

VE Day

VE Day, which is short for 'Victory in Europe' celebrates the end of the Second World War on the 8th May 1945.

It was announced by the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill and many people celebrated this good news with street parties after many long years of war!



Photo: Imperial War Museum

Rationing

During the war, when it was more difficult to import food from other countries, the government was worried that as food and other items would become scarce. This could mean prices would rise and some people might not be able to afford what they needed. There was also a danger that some people might hoard items, leaving none for others. Rationing was introduced in 1940 to make sure that everyone had a fair share of the items.

What was rationed?

Lots of things including food, clothing and even petrol was rationed. Rationing did not end until 9 years after the war ended in July 1954. The first things to be rationed in January 1940 were bacon, butter and sugar. In 1940 meat, fish and tea was rationed and in 1941, eggs and cheese were added to the list too. As sugar was rationed, so were things like biscuits and sweets!

What were you allowed?

Everybody in the country was given a ration book. These books contained coupons that shopkeepers cut out or signed when people bought food and other items. You were only allowed to buy what was in your ration book but different people were allowed different things.

Pregnant women and young children were allowed their first choice of fruit, a daily pint of milk and a double supply of eggs, children aged 5-16 were also allowed their full meat ration and half a pint of milk a day.

Each week, adults were allowed to buy;

Butter: 50g

Bacon and ham: 100g

Margarine: 100g

Sugar: 225g

Meat: To the value of one shilling and sixpence per week - that's about 6p today!

Eggs: 1 fresh egg a week +
1 dried eggs packet a month

Milk: 3 pints

Cheese: 50g

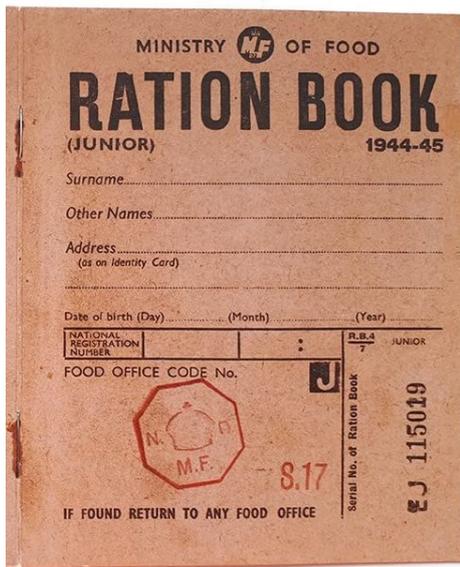
Jam: 450g every two months

Tea: 50g

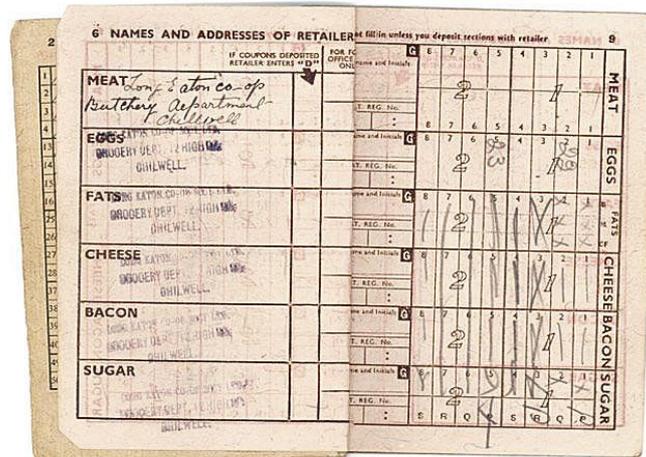
Cooking fat: 100g

Sweets: 350g per month

Would you find rationing difficult? Have a look in your cupboards and fridge & see which of your favourite foods would be rationed!



A child's ration book



A weeks
ration of food
for an adult!





A VE Day Picnic!

Street parties were held all over Britain, including in Ely and the surrounding towns and villages, to celebrate the end of the war. As food was still rationed, people had to be inventive with their recipes.

Many people used carrots grown at home to make carrot cake or made special eggless fruit cakes as sugar, eggs and butter was rationed.

Many also made dishes such as 'Lord Woolton pie' and 'Homity pie', both types of vegetable pie, and made beef dripping sandwiches!

What would you include in your special VE Day picnic? Write or draw the dishes you would make in the basket below!

Remember - you've only got your weekly rations to use!

