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Notes

**13 pp**

**Provides a general description of the project goals and achievements. Outlines educational materials, choice of nutrition topics, visual materials, personnel and responsibilities. Accompanied by 4 drawings to be used in project communications.**

Print Name of Person Submit Image

SAROJA DOUGLAS

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F I N A L     R E P O R T

Nutrition Communications Project SAPLAN/CARE

Tegucigalpa, Honduras

Submitted to: Michelle Siegal  
Save the Children/International Nutrition  
Communications Service

Submitted by: Carolina Mena de Godínez, Nutrition Consultant *Carolina*  
Ann Jimerson, Communications Consultant *Ann Jimerson*

Date: October 30, 1981

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The Nutrition Communications Project SAPLAN/CARE grew up from the need among rural promoters for more effective educational activities and a better base in knowledge of nutrition. SAPLAN (the National Nutrition Planning Department) and CARE/Honduras joined forces in January 1981, to develop a project which would answer these needs of promoters from a multitude of national institutions.

GOALS: The project was initiated to meet the following goals:

Long-term: • To provide continuous training in nutrition and new techniques in nonformal education, for promoters working for the institutions represented in SAPLAN, among whose responsibilities is included education.

Short-term: The first step of the project, which was completed from January through October of 1981, was designed to meet the following goals:

- To design a training course for promoters on basic nutrition and nonformal education

- To produce an illustrated promoters' manual on participatory techniques and nutrition
- To develop a set of visual materials for community activities

### Nutrition Communications

This project differs from previous nutrition education efforts in Honduras in its emphasis on dialogue with the community. The traditional promotion techniques tend to launch messages toward community members; "participatory techniques" take into account the interests, knowledge, abilities, and responsibility of the adult members of the community. The participants are no longer passive receptors in their education, but take an active role in shaping it.

Participatory education is applied to many topics; this project has attempted to adapt the techniques to the nutrition needs of rural Hondurans.

### Choice of nutrition topics

Knowing that a wide range of factors affect the nutritional state of any community, and that the institutions which make up SAPLAN deal directly or indirectly with many of these factors (health, welfare, agriculture, education, land reform), we selected basic nutrition concepts which we felt the promoters could best use in their community work.

We also considered the most common nutrition problems detected by SAPLAN and CARE, and conducted informal studies in several communities to discover the needs, beliefs and customs which most affect the food habits of rural Hondurans.

### THE EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

The course and materials developed during the first phase of the project, and mentioned above, are described here:

#### The Training Guide

This booklet is the guide for the team which will offer the course to train promoters in nutrition and participatory techniques. It contains:

- a description of the project
- an overview of the course
- goals and objectives

- a recommended schedule
- suggested activities, with materials, time, procedure and comments
- notes and suggestions for the trainers
- acknowledgements and bibliography

The training guide is based on a pilot course in which 17 promoters participated during August 1981. It is a two-week course and includes a community practicum. Many of the participatory activities which comprise the course have been adapted from materials developed by other groups working internationally in non-formal education. Our purpose was not to design new exercises, but to build on the experience of others and to apply the techniques to the field of nutrition and the reality of Honduras.

The pilot course included two extra days in which the promoters evaluated the course and the promoters' manual and offered recommendations; these played an important part in the final design of the training guide for the prototype course.

### The Promoters' Manual

The manual is intended to be used during the course and to remain with each promoter who has received the course, as a future reference. It consists of four booklets:

1. "Participatory Techniques in the Community"
2. "Nutrition in the Community"
3. "Child Feeding"
4. "Visual Materials--Their Use in the Communities"

The promoters' manual is related closely with the reality of Honduran rural life. Its question-and-answer format deals with concerns frequently raised by promoters and Honduran "campesinos." Information which we obtained in discussions with promoters and with rural mothers helped to shape the content and the format of the manual.

Each booklet of the manual provides technical background information on nutrition or communications as well as suggested community activities related to the nutrition content.

The manual was reviewed with the participants in the pilot course, with the five promoters who did pretesting for the project, and by professionals in nutrition and nonformal education. A Honduran artist, who participated in some of the activities and visited rural areas, illustrated the booklets.

### The Visual Materials

The project designed a set of visual materials for use at the village level. After participating in the training course, each promoter will receive:

- 100 color food cards (2 copies of each of 50 common foods)
- 10 large black and white drawings depicting nutrition concepts
- 2 sheets of Flexiflans, which will be cut out, colored and assembled by the promoters. These contain 48 figures (25 humans; 6 animals; 17 objects)

In designing these materials, we first collected visuals produced worldwide for health and nutrition promotion. Those most appropriate to the nutrition content and to the participatory methods which we had chosen, were adapted for Honduran communities. New materials were created to meet needs raised during the community investigations.

All of the visual materials were pretested in the rural areas to measure comprehension and acceptance. We developed test instruments based on those suggested in Communications Pretesting (Bertrand, Jane T. Communication Laboratory; Community and Family Study Center, University of Chicago, 1978.), and trained five promoters (whom we called "Local Leaders") in pretesting techniques.

Based on these pretests, we made changes in certain materials and tested them again until we felt assured of their acceptability. We found that it was impossible to generalize on the findings of other communications studies in designing the materials; each visual needed to be pretested individually.

All the visual materials produced by the project are "open"; that is, they can be used in a multitude of ways. Although the visuals could illustrate formal talks given by a promoter, their main contribution comes from their application through participation. Flexiflans are handed to a community group and they are asked to use them

in telling a story about the problems they face in feeding their children; another group discusses their resources and needs as they sort the food cards.

This nontraditional use of visual materials requires basic changes in the approaches that promoters, most of whom have been trained as school teachers, must take in the community. After experiencing the informal atmosphere of the training course, promoters are more inclined to use these materials as intended; we have suggested that the visual materials be given only to those promoters who have participated in the course.

## PERSONNEL AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PHASE I

### Nutrition Consultant and Communications Consultant

These two fulltime consultants, chosen for their experience in community work, participatory training, and familiarity with the needs of Honduran promoters, planned and coordinated all aspects of the project. Among their tasks were the following:

- coordinating between SAPLAN and CARE
- hiring of the artist
- interviewing administrators in the various ministries
- collecting visual materials and manuals produced in other countries
- training the five Local Leaders in nutrition, use of participatory methods, informal community investigation, and pretesting of visual materials
- coordinating the community investigations
- determining visual materials to be drawn
- designing the pretest instruments
- analyzing the results of the pretests and deciding on final form of the visual materials
- outlining and writing the promoters' manual
- deciding on illustrations and layout for the manual
- testing, with the Local Leaders, activities to be used in the pilot course
- planning and executing a pilot course
- evaluating, with an extra consultant, the course

- writing a training guide for a prototype course
- informing and promoting the project nationally and internationally

### Extra Consultants

During July, two representatives of INCS visited the project to straighten out administrative details; their observations and recommendations on the early draft of the promoters' manual and the project to date were invaluable.

A third consultant was assigned to the project to participate in a part of the pilot course in September and to offer suggestions on the second draft of the promoters' manual. The timing of this consultancy was crucial, and helped us to put into perspective the work ahead of us, as well as to see which components were missing. During this visit, it was decided that a thorough training guide should be written, rather than the report on the pilot course which we had intended to leave behind. This consultant's comments on the manual will be considered in its final revision. They were quite helpful.

### The Artist

A local artist with experience in political cartooning, was hired with the following responsibilities:

- participate in certain educational activities
- visit rural areas to collect ideas for sketches
- produce, to the consultants' specifications, drafts of the visual materials to be pretested
- redraw unacceptable visuals, for further field testing
- illustrate the draft of the promoters' manual
- produce camera-ready copies of the visual materials

### The Local Leaders

Early in the project, five promoters were selected from five different institutions, to be freed from their work responsibilities at certain points in the project in order to act as a "project-community" and a "project-institution" link. From June through September, they met in Tegucigalpa a total of 15 days, and carried out other tasks in their communities. Their role included:

- receiving training in basic nutrition
- trying out activities to be used in pilot course



- conducting informal "surveys" among rural adults in a technique called "focal group"
- receiving training in pretesting, and conducting various pretests of the visual materials
- contributing ideas and feedback on the promoters' manual

One of the Local Leaders participated in the pilot course so that the group benefitted from her experience with the project. Her observations on the course were useful as we prepared the training guide.

#### Counterparts at SAPLAN and CARE

The project originated from the CARE Office. Contact was made with SAPLAN, and they expressed enthusiasm and agreed to share sponsorship with CARE. The two consultants were to work side by side with a Program Manager at the CARE office and with two counterparts from SAPLAN--a nutritionist and the representative from the Ministry of Education.

The coordination with these two agencies proved to be the weakest aspect of the project. SAPLAN, while nominally (and financially) supporting our work, actually assigned it a low priority, reflected by the time devoted to it. The two counterparts were given very little time for the project.

CARE's intention had been to turn the project over to SAPLAN once the course and materials were designed and tested, SAPLAN seemingly a logical choice for housing a permanent training unit. Midway through phase I, our SAPLAN counterpart intimated that her agency had never intended to implement training, since their mandate is planning and not implementation. The consultants, with their CARE counterpart, immediately began exploring other possible training groups, but by the end of this project, no decisions had been made, due to the following factors:

- 1--SAPLAN reconsidered the possibility of sponsoring the training unit
- 2--according to the agreement signed in July, all products of the project belong to SAPLAN
- 3--the proximity of national elections make all negotiations with governmental ministries difficult
- 4--SAPLAN, having lost its AID backing, is in the process of restructuring and looking for funding

CARE/Honduras has been extremely supportive of the consultants and is concerned about the future of the project, despite

the fact that the original Project Manager was transferred out of Honduras in June. Her replacement, however, was not in country during September and October, the last two months of Phase I, due to vacations and health problems. This has further slowed progress on the planning of the second phase.

Most of the project, then, has been handled by the two consultants, and not as a team effort with SAPLAN and CARE, as originally intended.

#### PROJECT TIMEFRAME

The first phase of the project (design and testing of course, manual and visual materials) was to have been completed from January to August of 1981. Delays in coordination with SAPLAN at the beginning of the project threw us off by six weeks, and INCS agreed to extend our contract through September 30.

The additional responsibility of writing the training manual, which had not been anticipated as such a large task, added more time to the project. SAPLAN agreed to pay the two consultants for the first half of October, and the artist for the entire month; CARE continued to provide administrative support, including a fulltime secretary.

With this extra month, we had planned to complete all the products in final form. SAPLAN, however, has not to date submitted their comments on the manual. INCS, CARE and SAPLAN have agreed to accept final drafts of the promoters' manual and the training guide at this point, and to send the two consultants back and to rehire the artist for a three-week period after SAPLAN and CARE have had time to review and comment on the drafts. At that time, final press-ready copies of the four booklets of the promoters' manual and the training guide will be prepared, taking into consideration the recommendations of INCS, SAPLAN and CARE.

We strongly recommend that this second consultancy take place in early December 1981, in order not to lose the momentum of the project and to avoid possible conflicts in the schedules of the three people involved.

#### COMMENTS

Despite some lagging at the upper levels, we have discovered wholehearted enthusiasm among the promoters in whose interest this project was undertaken. The Local Leaders

became convinced that participatory techniques offer many advantages over their more formal approaches to promotion. At least one Local Leader has begun using the Focal Group investigations in the communities where she works and plans to offer a course on nutrition communications for the promoters whom she supervises.

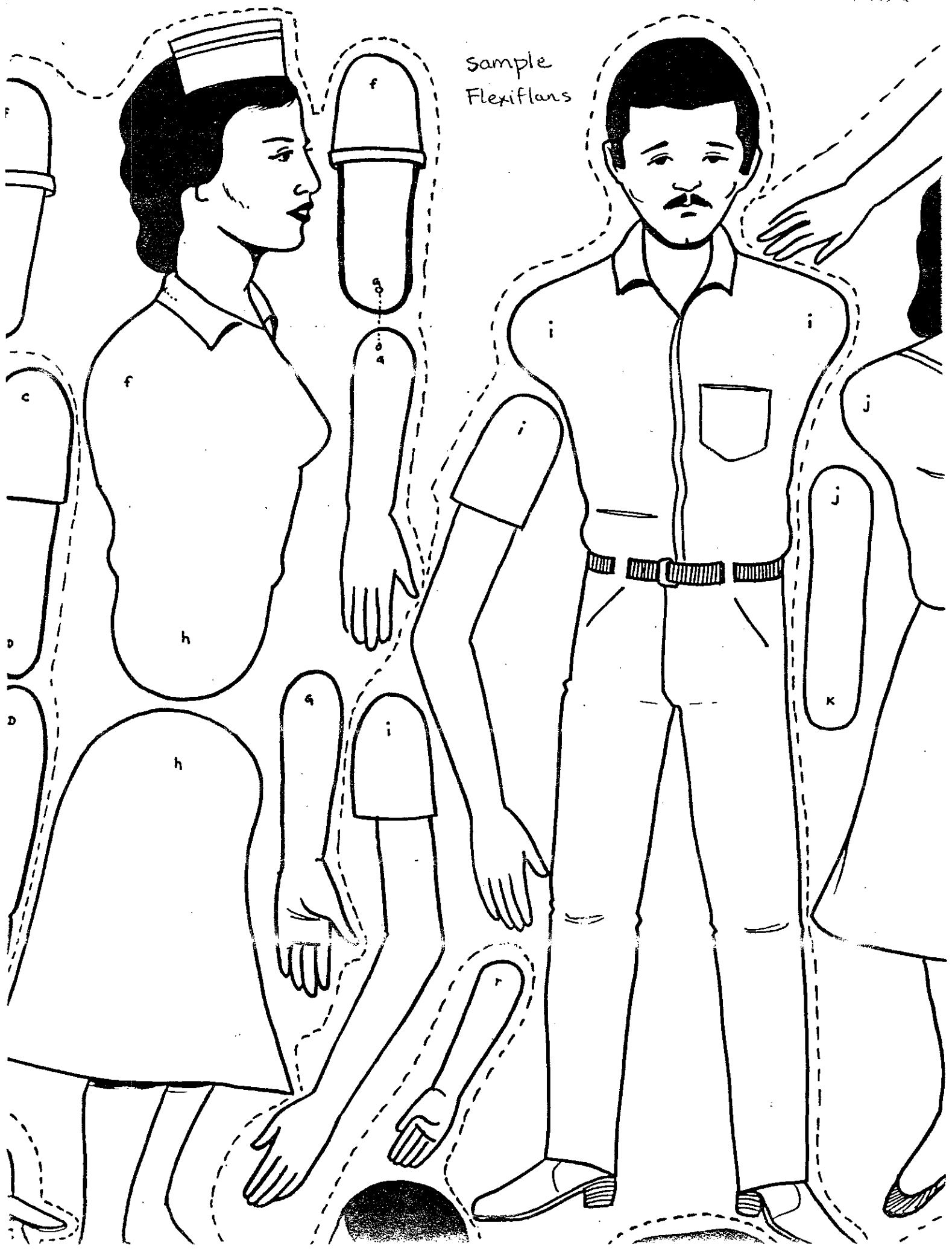
The participants in the pilot course were anxious to improve their knowledge of nutrition; we ended up converting even the men in the course to strong proponents of breastfeeding over bottle! The practicum conducted in communities sold the group on the advantages of community participation in nonformal education. Their response to the promoters' manual was positive, and we had to watch carefully that the sample visual materials did not disappear! Many participants took the time to trace the food cards and Flexiflans, so that they could work with the materials immediately, rather than wait until the visuals are published.

Thanks to the link provided by the Local Leaders, and the feedback from the pilot course participants, we are convinced that the promoters' manual and the visual materials are truly Honduran products, the first of their kind to be designed specifically for this country. Our hope is that their enthusiastic reception among promoters and the people with whom they work, will spread to the upper levels of the ministries, to guarantee the publishing of the materials and the continued training of promoters through the prototype course.

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Flexiflans



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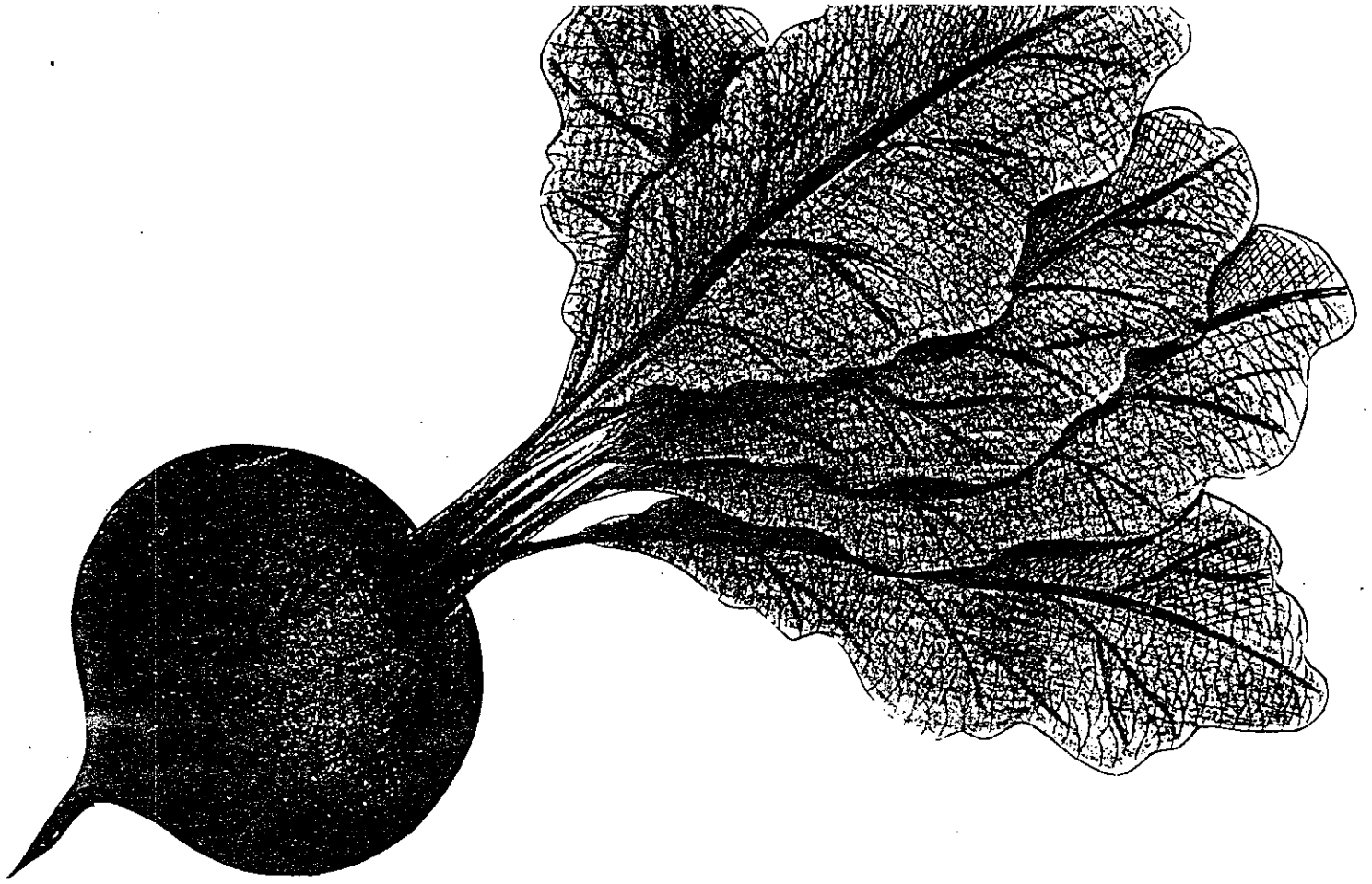
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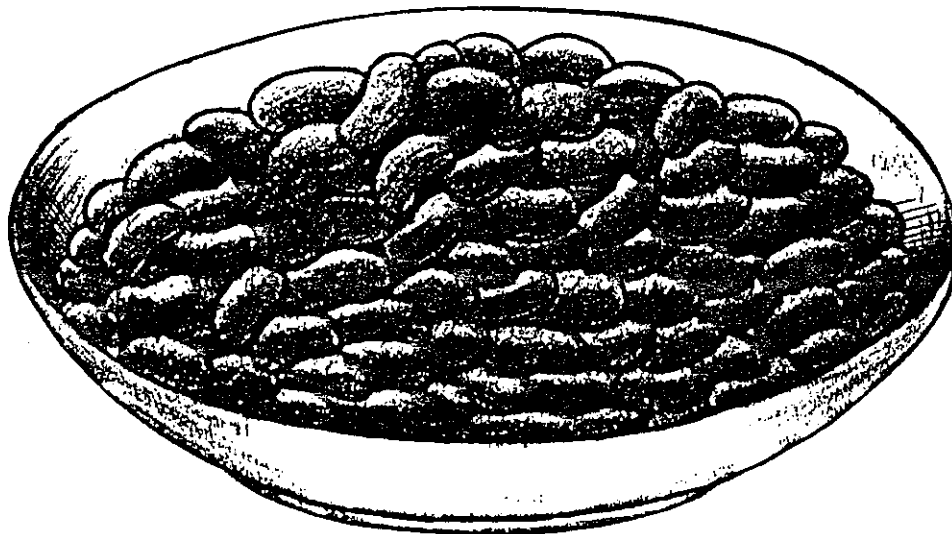
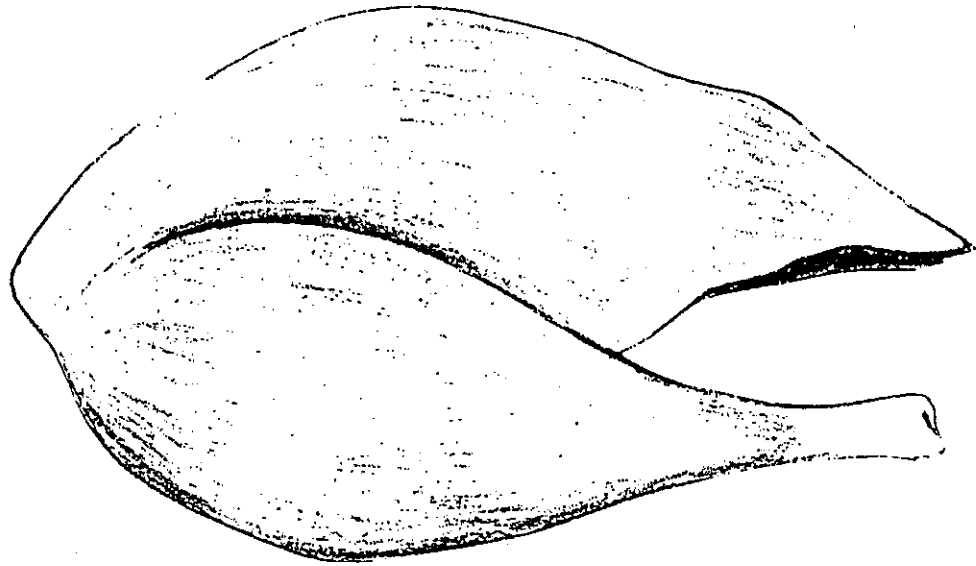




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