain and Germany*



Source 5 (pg2)

COPY/

DRAFT QUESTION & ANSWER.

Q. To ask whether the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster is able to make a statement as to the Government's intentions with regard to Food Rationing.

A. Yes, Sir. H.M. Government have decided that it is desirable to take the necessary steps to enable the rationing of individual consumers to be put into operation later. Instructions will accordingly be given to all Food Control Committees in the United Kingdom to issue the appropriate Ration Book for every individual consumer.

There are, however, only two commodities, namely, bacon and butter, which the Government consider it necessary to ration and even in the case of these two commodities it is not proposed to begin rationing before the end of November. The actual date will be announced later. During the interval each consumer will be asked to register with a retailer of his or her choice for bacon and for butter.

Both the commodities which we propose to ration are perishable. Neither commodity was suitable for storage and consequently no Government reserve of either existed on the outbreak of hostilities. Later on, we expect supplies to increase, but, for the present, imports from European sources have been reduced and there has not been sufficient time to fill the gap from more distant sources of supply. Provided that present

*Comparison of the rationing schemes used in Britain and Germany*