

time at all, Popeye whipped the daylight out of Bluto, won Olive's heart (for the moment), and everyone lived happily ever after--- until the start of a new story in next week's comic strip.

If spinach was the sponsor of the Popeye radio show, it would be the perfect fit. During the 1930's, there were makers of canned fruit and vegetables (including spinach), but none of them came forward. For a radio program to survive on the air, it was very important to have a sponsor. *Wheatena* wasn't spinach, but it was the sponsor of the Popeye radio program (if you're not familiar with *Wheatena*, it was a hot wheat cereal). As you already know, the sponsor called the shots on the radio program they sponsored, so the trick here was to involve *Wheatena* into the program. There was only one answer--- *Wheatena* replaced spinach as Popeye's strengthening food.

At the beginning and end of each broadcast, there were the usual *Wheatena* commercials narrated by announcer Kelvin Beech. While Beech made *Wheatena* sound so good, the small fry in the listening audience were wondering how it would be involved in the story.

In the enclosed sound clip, Olive, Wimpy, and Matey planned a picnic. ■ They boarded a streetcar that was going to the city limits. This streetcar had a reputation of going fast. On this trip, it was a little **TOO** fast. With some sharp curves coming up, the streetcar operator tried to slow it down, but the brakes jammed. After the streetcar hit a truck in the tracks, the driver was thrown out. The conductor of the streetcar showed his bravery by voluntarily jumping off. It was Olive, Wimpy, and Matey on the speeding streetcar by themselves. In a nutshell, it didn't look very good for the trio.

With the streetcar gathering more speed, Popeye came to the rescue. He stood in the middle of the tracks, bracing himself to stop the streetcar. This may not necessarily be the smartest thing Popeye or anyone else could do. The speeding streetcar continued its deadly pace. It appeared Popeye was headed to the ship in the sky. Miraculously, Popeye wasn't hit by the streetcar, but he was hanging on to the opposite end for dear life.

The streetcar was now approaching a busy area of the city. Something had to be done--- and fast. Matey started cooking some *Wheatena*. Popeye said that in order to stop a fast moving streetcar, not to mention heavy, he needed 3 bowls full of *Wheatena*. Popeye devoured the *Wheatena*. In split second speed, he had energy and strength. Popeye slowed down the streetcar. It took a few seconds, but Popeye managed to completely derail the streetcar before it approached the busy intersection. It was a scary moment, but the good news was nobody was hurt--- except Popeye's feet that felt the heat from the friction of slowing the streetcar down.

Although *Wheatena* gave Popeye super human strength on the program, the makers of the cereal doesn't promise the same result to everyone who eats it. Eating *Wheatena* at breakfast time supplied the energy needed to get the day off in the right direction.

Wheatena worked out very well in Popeye's stories on the radio. Good thing the sponsor wasn't something that was **NOT** to be eaten. Working that into the story might be very interesting.