

UNITED STATES  
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20545

407899

R

June 27, 1973

Members of the Radiological Assessment Review Group

ENIWETOK METHOD OF COOKING

Dr. Jack A. Tobin has provided additional information on a method of cooking utilized by the Eniwetok Atoll People. It is quoted in the following extract from a recent letter.

"You will recall that I raised the question of possible contamination of the pits which are used to preserve and store breadfruit. In connection with this possible source of contamination there is a method of cooking food that might also be pertinent.

"The pit or earth oven method of cooking food is used throughout the Marshalls (and the rest of Micronesia and other parts of Oceania as well). You are perhaps aware of this, in connection with the Hawaiian luaus. In the Marshalls the hole is shallower than that used in Hawaii. The depth (and circumference) varies with the amount or size of food to be cooked. The earth oven or um (phonetically: "oom") is usually about two feet deep. If a large pig, or turtle, or porpoise, or fish is to be cooked the depth and overall measurement of the hole will correspond to the size of the animal and whatever else is to be cooked with it. Two feet is usually the maximum depth.

"The food will remain in the ground, in the oven, covered with a layer of leaves, mats and sometimes wet canvas, until the food has been cooked by the resultant steam and heat from the rocks which have been heated previously. The method is, of course, familiar to anyone who has participated in a New England Clambake. Several hours may be required to cook the food properly.

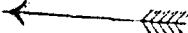
"The um is located in or next to the cook house, which is adjacent to the living (sleeping house). The um is used over and over again as are the rocks used in the cooking

process. As you perhaps know the normal location of the homes is on the lagoon side of the island usually fairly close to the beach.

"The Enewetak People will undoubtedly continue to use this method of cooking when they return to Enewetak Atoll."



N. F. Barr, Assistant Director  
for Measurement and Evaluation  
Division of Biomedical and  
Environmental Research

cc: W. W. Gay, DMA  
R. Ray, Nevada Operations Office  
R. Maxwell, DBER ←   
W. Forster, DBER  
C. Osterberg, DBER

DOE ARCHIVES

Members of the Radiological Assessment Review Group - memo dtd 6/27/73

Tommy F. McCraw, Division of Operational Safety, USAEC

Bernard Shleien, Public Health Service, Department of Health,  
Education and Welfare

Charles L. Weaver, Office of Radiation Programs, Environmental  
Protection Agency

Robert B. Leachman, Defense Nuclear Agency, Department of Defense

Philip F. Gustafson, Argonne National Laboratory

Chester R. Richmond, Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory

Allyn H. Seymour, University of Washington

LOS ALAMOS