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# Home Cooking Becoming Lost Art

**H**OME cooking, once considered the best to be had, seems to be on the wane and it could become a lost art.

A generation or two ago, home economics courses stressing perfection in cooking, homemaking and housekeeping were regarded as essentials in every proper young lady's education.

Probably enrollment in such courses still is high, but there must have been a change in direction along the line, or at least one is in the making.

People don't stay home as much as they used to, they don't seem to invite guests in for dinner as much as once was the custom and one-third of all meals now are taken outside the home, according to the Nutrition Foundation.

A large proportion of our meals away from home are consumed in fast-food restaurants, where we can grab a bite, gobble it down, get up and go. Experts say that within five years, half of our meals will be

away from home.

Increasingly, retired persons tend to eat light, easily prepared meals at home and then go to nearby cafeterias or restaurants for their main meal of the day.

Another hazard to home cooking is the fact that more of our food comes from factories, rather than from farms, recent revivals of backyard gardening notwithstanding.

Fruits and vegetables are grown and harvested to meet demands of transportation, "long shelf life" and factory processing, rather than selected for natural, vine-ripened flavor.

Large-scale preparation of foods may offer convenience and economy, but many dining room experts still favor home cooking.

Estimates indicate that at least half of the foods served in homes are bought either partially or entirely processed and ready to eat. Critics have embroiled the industry

in controversies over such things as methods, packaging, advertising claims, obesity, nutritive content and real or suspected health hazards attributed to ingredients or additives.

Food experts say that the trend toward processed and ready-to-eat foods will increase.

A senate committee has brought out a report implying that as a nation we are not properly nourished, that we don't know how to eat properly and that a government agency ought to be allowed to supervise our diet and improve it.

It is doubtful if that would be popular, but our way of living has changed. Instead of dining out, as usual, the homemaker of the future may promise her family a treat by saying:

"I've managed to get hold of some uncooked meat, fresh vegetables and natural fruit, so we're going to indulge in a home cooked meal tomorrow. Does anyone know where my cookbook is?"