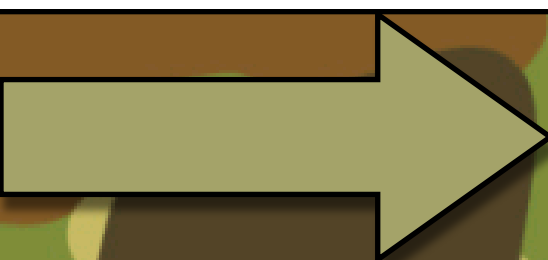


What was it like for children in the Second World War?

Learning Objective:

To find out what rationing was, why it was necessary and how it impacted on people's lives.



During World War I, food had been in very short supply because the ships which brought the food over from other countries were often attacked, destroying the food supplies.

During the 1930s, Britain realised that war would almost certainly break out again. So in 1937, the government set up the Ministry of Food to make sure that everyone would have enough to eat if another war broke out.



What kinds of foods can't be grown in Britain that have to be shipped from abroad?

Rationing was introduced in 1940. The idea behind rationing was to make sure that everyone in the country would have enough to eat. If rationing hadn't taken place, some of the poorer people in Britain would have gone hungry. This was because food prices would have gone up as food supplies became scarce and they wouldn't have been able to afford the food they needed.



In September 1939, the government made every household in the country list who was living in the house. They then used this information to issue everyone with a ration book. The ration books contained coupons that were removed or signed by the shopkeepers when you purchased an item. As well as the coupons, people were allowed 20 points worth of goods a month.

This picture shows a shopkeeper stamping a ration book.

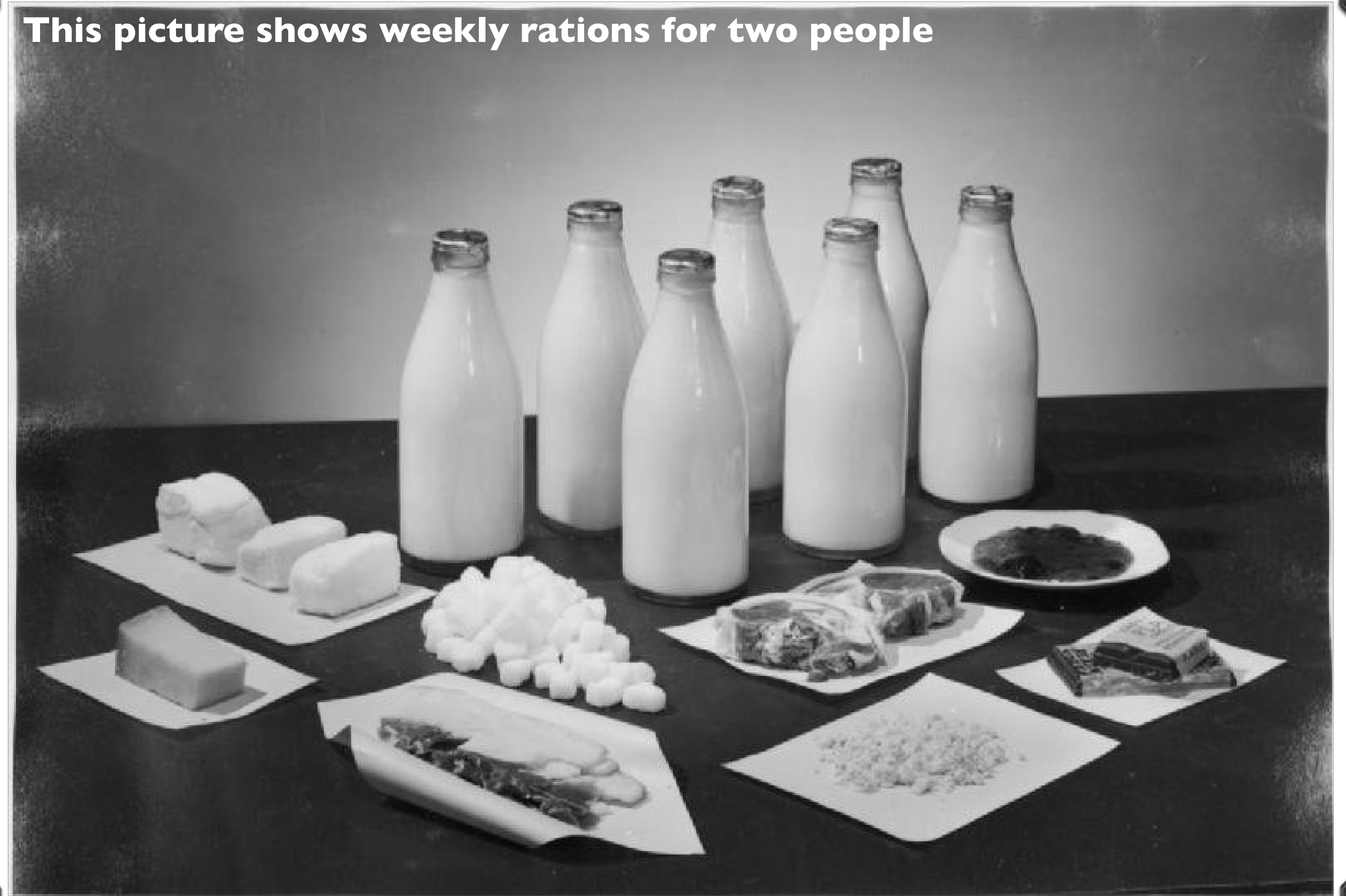


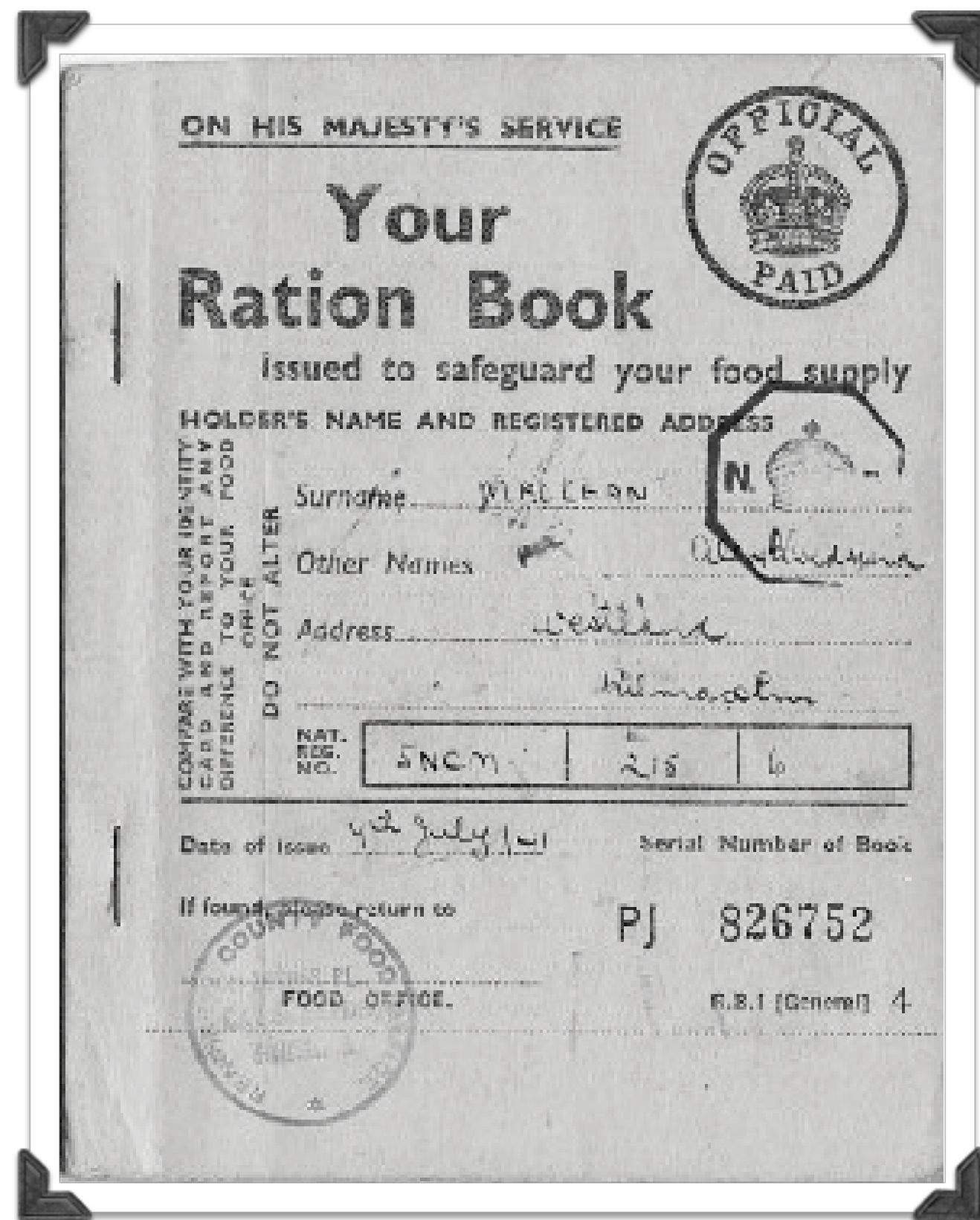
- 104g margarine
- 3 pints of milk
- 57g butter
- 57g cooking fat
- 226g sugar
- 1 fresh egg
- 57g tea
- 28g cheese
- 1 shilling 2 pence worth of meat
- 350g sweets (a month)
- 450g jam (a month)
- 1 pack of dried eggs (a month)



How much food were people allowed each week?

This picture shows weekly rations for two people





Other foods, like tinned fruit, biscuits and cereal were rationed on a points basis. You could choose what you wanted to buy from the 20 points you were allowed each month.



Can you think of ways
people would have
been able get other
foods to add to their
diets?

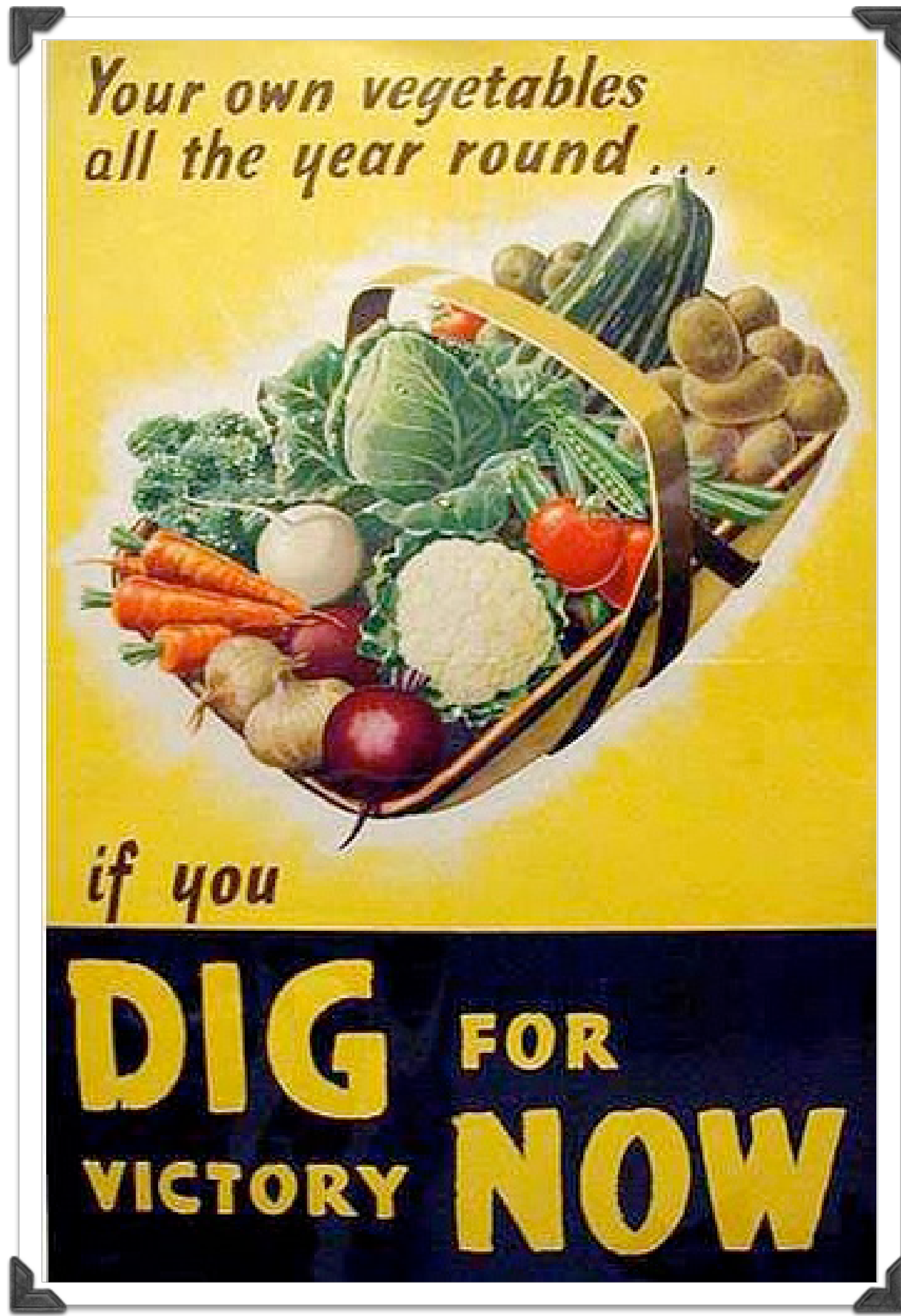
Think, pair, share your ideas.



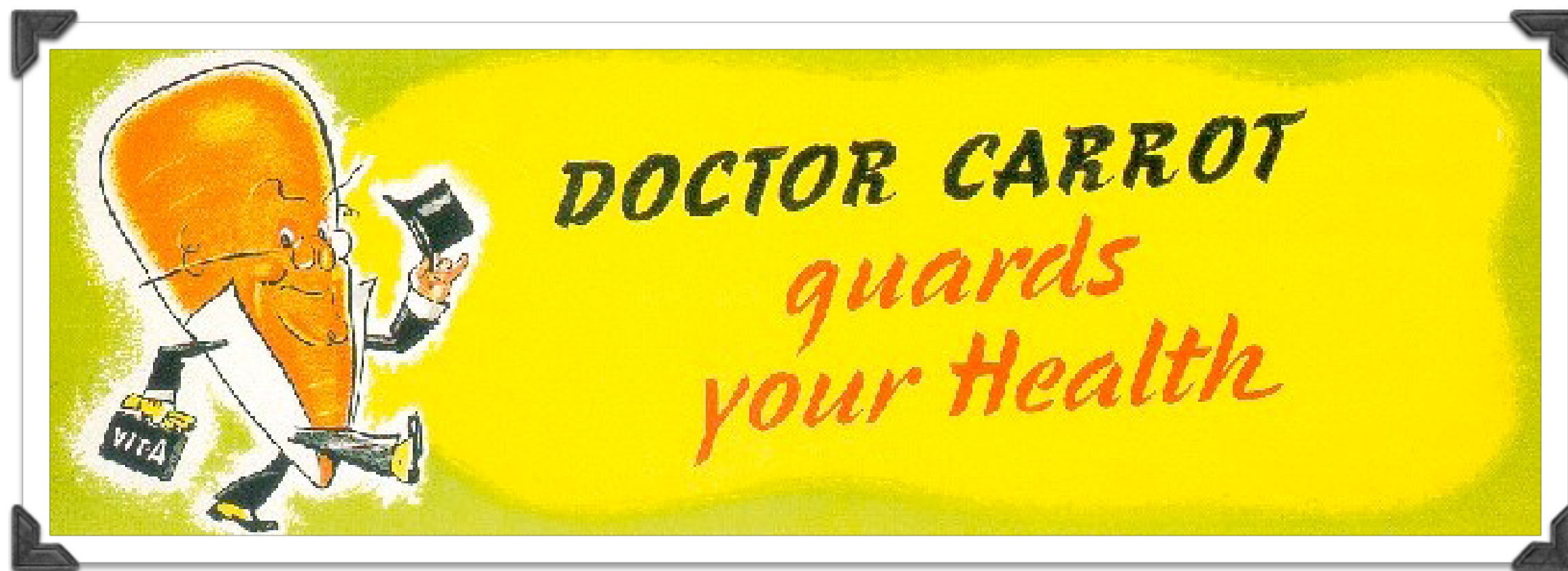
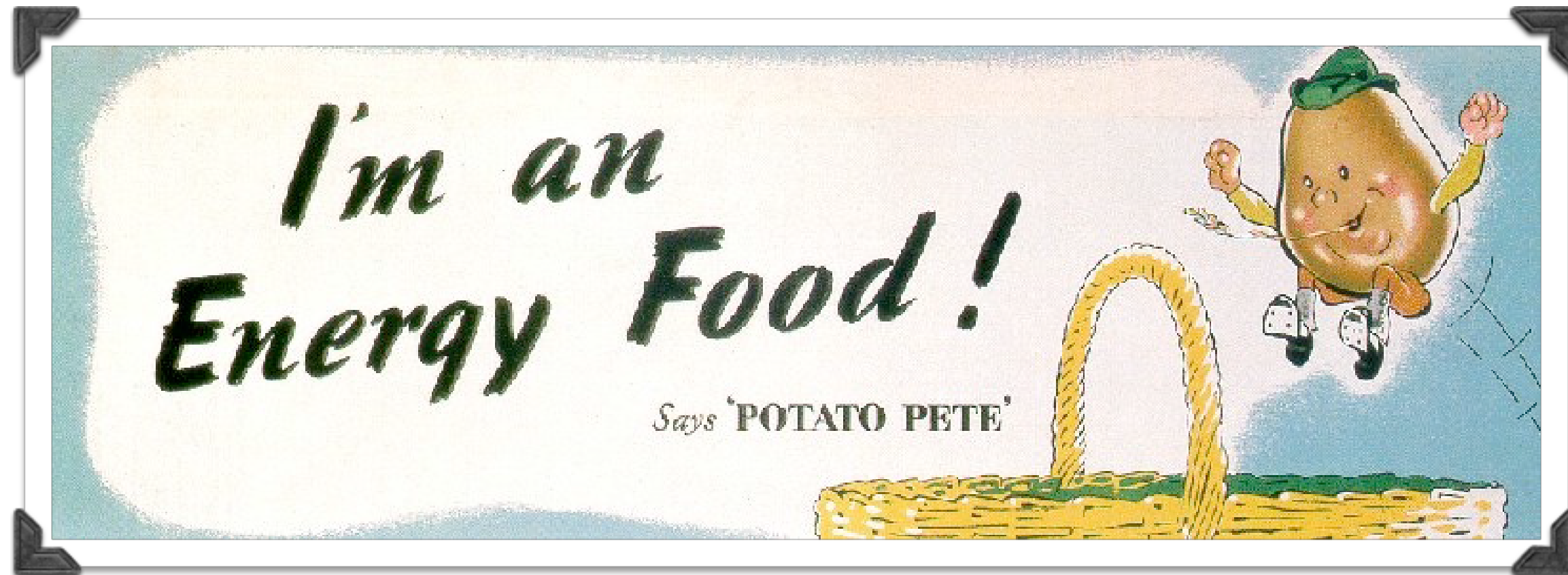
The government encouraged people to grow their own fruit and vegetables so that they would have more food to eat. There were very few flower gardens in Britain during the war as most people who had a garden turned it into a vegetable patch. People without gardens were encouraged to use allotments.

As well as growing vegetables at home, some people started to keep animals like chickens, pigs, goats and rabbits in their gardens. This meant they would have a supply of eggs, milk and meat outside of their regular rationing.





As well as being cheap to produce, home grown vegetables were good for your health and the government wanted a healthy nation to keep Britain strong.

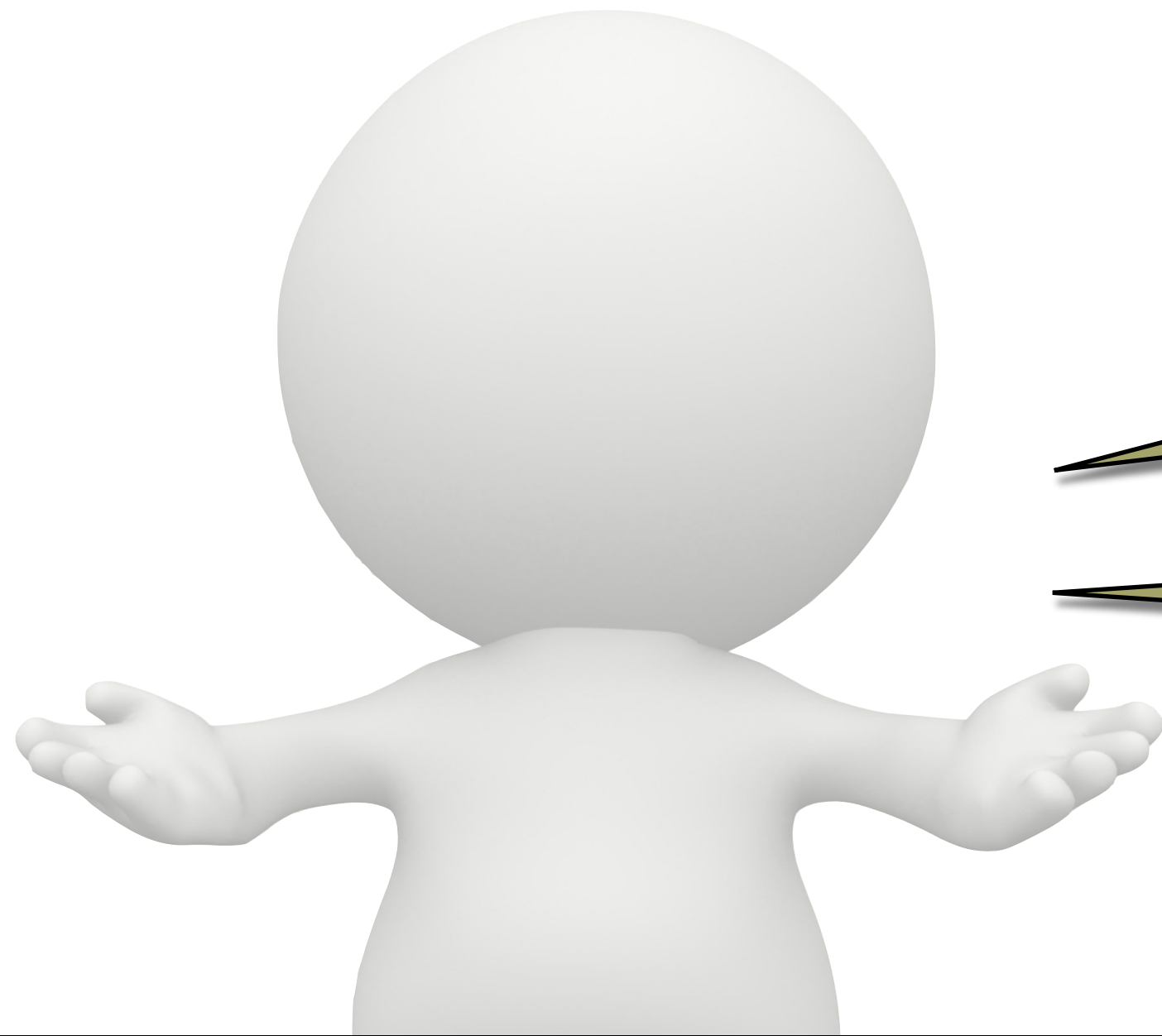


How do you think Potato Pete and Doctor Carrot encouraged people to grow their own vegetables?



How long did rationing continue for?

Rationing started in 1940 and didn't end until 1954. This meant that rationing continued for ten years after the war finished. Some foods became more available and the amounts of rations changed although some more foods were added to the rationing list, such as bread.



Why do you think that rationing had to continue for so long after the war?

What kind of impact do you think rationing had on people's lives?