

TEACHER'S GUIDE
Primary Source Document Collection
MISSION US: "Prisoner in My Homeland"

Mess Hall Workers Meeting on Sugar Shortages

Sugar was an important commodity at Manzanar: it was used to sweeten beverages, as an ingredient in baking, and as a way to preserve other foods. The war made sugar very difficult to obtain, however, leading to widespread shortages and rationing. In the following meeting minutes of the Mess Hall Workers Union at Manzanar, incarcerated discuss the sugar rations as yet another example of their unfair treatment within the camp.

The meeting of the Manzanar Mess Hall Workers Association was called by Mr. Amano on Friday evening, November 5, 1942 at Mess Hall #22 from 7:30 p. m. . . .

The question of rationing and distribution of the food was discussed. The question in reference to the distribution of meat was: How much meat is allotted to each person per week? This question will be brought up with Mr. Winchester by the negotiation committee. Sugar rationing was next brought up. At a Block Leaders meeting recently, Mr. Winchester has stated that the people within the Center should be given more sugar than those outside for the reason that we are not supplied with pastry of any kind, or any other form of sweets. At present only seven ounces of sugar is being given to each person in the Center, while the rate of ration outside is eight ounces per person per week. Sugar used in the baking of the pastries must be taken out of the seven ounces allotted to each individual. Therefore, the members felt that we should receive a better rate of ration than the seven ounces a person per week in order that the people may have baked foods more frequently than at present. . .

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned by Mr. Amano at 9:35 p. m.

Source: Minutes for Meetings of the Mess Hall Workers' Union, Ueno Papers, JARP, UCLA
Reprinted in *Manzanar Martyr : An Interview with Harry Y. Ueno*, by Harry Y Ueno; Sue Kunitomi Embrey; Arthur A Hansen; Betty Kulberg Mitson. Fullerton, Calif.: Oral History Program, California State University, ©1986.