All You Can

Community Cannery Toolkit v1.0

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Photographs: Robin Newman except those on pages 39, 44, 57 by Nathan Payne and the photo on page 64 by Janna Lüttmann.
Layout: Matt Adams.

The West End Food Co-op would like to thank the Co-operative Development Foundation Robert Owen-Henri Lasserre Fund and the Canadian Worker Co-operative Federation for their support for the Parkdale Processing Project.

Gratitude and thanks also go to Joe Abbey-Colborne and Erinn Oxford and the Parkdale Neighbourhood Church who provided space and the use of their kitchen. Thank you to Heather Kilner, James Partanen and Katie Sandwell for support, facilitation and canning wisdom.

Thank you to the Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre for their support and use of their space.

Thanks to Laura Reinsborough from Not Far From the Tree for her support.

Finally a big warm thank you to all the co-op, Community Supported Orchard, cannery volunteers and farmers who made the Parkdale Processing Project possible.

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INTRODUCTION

A Short History of Preserving in North America

The preservation of food is probably as old as human culture. Methods like drying and smoking are particularly ancient and still feature importantly in the diets and cultural practices of indigenous groups around the world. In permanent settlements like those that often characterize grain-based agricultural systems, methods of storage and preservation including burying and fermenting foods gained popularity. In pastoral cultures cow, goat, sheep, yak, and mare's milk were often fermented into yogurts, cheeses, and sometimes even spirits both to make them more palatable to people who often preferred the strong flavours of ferments to raw milk, and to secure a supply through the winter months when animals produced little or no milk.

Many of these methods of preservation continue to be practiced by people around the world and people are increasingly aware of the health benefits of naturally preserved food, particularly ferments.

Vegetable ferments like miso, kimchi, saurkraut and others also have an ancient history, together with fermentation to produce alcohol including beer and ale that often made up an important component of people's diets. All of these preserving method added flavour to foods as well as making it possible to store them for longer periods of time, which helped many of them to persist in national cuisines after the introduction of other methods of preserving.

Many of these methods of preservation continue to be practiced by people around the world and people are increasingly aware of the health benefits of naturally preserved food, particularly ferments. However, the bulk of preserved food consumed in North America is either frozen or preserved through a process of heat-sterilizing and vacuum packing, most commonly in aluminum cans or glass jars and primarily in large industrial facilities.

The technique of preserving food by pasteurizing it at high heat and sealing it to prevent microbial action was originally developed by Nicolas Appert around 1810 in France (Bruegel, 2002, 114). While the invention was met with some enthusiasm for its ability to provide farmers with better markets at peak production, add variety to people's diets, and transport perishable food for sea journeys and military excursions, it took more than a century for "appertized" foods to be widely consumed, in spite of active promotion from government and industry (ibid.).

Early canning faced a number of issues including an imperfect understanding of microbiology which led either to gross over-processing, resulting in unpleasant textures and flavours, or to under-processing, with the potential to cause serious illness. “Food poisoning” was fairly common, including poisoning by the usually

deadly botulism toxin, which especially plagued popular canned meat products.

"Ptomaine," a term used to refer to food poisoning attributed to eating spoiled canned food, was common but probably associated as much with improper storage of opened canned foods before refrigeration as with problems in processing itself. Consumers at the time, however, drew no such distinction and may have tended to blame canned foods for more general illnesses (Petrick, 2010).

Chemical contamination from lead based sealants and unsafe preservatives was also a major issue. While the main complaints around chemical contaminants focussed on flavour – metallic flavours being particularly common and unpleasant in early canned products – the health effects of sealants were also potentially severe. Early consumers had good reason to be suspicious of canned food, and consuming either home-preserved or industrially processed foods could be a genuine health risk.

However, resistance to canned food appears to have gone beyond what can be easily explained by these factors (Bruegel, 2002) - after

all, “fresh” foods at the time were not subject to rigorous screening or regulation and poisoning from other sources, like unsanitary milk or spoiled meat was also very common (See DuPuis, E.M, 2002 for discussion of milk). The social and emotional values attached to canned food, as well as people's habits and preferences around cooking and eating played an important role in first slowing and later accelerating the adoption of canned food as part of the everyday diet.

In cultures just beginning to industrialize, the space for canned food was limited and existing systems supplied a diet that many people already considered adequate (Levenstein, 1988). The deliberate use of canned food in government institutions, including the military and the public school system, played an important part in transforming tastes and habits to create space in diets for canned food (Bruegel, 2002; Levenstein, 1988).

Improvements in technology helped to reduce contamination as well as metallic and other unpleasant flavours associated with canned foods while also driving down the overall cost of canned food by, for example, replacing cans made by metal smiths with machine-manufactured and -sealed vessels. However, consumers were always required to meet industry half way and industrially canned food historically represented a compromise between quality and

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convenience, made acceptable by changing habits of both labour and eating (Levenstein, 1988).

In North America the use of canned food developed in two directions, starting in around the 1880s. On the one hand, lower-income people, encouraged by members of the emerging discipline of "home economics", learned to preserve food in their own homes. This was taught in various environments including within the public school system and was encouraged as an important strategy for diversifying diets (Levenstein, 1988). Middle-class and upper-middle-class consumers, on the other hand, were far more likely to consume industrially produced canned goods, the convenience and novelty of which made them status symbols (ibid.).

Upper-middle-class diets, and, as processed foods became cheaper, increasingly lower-class diets as well, incorporated more canned food and reduced the amount of labour expended on food preparation within the home. This was associated with both a decline in the number of servants in middle-class households and an increasing tendency for women to be active outside the home (ibid.).

Canned food was neither fully industrialized nor particularly safe to eat until after the first world war.

Canned food was neither fully industrialized nor particularly safe to eat until after the first world war. Until the 1920s food was often processed in small, seasonal, craft operations close to farmers fields which utilized mostly human labour (including cutting and shaping cans by hand) and often sealed cans with lead and heated them unreliably or inconsistently (Petrick, 2010). Scientifically grounded processing standards and times for industrial canning were not determined until the 1930s and public mistrust lingered for some years after the establishment of nearly universal safe canning practices (ibid.).

Safe and reliable canned food came to be associated with large-scale industrial processing – major brand names were able to dominate the industry partially on the grounds of people's distrust of small processors who frequently produced food that was unpalatable or dangerous. Companies like Heinz opened their factories for tours and advertised on the basis of their sterile work environments, with their advertisements frequently emphasizing the personal and moral characteristics of their factory workers – Heinz even went so far as providing all workers with weekly manicures to encourage clean nails (Petrick, 2008, 31).

While most of the technology and safety protocols could have been applied in small-scale canneries, the lack of any national regulation of these standards meant that consumers relied on brand names to distinguish safe food from unsafe.

Health and safety regulations were developed in the middle of the twentieth century, supported by large scale manufacturers who realized that they would help to increase public trust in canned foods. Because of their influence, however, the resulting regulations were often biased in favour of large industrial scale operations and regulations today may still place unnecessary burdens on small industry.

In addition, the brand identities cultivated in decades past continue to linger and are, for many people, still an important “marks of quality” in spite of the fact that small processors today are more than capable of producing products that match or exceed the quality and safety of preserved foods from large industrial operations.

The First and Second World Wars played an important role in encouraging home food preservation in North America, as the needs of the military made major demands on existing industrial processing.

However, home preserving did continue to develop alongside industrial processing and advances in microbiology helped to make this form of preserving safer as well. The First and Second World Wars played an important role in encouraging home food preservation in North America, as the needs of the military made major demands on existing industrial processing infrastructure. Voluntary rationing and food conservation programs in the United States encouraged the growing of "victory gardens" to allow for greater food exports and a heavy emphasis was placed on home food preservation (Bernat, online photo exhibit).

During the Second World War women were encouraged to “put up” food for winter so that industrially processed food could be used in the war effort. Free public education programs including workshops, curricula in public schools, and the development of “community canning centres” played an important role in developing canning expertise in women across America. While home food preservation was encouraged in Canada, supported by government agencies and taught in schools, the scale of the effort was smaller than in America.

Following World War II home processing declined and the industrialization of food continued apace. Major processing firms largely replaced home preservation, though practices lingered in some families, particularly in the American South, where some USDA-run Community Canneries are still in operation today, and in some immigrant communities where industrially processed food was not embraced for a variety of reasons.

In the absence of a servant class, canned and otherwise processed "convenience" food was an important support as women increasingly worked outside of the home through 1970s and 1980s. With the increased popularity of home fridges and freezers, frozen food also became increasingly important in people's diets, further displacing home processing.

The Future of Preserving

In the last several years, however, there has been a resurgence of interest in home food preservation. Traditionally a survival strategy of the poor, it is increasingly a hobby of more affluent "foodies," though this does not mean that food preservation has nothing to offer lower-income consumers. Click and Ridberg argue that food preservation tends to be more focused on community and relationships than other practices in the food movement and therefore has a part to play in strengthening the movement and preventing concerns about sustainable agriculture and local food from being co-opted by commercial interests (Click and Ridberg, 2010).

Other authors have argued that practices like canning (and also cooking more generally) are an opportunity to "re-skill" consumers who have been actively "de-skilled" by food retailers and processors who gain power by doing so, reducing peoples' choices about what to buy and what to eat (Jaffe & Gertler, 2006).

Home preserved food may not be able to compete with grocery store food for sheer cheapness (though in some cases it may be able to do this too) but it can be a much better value in terms of flavour, quality, and control over what you eat. For people of any income who value organic, local, or sustainable agriculture and wish to support it year-round, or for those with special dietary requirements or sensitivities,

home preserved foods can be important. Furthermore savvy canners, especially if they are working with groups to access bulk rates or have access to gleaned produce or produce from their own private or community garden, can produce a lot of food for their own consumption surprisingly cheaply.

A number of recent projects around North America have collected people together to re-learn and practice canning skills. In Toronto alone half a dozen different groups were offering preserving classes in the summer of 2010 and this trend appears to be present elsewhere as well, with canning projects popping up across North America **(**see the References and Links section, page 64, for a partial list)**.** Re-learning these skills is an important way for people to gain some control over their food system, over what they purchase and what they put in their bodies. At the same time, developing local preserving infrastructure, whether primarily decentralized and in the home or in more concentrated communal and commercial operations is important to the development of a viable local food system.

Being able to preserve food locally helps to reduce waste, provides larger and more reliable markets for farmers, reduces need to ship foods long distances for processing, and offers an opportunity for consumers to build a closer relationship with their food year-round.

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DEVELOPING A COMMUNITY CANNERY
Good Practices, Examples, and Possible Programs

What is a Community Cannery?

What exactly do we mean when we talk about a “community cannery?” There are a huge range of possible programs and organizations that could be fairly called community canneries. What they have in common is not a particular program or structure but rather a shared motivation or orientation.

Community Canneries are not merely businesses or canning schools, rather they consciously seek to develop their local community in one of many ways. They seek to enhance people's skills, or to strengthen their relationship to local farmers, to combat social isolation or to encourage people to take control of their food system. Their focus is on involving a range of people from the local community and on creating a project that will make that community stronger and more vibrant.

Community canneries can run the gamut from relatively large industrial operations to small groups running as community kitchens out of church basements, school buildings, or even home kitchens. Within the broader orientation towards contributing to their community

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they will also have a diversity of goals depending on what they see as the major needs of their community.

As such, one important way to answer the question of what a community cannery is, is to look at existing projects that seem to fit the bill. However, it is very important to note that these projects are only the beginning. The project you choose to develop may go in an entirely different direction, based on the particular needs of your community as well as the skills and inspirations of you and your partners.

The miniature case studies presented here represent a few possible options for cannery models. They are provided to give inspiration, not to constrain possibilities, and it is possible to combine multiple models and uses or to develop entirely new models not discussed here. The West End Food Co-op combined elements from several of these models.

Scoharie Co-op Cannery

The Scoharie Co-op Cannery in Scoharie, New York is still in a development phase, raising funds and building community support for its eventual work. It is an ambitious project, focused primarily on providing services and markets for farmers as well as generating employment in the region. The plan is for a small-scale industrial cannery, able to pressure can large volumes of fresh produce in glass bottles and tin cans.

Founded by farmer Peter Pehrson the co-op will be farmer-owned, similar in structure to larger scale co-operative processing ventures like co-operative grain milling (see for example the Dakota Grower's Pasta Company - http://www.dakotagrowers.com/ - since converted to a common stock corporation). This hearkens back to traditional processing in the United States where numerous small canneries located throughout the countryside used to process goods for a small number of growers who delivered directly to the processing centre (Petrick, 2010). Unlike many of these earlier ventures, however, Scoharie Co-op Cannery will be a non-profit, focused on developing the local economy for farmers and workers alike.

Pehrson envisions farmers bringing truckloads of produce during the busy summer season, when they may have little time to find markets for their harvests, let alone preserve it themselves. They would pay a processing fee to the cannery and get back their own produce, canned or jarred, and ready to be sold in the store associated with the cannery, at farmers markets, on their own on-farm stores, or through other local retail outlets. This would allow farmers to receive more income through the winter months, as well as providing them with the option not to sell during the summer months if prices fall extremely low.

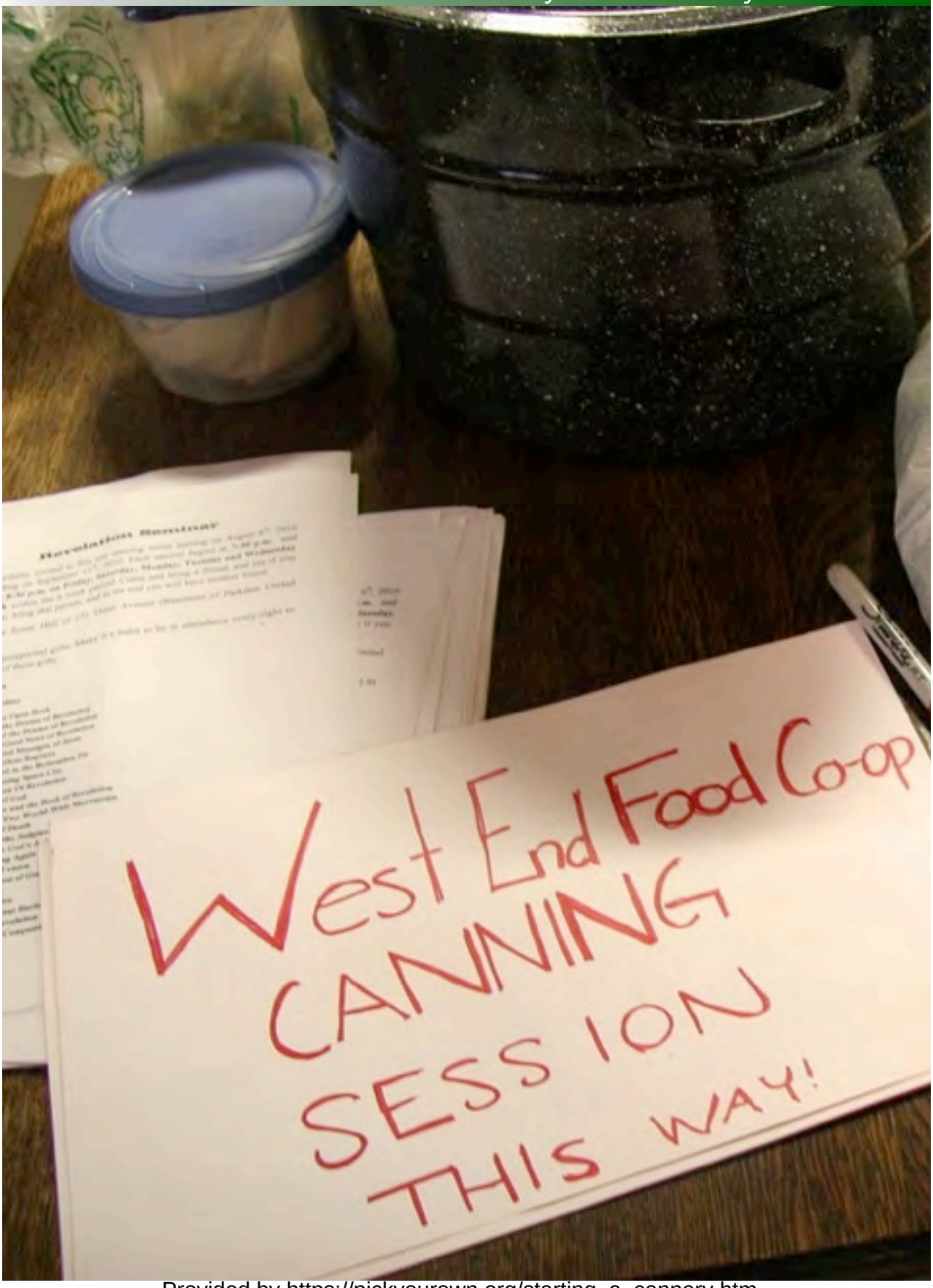
Because of the perishability of their products, fruit and vegetable growers may find themselves selling below the cost of production during summer months; recouping even part of the cost of producing food is preferable to letting it rot but this dynamic can be harmful to farmers in the long run. The cannery would give farmers considerably more control over the pricing of their products and make it easier for them to receive fair prices.

Though they have faced setbacks acquiring both funding and equipment, Pehrson and his allies continue to build community support and gather resources to open their canning plant which they hope will be 7,000 square feet and equipped to process large volumes of fresh produce and employ several seasonal workers.

Links
Website: www.scohariecannery.org
Newspaper Article: http://www.schohariecannery.org/timesjournal.html

USDA Community Canneries
This term is being used somewhat generically – and perhaps therefore not quite accurately – to describe Canneries receiving some form of governmental financial support. Some funding is received from the United States Department of Agriculture National Center for Home Food Preservation, but other Canneries receive funds from Co-operative Extension Services of Land Grant Universities, or from Regional, County, or Municipal governments. Nonetheless these Canneries are distinguished by relatively reliable access to funds. Because of this they cannot necessarily be imitated directly by community organizations working with smaller budgets. However the model is still an interesting one and some aspects can be replicated, particularly by organizations with strong partners or access to long-term funding.

State-funded community canneries may have their own dedicated building but often use kitchen spaces in local schools or other mixed-use buildings. The canneries generally provide materials including cans and jars to users at a small fee (generally between 50 cents and a dollar per can or bottle). They also provide instruction or supervision from a qualified staff person who ensures that users are canning safely. The space and basic equipment, frequently including hot water bath canners, pressure canners, and often also tin can sealing machines, are also provided. The user fees help to cover these costs though in some cases membership fees may also be collected. Pricing is sometimes adjustable on the basis of income and need as there is some intention by funders to make these canneries available to low-income users (Baer et al, 1992)



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The canneries generally do not provide or assist in procurement of produce. Users are expected to bring their own produce and in many cases the canneries recommend or require that users perform the initial stages of processing (cleaning and, depending on the fruit or vegetable, trimming or stemming) before arriving at the cannery in order to finish in a reasonable time period. Canneries are often located in more rural settings which makes sourcing produce easier but can be an obstacle for urban residents without access to a car or time to drive outside the city (ibid.). Canneries are predominantly located in the Southern United States, perhaps due to the greater historical importance of home food preservation in those regions – Florida, Georgia, and Virginia boast particularly high numbers of canneries.

Community Canneries are not merely businesses or canning schools, rather they consciously seek to develop their local community in one of many ways.

Links
Citrus County Canning Centre
http://www.citruscountyfl.org/commserv/extension/canning/canning_center.htm

Keezletown Community Cannery, Virginia
http://www.keezletowncommunitycannery.com/

Montgomery County Cannery, Virginia
http://www.montva.com/content/1146/98/133/1758.aspx

A list of Community Canneries (USDA and others) throughout the United States:
http://www.pickyourown.org/canneries.htm

Keezletown Community Cannery
Keezletown Community Cannery in the Shenandoah Valley in Virginia was founded in 1942 and operated continuously since then, supported by the local County government. The County was unable to continue funding the venture and in August of 2009 the cannery passed into the hands of local non-profit organization "Horizons Learning Foundation". They plan to keep the cannery open and operating but also enhance educational programming, making the historic space available to school groups.

Although now independently owned, Keezeltown Community Cannery is still run much like other USDA canneries, relying on user fees to help cover costs and providing staff assistance for visiting groups. Their effort to continue providing similar programming without government assistance will be an important experiment in running a full-service cannery primarily on a cost-recovery model.

Website: http://www.keezletowncommunitycannery.com/history.html

Economic Development, Producer Oriented Canneries, and Incubator Kitchens

Open kitchens and canning centres as described above may well benefit local producers and may be used by them, but they are not explicitly geared towards their needs. Other cannery programs may more explicitly target growers or food processors. These programs tend to be focussed on economic development – expanded markets, job creation, and support for entrepreneurs – whereas programs like open kitchens and workshops often place a greater emphasis on social and communal aspects of cooking together and developing personal and life skills.

Some job skills programs, however, like those offered by the Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre in Toronto (http://parc.on.ca) may also cover community-building and support as an important part of their training programs.

One model of producer-oriented processing involves offering canning services to farmers, usually by paid staff. This is the model that Scoharie Co-op Cannery (http://www.schohariecannery.org) intends to follow – farmer members will be able to drop off bulk quantities of produce at peak seasons, pay a processing fee, and get back canned goods that they can sell either through a store associated with the cannery or through their own on-farm stores and market stalls. This model effectively serves to expand farmers' market

opportunities and to provide jobs for the community – it is also reminiscent of the small processing enterprises that historically performed the majority of North America's food processing until the mid 19th century. This model seems most appropriate for canneries on a small-industrial scale, with comparatively sophisticated equipment and a dedicated facility, but there may be an opportunity for pursuing similar programs at a more “craft” scale.

A commercial scale community cannery could also operate as a small business or social enterprise, serving local job creation functions or perhaps acting as part of a training and job creation program similar to Eva's Phoenix Print Shop in Toronto, a functioning commercial print shop that helps to provide job skills and paid employment for homeless and at-risk youth (http://phoenixprintshop.ca).

In order to be considered a “community cannery” rather than just a local small-scale cannery such an organization would have to demonstrate a commitment to local development in the form of job creation and training, working with local producers, increasing local food access, or otherwise serving the needs of its community rather than a private profit motive.

In order to be considered a “community cannery” rather than just a local small-scale cannery such an organization would have to demonstrate a commitment to local development in the form of job creation and training, working with local producers, increasing local food access, or otherwise serving the needs of its community rather than a private profit motive. This might also take the form of a cannery with an inspected kitchen devoting part of its time to producing product lines for sale, in order to fund other activities of the organization and create opportunities for community members to earn income.

The Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre has considered this as one possible direction for development: producing and marketing gourmet preserves provides an independent opportunity for members to learn food business skills while earning income. These models can be broadly described as social enterprises in canning or preserving, dedicated to generating viable business models in order to benefit their communities in a variety of ways.

A final important way that community canneries can serve economic development goals is by acting as test or incubator kitchens, providing services for entrepreneurs trying to develop food businesses and producers seeking to diversify their income streams by branching out into small-scale processing of their own produce. This works best where a certified or inspected kitchen is available, and may be particularly valuable in association with other assistance in business development, such as peer or professional training in budgeting, marketing, business planning, food regulations etc. Incubator kitchens allow users to test new product ideas without investing heavily to create their own certified kitchen or purchase expensive equipment. Especially where further support is available in the form of training or access to staff with training in marketing, design or promotions, access to shared free retail or advertising space etc. these types of programs can lead to the development of many new food businesses.

Furthermore, encouraging innovation centred in one location not only saves on resources but can also encourage linkages and partnerships between emerging food businesses which may form long-term mutually beneficial relationships.

Though most effective where a certified kitchen is available permanently, these programs can be combined with a variety of other cannery operations and, with sufficient creativity and resourcefulness, could be implemented in shared or rented kitchens.

Social Enterprises and Job Creation

Eva's Phoenix:
http://phoenixprintshop.ca

St. John's Bakery:
http://www.stjohnsbakery.com

Scoharie Co-op Cannery:
http://www.schohariecannery.org

Incubator Kitchens:
Foodshare's Toronto Kitchen Incubator, Toronto, Ontario:
http://www.foodshare.net/kitchen05.htm

The City of Toronto Food Business Incubator, Toronto, Ontario:
http://www.toronto.ca/tfbi/

Sunday Kitchen, Decatur, Tennessee:
http://www.sundaykitchentn.com/

Shoals Entrepreneurial Center, Alabama:
http://www.shoalsec.com/facilities/SCC_index.html

Volunteer Processing for Donation or Use

Several community canning operations focus on processing donated food using volunteer labour to produce products for fund-raising, donation, or use within the organization. At the Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre in Toronto, for instance, preserving became an important part of their hunger-relief kitchen as staff and volunteers struggled both to keep large volumes of donated fruit from going to waste and to ensure a relatively continuous food supply in spite of both seasonal and week-to-week fluctuations in donations. Preserves produced at PARC are now used to enhance the 300+ free meals that the organization's relief kitchen provides to community members every day.

The Toronto organization Not Far From The Tree, which organizes the harvest of surplus fruit from private homes and a few public parks around the city, have also relied on volunteers to help to process donated fruit. The volunteers had the opportunity to learn canning skills while the organization, working with local agencies in different regions around the city, were able to provide preserves for local meal programs. Not Far From The Tree has also gone on to use their donated fruit to run free workshops for various organizations around the city.

These are just a small sample of the huge number of ways that organizations can make creative use of donated food and volunteer labour to teach canning and create delicious preserves on a shoestring budget. Like-minded organizations generally abound and it is likely to be easier to access kitchen space for free when food is being processed for donation. There are ample opportunities to partner with local drop-in centres or Food Not Bombs collectives, as well as with gleaning organizations, farmers markets, or community gardens. These programs can help to reduce waste, increase community food security, develop canning skills, reduce isolation, build community, and strengthen co-operative linkages between local projects addressing different aspects of the local food system.

Links:
PARC (Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre):
http://parc.on.ca

Not Far From The Tree:
http://www.notfarfromthetree.org/

Shoelace Collective:
http://www.shoelace.ca/

Newspaper Article on NFFTT & Shoelace Collective's Preserving Parties:
http://www.insidetoronto.com/news/local/article/160243--preserving-party-in-woodbine-heights

Food Not Bombs:
http://www.foodnotbombs.net/

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Workshops for Paying Customers

Workshops for paying customers can vary widely in price and delivery depending on the target audience. If budgeted carefully they can be self-supporting and, if demand permits, they could even be used to generate revenue for other cannery activities. They are also one of the easiest types of programming to implement without a fixed space as kitchens are often available (particularly from local churches, as well as schools in some districts) for relatively modest fees.

Workshops can range from a short 2-3 hour session covering just one or two recipes to a half- or full-day event that covers a variety of different types of preserving. There is room for a variety of formats and Bay Area canning group “Yes We Can Food” even holds some workshops on local farms. These usually full-day events may include meals featuring local food and other added bonuses (http://yeswecanfood.com).

The disadvantage of this type of paid programming is that it may exclude low-income community members. Various pricing and payment structures can be devised to deal with this. Sliding scale or fully subsidized spaces can be provided. For example, if your cannery is working in association with local drop-in centres it may be realistic to offer some spaces in each workshop free to members. In the event

that a Church or school kitchen is being used, the space may be made available free or at a reduced rental fee in exchange for allowing a certain number of congregation members or students to attend free of charge.

Because facilitation and space rental costs usually make up the bulk of workshop costs, with ingredients actually being comparatively minor, it may be possible to offer as many as half of the workshop spaces as subsidized spots at no or low cost. Lower rates for students, seniors, and the unwaged may also help to increase access.

Because facilitation and space rental costs usually make up the bulk of workshop costs, with ingredients actually being comparatively minor, it may be possible to offer as many as half of the workshop spaces as subsidized spots at no or low cost.

Finally, a sliding scale where potential attendees are dealt with on a case by case basis by organizers and pay as much as they feel able may also be an option, particularly for more involved and expensive, longer or multiple-session workshops.

However, these models may not always be easy to implement, or may not increase access as much as you may like, particularly where it may be difficult for lower-income community members to reach the selected workshop space because of transportation access, mobility issues, or an inaccessible location. Furthermore, other social factors may be at work, preventing potential attendees from accessing subsidized spaces because of social or personal attitudes towards receiving “charity” or fear of being stigmatized or singled out within the workshop itself.

In some cases, then, it may be more appropriate to use revenue from paid workshops to subsidize free workshops held in more accessible locations. While this approach does not have the same possibility of breaking down social barriers by introducing people to different social realities, it may be more realistic and more comfortable for marginalized community members who can feel exposed or excluded in gatherings that may be made up primarily of more privileged participants. Regardless of the payment structure of the workshop and who ultimately attends there is room in any workshop to begin discussions of social justice and inequality in the food system.

Workshops provide an opportunity to reach a large number of people who may be just beginning to become curious about canning or about the food system more generally. Because they are fun, short term, and minimal commitment they can be a great introduction for people just getting to know your organization. They are also generally fun and welcoming social environments, emphasizing the light and satisfying part of community cannery work and empowering people to continue canning in their own home.

Finally, they provide the opportunity for the organizers themselves to experiment – ideas, exercises, recipes, and concepts can be tried out on a small group with a relatively low risk. For this reason, even if they

are not the primary focus of a community cannery, they can add energy and vitality and aid in developing “buzz” about an ongoing and more far-reaching project.

Links

Yes We Can Food, San Francisco, California:
http://yeswecanfood.com/

Food In Jars, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:
http://www.foodinjars.com/canning-classes/

Lost Art of Canning. Everdale Farm, Toronto, Ontario:
http://workshops.everdale.org/in-the-city/toronto/canning/

Preserving Parkdale Project

The Preserving Parkdale Project ran a series of workshops through the summer and fall of 2010 with further sessions planned for the winter and spring of 2011. The workshops varied quite a bit in form and were facilitated and co-facilitated by several different people, allowing for ample experimentation and creativity. They generally had between 8 and 14 attendees and ran for approximately 2.5 hours, on weekday evenings.

One sample workshop which might be considered fairly representative ran something like this:

Schedule:

5:45 – 6:00:	Greet the group, register participants, handle payment etc.
6:00- 6:15:	Introductions: Have the group break into pairs and talk for a few minutes then introduce each-other including name and the last preserved food they ate (including industrially canned!)
6:15 – 6:30:	Show people around the kitchen, wash hands etc., introduce the recipes for the evening
6:30 – 7:20:	Make Salsa! Discuss sterilization, safety, etc. while providing hands-on instruction and collectively chopping, peeling, and preparing ingredients.
7:20 – 7:50:	Discussion: While salsa reduces group meets in the other room, first in small groups then as a whole, to discuss historic images of traditional preserving, discussing their own experiences of preserving in light of these images and talking about, for example, how ideas of sanitation and food have changed over time.
7:50 – 8:05:	Fill jars and place in the canner, answering questions about hot water bath canning and sterilization that may arise along the way.
8:05 – 8:20:	Tidy kitchen together and inform people about the Community Cannery project and partners
8:20 – 8:30:	Remove jars from the canner and send people home with their delicious salsa!

The workshops were designed to build people's expertise in canning so that they would feel comfortable doing it in their own homes, but also to spark their curiosity about the food system more generally.

Various different exercises and practices can be used to spark discussion – see Appendix 1 **f**or ideas and resources – and a wide variety of topics can be covered depending on the group, their interests, and the goals and interests of the organization itself.

Food lends itself to discussion of social justice, access, and equality, but also of corporate control, environmental issues, cultural traditions and dozens of other vital topics. A workshop that strikes a balance between teaching practical skills and addressing the broader questions of the food system can be both fun and inspiring, leading people into further and deeper engagement with their food and their community.

Social Service Workshops

Another type of programming, which may be integrated with incubator kitchen and job training programs, is providing workshops for Social Service Agencies. Preserving can be a useful skill in many industrial kitchens and, particularly, a valuable way for drop-ins to deal with the variability in food donations throughout the year. As such, an important element of cannery programming may be sharing skills with drop-ins and other social service programs either as training for their staff or as a piece of an existing employment skills program.

These workshops can take a variety of forms depending on their particular goals - “train the trainer” workshops, for example, that aim to prepare people to teach preserving courses in their own community, are likely to be longer-term and more intensive and may even include testing at the end to make sure a certain standard is maintained. Training which is provided to supplement job training for work in commercial kitchens, on the other hand, may focus more on mastering basic concepts and principles and acquiring tools to find out more.

One important format may be “scaling out” - if one drop-in centre or hunger-relief kitchen has found it helpful to master preserving it may be natural for them to want to share their experience and expertise with similar agencies. There are many different, effective ways this can be carried out ranging from employee exchange of several days or weeks to workshops held in either one of the two agencies. In this context the needs and abilities of each group are likely to be quite unique so it probably makes most sense to arrange the programs co-operatively, negotiating a strategy that will work for both parties.

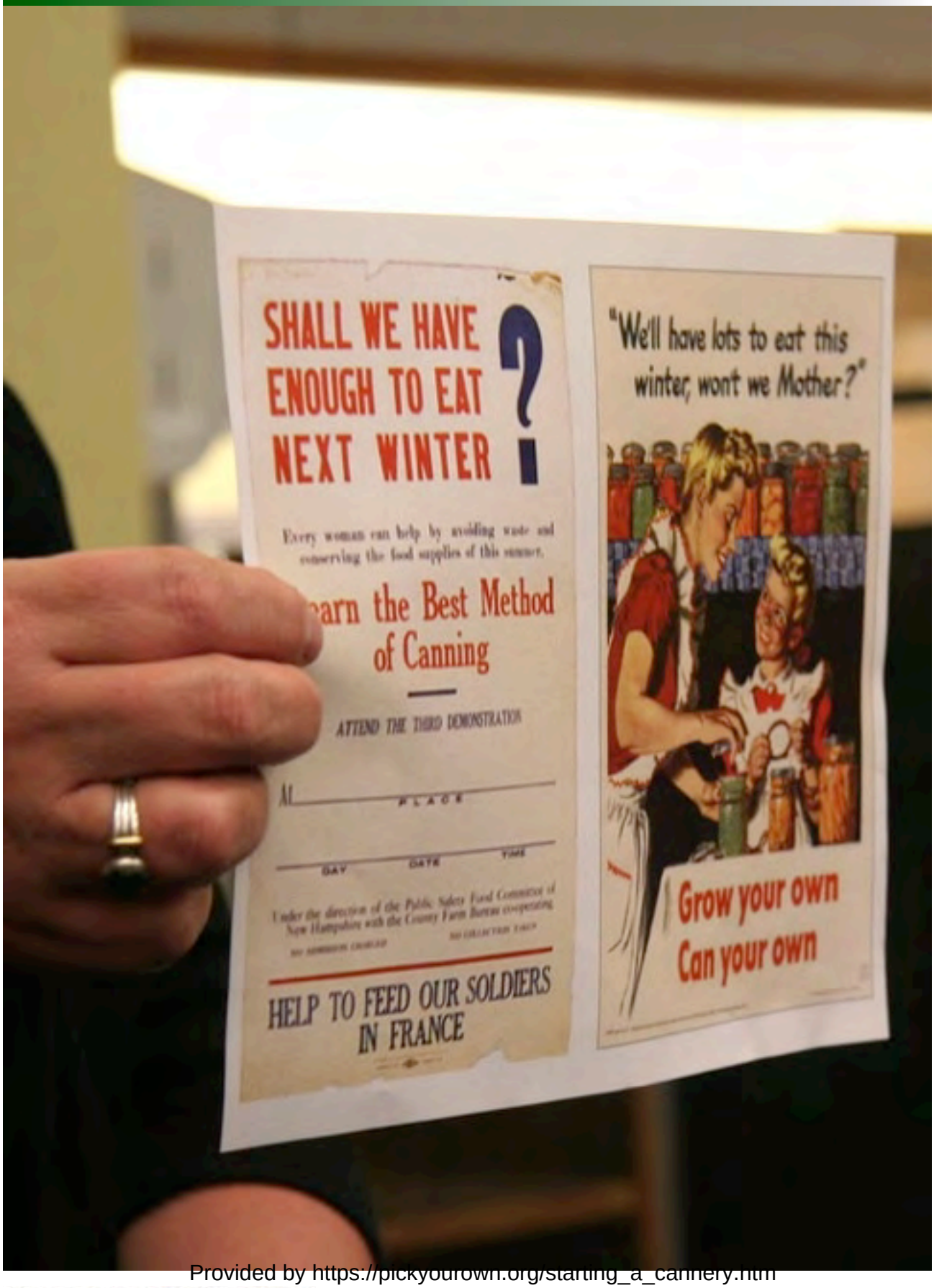
Preserving can be a useful skill in many industrial kitchens and, particularly, a valuable way for drop-ins to deal with the variability in food donations throughout the year.

Community Supported Orchard

“Community Supported Orchard” was the name given by the Parkdale Community Cannery to one of its major projects, which worked closely with producer-members of the West End Food Co-op and involved a small group of fourteen participants meeting every two weeks to can relatively large volumes of food.

The name is drawn from “Community Supported Agriculture”, an arrangement in which consumers pay up front at the beginning of the agricultural season for fruits and vegetables to be delivered to them throughout the season – in this way they share in some of the risks associated with farming, receiving more bountiful shares in good years and less variety in lean ones. At the same time the system helps to solve a major financial problem for farmers – the major expenses of farming are incurred in spring, but the investment pays back only in late summer and fall.

All You Can!



Provided by https://pickyourown.org/starting_a_cannery.htm

CSA systems thus help urban and rural consumers to access high quality food at generally very reasonable prices as well as giving them the opportunity and acknowledged right to take an interest in how that food is grown, and allowing them to establish a stronger relationship with the source of their food, while also improving the financial security of farmers. The CSO project sought to achieve something similar by working closely with two WEFC producer-members who produce large quantities of fruit and have struggled to find markets for it since the closing of the last major cannery in their area.

The CSO plan is discussed in slightly more detail in the section on budget and numerous documents associated with it (including all the recipes from our first year of preserving) are included in the "documents" section. Further details of our experience and discussion of the job-creation aspects of our CSO program are included within the Case Study: Preserving Parkdale Project (see page 51)**.** This section deals only with some of the more general advantages and possibilities of this type of programming.

The CSO model provides the opportunity for a small group to gain substantial expertise in canning as well as developing a group that may be equipped subsequently to use a shared kitchen or other resources with limited supervision or organization. Because the group is more skilled, more complex recipes can be tried than are often feasible in workshops and, if the group works together well, there is an excellent opportunity for training new facilitators in a sympathetic and comparatively low-stress environment.

Finally, the advantages to producers can be substantial as they have the opportunity to receive good prices for produce that may be unpopular at market or fetch low prices because of minor cosmetic issues like apple scab or small bruises. Depending on the scale at which a CSO operates it can provide a significant market for a small farmer, reducing the amount of time and energy they must invest in other more arduous forms of marketing such as selling at farmers markets.

Because of the relatively high cost of buying-in at the beginning of the season, however, CSO programming may be inaccessible to lower-income community members. There are various ways around this including developing subsidized shares, paid for by higher fees for other members, by other programs, by grants, or by having individuals or organizations sponsor shares.

Having a group or organization share a share is another option to reduce the financial burden. A CSO that relies partially on gleaning or allows members to trade some labour for discounts or free produce (as some CSAs have historically done) might also be more accessible, though accommodations would ideally be made for those

who might be unable to take place in the comparatively heavy labour of picking. Selling non-working shares at a higher rate might also make it possible to offer free or cheaper shares to members who assist in canning.

If creatively financed, CSOs have the opportunity to make a significant impact on people's diets as the amount of food preserved can be relatively large and home-preserved foods can potentially be considerably healthier than many industrially processed goods. While it would require creativity and commitment, the CSO model has substantial potential to increase both urban food security and farmers' financial security while also developing community and allowing people to master preserving skills.

Provided by https://pickyourown.org/starting_a_cannery.htm

Seasonality and the CSO

The CSO program at the Parkdale Community Cannery focussed, even more than our workshops, on local, sustainable, seasonal food. This approach, particularly if you are committed to working with specific small farmers and prioritizing their needs, can create some difficulties. Variations and unpredictability in the local weather mean that, while general ideas can be entertained in advance, planning must be done at best week by week – a sudden frost or other extreme weather event early or late in the season or an unexpected infestation can cause crop failures that may be local (confined to the farm you are working with) or regional.

Our main tender fruit farmer lost virtually all her apricots to a wind storm and we had to scramble to develop a new set of recipes for one week. Come fall, a time for mixed pickles, we discovered that there was virtually no organic cauliflower to be had in Ontario. Had we been in operation in 2009 we would have faced a similar near-total lack of pickling cucumbers due to an epidemic of powdery mildew.

These factors demand creativity and a willingness to work with the farmers, keeping close contact in order to have the farthest possible advance notice of looming shortages but also being willing to work with what they have and adapt recipes at the last moment. While challenging, this is also one of the original motives behind CSAs – not knowing what you will get in your box each time encourages you to try new foods and new recipes, stepping outside your culinary comfort zone.

In the CSO this dynamic provides an opportunity for members to learn more about the conditions of uncertainty that characterize organic farming and to become more connected to their local farming community. This can encourage sympathy with, and more robust support for, local farmers and a better understanding of the realities of food production.

This is also an opportunity for people to become acquainted with the reality of seasonality, which is that strawberries do not arrive uniformly on the first of June and that a fruit may disappear from the markets long before you have had time to enjoy it if you are not careful and quick to act. Preserving in this context provides an opportunity for people to get more in touch with their local ecosystem.

This seasonal and rapidly changing food supply also in some way justifies canning itself – these are the conditions for which food preservation was developed. When we can purchase tomatoes from Mexico and strawberries from California year-round, food preservation can seem anachronistic. If we commit ourselves to consuming local produce as an important part of our diets the need to preserve food becomes much more apparent.

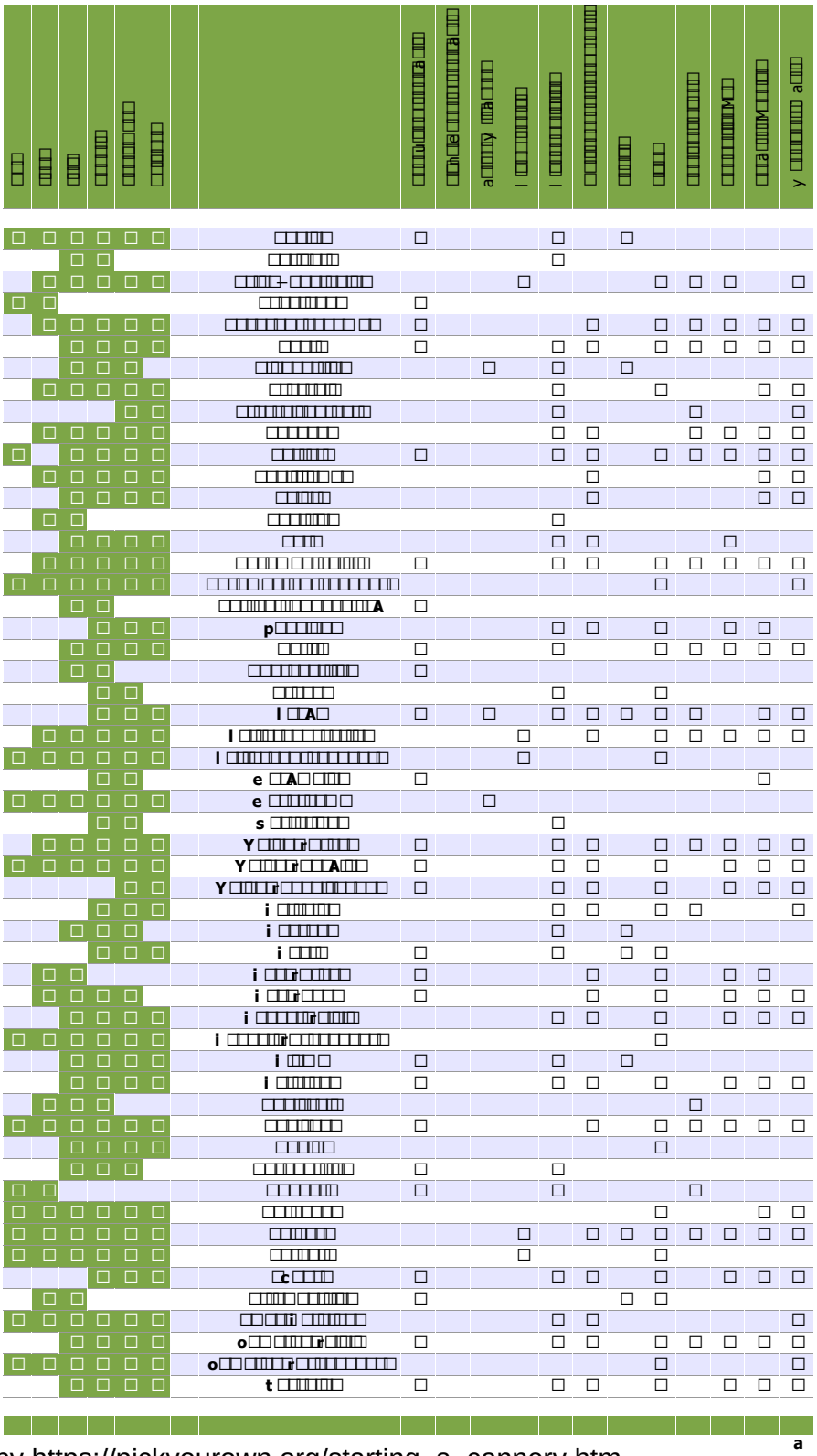
In an important way this is the same impetus that drives drop-in centres and hunger-relief kitchens to preserve food; while the fluctuations of their supplies may be more linked to their major donors' (like grocery stores) surpluses and shortages than weather events, the effects can be equally drastic and preserving can play an equally important role in making their food supplies more uniform and reliable.

All You Can!

This chart is adapted from charts provided by a local agricultural program (FoodLand Ontario: http://www.foodland.gov.on.ca/english/availability.html) and should be taken with a healthy grain of salt.

Not only does it apply only to Southern Ontario but it, like similar charts that may be available for your region, it gives a false impression of certainty and regularity where the reality of seasonality is just the opposite!

[illegible]



Partnerships and Networks

Having discussed some of the major forms that a Community Cannery can take and some important goals and programs it might pursue we will now move on to a somewhat more systemic discussion of how to go about developing one.

Food is a powerful tool for bringing people together and is increasingly a focus for activism in many communities. Community gardens and kitchens, food banks, soup kitchens, school gardens, farmers markets, local farm organizations, independent grocery stores, independent restaurants, local gleaning operations and other organizations with an interest in food can be important allies in the development of a Community Cannery.

A Community Cannery can contribute to the local food landscape in a huge number of different ways. Your program can help to make people more aware of their purchasing and eating habits and empower them to buy and use fresh local produce, improve local food security, create new markets for farmers, new jobs for the community, and new skills for everyone. In the long term, building up food skills and food networks, developing both knowledge about and interest in food in a broader social and environmental context, is key to developing a sustainable and socially just food system.

Canneries are one program among many, poised to make a substantial contribution to this kind of development but ultimately the work is collective and communal and cannot be undertaken by one organization in isolation. The first important step in developing a Community Cannery, then, is finding and connecting with allies in your community.

Different partner organizations will be able to contribute different things and will have different needs and expectations for the cannery. Different models will be more amenable to co-operation with different organizations: A community cannery focused on processing relatively large volumes of vegetables for re-sale may form natural connections with job creation programs, local farmers looking for markets, farmers' markets, restaurants, and independent grocers who may be interested in selling locally produced products.

On the other hand, a cannery following a more "community kitchen" model, focused on re-skilling consumers and helping them take control of their food may form more natural alliances with community gardens, orchards, and gleaners, with groups like churches, support groups, and seniors' groups working to combat social isolation, and with schools and educational and youth programs trying to teach people new skills.

All You Can!

The focus and style of your program will be one factor determining what partnerships will be effective and as such it would be wise to survey, as comprehensively as possible, local organizations and groups that might be open to collaboration before settling on a fixed design and program for your cannery. Doing this at an early stage is preferable to developing a program and then looking for collaborators, as partners are more likely to be supportive and engaged where they feel that they have control over the process from the outset. Furthermore they may have knowledge about the community and about the groups they work with that you may not otherwise have access to.

One example of an important alliance has emerged in Vancouver, BC where six organizations have come together in the "People Preserving Food Project" (www.communitykitchens.ca/main/?en&PeoplePreservingFood). The project's first phase, entitled "Yes We Can" is a train-the-trainers program, teaching canning skills to people and supporting them to offer canning workshops in their own communities.

The organizations in the partnership are:

- Environmental Youth Alliance (/www.eya.ca/splash.php),
- Fresh Choice Kitchens (of the Greater Vancouver Foodbank Society) (www.communitykitchens.ca/main/)
- The Fruit Tree Project, Society Promoting Environmental Conservation (www.spec.bc.ca/),
- Aboriginal Health Strategic Initiatives of Vancouver Coastal Health (www.vch.ca/)
- Your Local Farmers Market Society (www.eatlocal.org/).

This powerful network is well positioned to serve a number of communities and reach many diverse groups with their canning programs. Because their member organizations include community kitchens and farmers markets they should also have many opportunities to source local, ethical food and access kitchen space at affordable prices.

The groups and organizations already operating in your community and their willingness or ability to work with you will both determine what programs you will be able to effectively carry out and will help you to determine which interventions and what type of cannery might be most beneficial for your neighbourhood. The following section on Planning with the Community provides some suggestions on how to go about this kind of planning. The Preserving Parkdale Project Case Study (Page 51) also includes some discussion of how this planning process was carried out in one specific case.

Planning with the Community: Visioning and Mapping Exercises

As important as finding allies in other organizations in your community is designing your cannery to meet the needs of community members, making sure it has the potential to provide something people want and are excited to be a part of as well as improving the lives of those involved. This necessity is one of the reasons this guide is so open-ended: each community is different (and indeed each physical community often has many communities within it) and has different needs.

When you decide what services and programs to offer in your cannery you are also deciding who in your community the cannery will benefit - will it serve young people struggling to learn skills they can use in the workplace? Or senior citizens looking to reclaim community? Will it serve upper-class patrons looking to reconnect with their cultural heritage and food system? Or will it serve food-insecure people struggling to make ends meet? One project can serve more than one of these groups but it is important to be mindful of the ways in which decisions about programming, pricing, and even promotions affect your ability to reach the communities you hope to serve.

An Introduction to Popular Education

Popular Education is a way of thinking about teaching and learning that was articulated by Brazilian literacy teacher Paulo Freire. In essence Freire and subsequent writers argue that all education is political and that teachers and students alike act out the structures of power and privilege in place in their society. To empower marginalized and oppressed people and to allow them to recognize their own knowledge and abilities and the value of their contributions we need to critically examine our own behaviour and the ways in which we unintentionally reinforce the oppression and marginalization of those we are trying to help.

Popular Education often focuses on alternative forms of education - discussions rather than lectures but often also collective art, drama, poetry, dance and other forms. Different ways of communicating can reveal different ways of thinking and can allow people to be heard who are silent or silenced in more conventional modes. New ways of approaching a topic can allow people to recognize how much they may already know, and how rich a source of information their own life and experience is.

Popular Educators focus on a continual interplay between practice and theory, or action and reflection. This interplay is called "praxis" and is one of the major grounding principles of popular education. While educators have developed many techniques for breaking down traditional power dynamics and allowing people's voices to be heard, these tools are easily misused if educators do not have some analysis of power and reflect on their own use of these tools and their own relationships to power. Any social practice can either break-down or build up existing power structures and the tools of popular education are no exception – their use must be careful, conscious, and supported by theory to avoid merely reproducing existing dynamics of marginalization and privilege in different mediums. The first appendix to this tool guide provides further discussion of some of these ideas and an introduction to some of the exercises and tools used in popular education.

Resources:

The Catalyst Centre: www.catalystcentre.ca/resources

The Popular Education News:www.popednews.org/resources.html

Trapese Popular Education Collective:http://trapese.org/

International Theatre of the Oppressed Organization:www.theatreoftheoppressed.org

Community Mapping Information:http://communitymap.blogspot.com/

Books on Popular Education:

Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed (numerous editions available)
Deb Barndt, Editor. Wild Fire: Art as Activism. Toronto, Ontario: Sumach Press, May 2006.
Augusto Boal, Theater of the Oppressed (numerous editions available)
For more information see the Popular Education Appendix**,** beginning on page 68.

Progressive community groups have worked hard to develop tools for participatory planning to avoid imposing programs and solutions that may not fit a community's needs or interests. (See information about Community Mapping, for instance, and find out how to get a copy of a guide for this powerful exercise here: www.communitymap.blogspot.com/).

Program ideas that sound wonderful on paper can fail on the street for many reasons. For instance, low-income community members, particularly those who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, or inadequately housed may not have access to kitchen facilities. As such merely teaching them preserving skills is unhelpful – at a minimum they would require access to a space in which they could employ these skills. However, they might benefit more from other programs that improved their access to food or that, for example, focussed around preserving techniques that do not require a kitchen, such as working with a solar dehydrator.

What you uncover about resources, skills, and partners available to support your project as well as about the needs and priorities of your community will help to determine the form your cannery project takes – and even to determine if a community cannery is the best way for you to use your resources at this time. Preserving has something to contribute to many communities but different forms, programs, and strategies will be effective in different communities.

Researching your community intensively beforehand, reaching out to the people who you hope to reach with your programming and discovering what they want and need from you, and being willing to revise programming as you go along if a given program proves to be ineffective or inappropriate will all be vital to the success of your project.

Promoting the Cannery

Once your Cannery is established promoting the project is very important but can be done at relatively low cost, particularly if the cannery is associated with other organizations with strong networks – mailing lists or listservs, word of mouth, tabling at events, and targeted postering can all help to get the word out about cannery programs. Many of these can be done by volunteers or with minimal staff time.

In many cases it can also be very effective to contact local media. Many newspapers offer free listings for community events so a Cannery opening party or fundraising event can be advertised in these. Attracting the attention of sympathetic or like-minded journalists can also be extremely valuable as an in-depth article in a neighbourhood or community newspaper can be a very important way of reaching community members. If your cannery is attempting to

reach out to specific ethnic communities, and particularly if you have the capacity to offer workshops and other programming in multiple languages, it is especially useful to have advertisements and articles in appropriate language newspapers.

Small flyers and simple posters can be created fairly cheaply and distributed at community events and popular locations. Farmers' Markets, Community Gardens, Community Kitchens, and Grocers are all natural locations for this type of outreach, as well as anywhere else in your community that people with an interest in food might be expected to gather.

Finally, word of mouth will be an important factor in promotions. Scheduling events on as regular a schedule as possible and at a fixed location can make it easier for people to locate you and find more information. Encouraging people to tell friends about their experience or, in the case of long-term programming like a CSO, to send a friend or neighbour to can for them if they are unable to make it to a session, can help create “buzz” about your programming.

A community group that wants to start a cannery should approach existing organizations for partnerships, partly because this will reduce costs but also as a way of reaching community groups through an existing network.

BUDGETING AND FINANCIAL PLANNING

Summary

Community canneries have a range of financial options for start-up; limited funding is not an insurmountable barrier if other attributes of the project are in place. For instance, if an organization is or has access to an established community kitchen, they also probably already have most of the equipment required, including large pots, large ladles, measuring cups and spoons, etc. An established community kitchen will have food safety handling regulations and policies in place (for safe dish-washing, refrigeration, etc.), and probably some infrastructure like manuals or at least a manager who can introduce a community group to these policies. All this reduces start-up costs. A community group that wants to start a cannery should approach existing organizations for partnerships, partly because this will reduce costs but also as a way of reaching community groups through an existing network.

Community organizations with established kitchens also can provide the base to subsidize the start up of their own program; many churches in the U.S., particularly with the Latter Day Saints, have proceeded this way. A similar program in Etobicoke Ontario also was launched in 2010. This Mormon church encourages the provision of basic food needs in storage for future eventualities; community canneries provide a simple and low-budget approach to this mandate.

The options for budgets can range from this most basic start up in partnership with an existing community kitchen program, to more elaborate projects that create the kitchen and begin the process from

scratch. The latter obviously requires a great deal more funding in staff time to establish the space, even before programming can begin.

Many community canneries in the U.S. begin this way, and do outreach to the community and other organizations once the space and equipment has been established, with mixed results (example: Scoharie Co-op Cannery). These canneries are often arranged as rentable commercial spaces, requiring the preservers to arrange the fruit or vegetables, ingredients and time themselves, and to manage the logistics if the preserver is a group. The cannery in turn provides all the necessary equipment (for pressure canning as well as the basic hot water bath) and expert help to answer questions and to train preservers in the use of the equipment. This model requires funding for infrastructure and staff which may be difficult to find.

The West End Food Co-op project took a partner-based approach. The need for the project had been identified already through various community based research processes, and community partners with community kitchens had expressed interest in the project before the Co-op raised money through the Co-operative Development Foundation Robert Owen-Henri Lasserre Fund grant for the project.

The project was launched with this $30,000 grant which covered additional community planning, work with community partners to train marginalized groups, and the various workshop and cannery session activities (some of which were done through a cost-recovery model). In the West End Food Co-op case, the latter sessions included the Community Supported Orchard (in which members bought shares and received bi-weekly deliveries of fruit to preserve together) and the community workshops open to the public. These were both somewhat financially self-sufficient, although project management, planning and training were done through the grant. This allowed the Co-op to offer subsidized rates for marginalized groups.

The following reviews key elements in the costing of a community cannery to aid other organizations in the development of budgets and planning.

Budget Scenarios with Range of Costs

Rather than providing actual numbers, which will vary from one community to another, the following discussion considers the options in the key elements of a cannery budget.

Rent

A community cannery can often command subsidized rent through existing community kitchens. Many churches, for instance, have kitchens, and are often enthusiastic about new community programming that is made available to their membership; they may

offer subsidized rent or other exchanges. Larger cannery projects may be able to establish a dedicated kitchen, but this is much more expensive, requiring capacity for market value rent and sometimes kitchen renovation as well.

The latter model seems especially unappealing as the cannery will have seasonal use; although preserving can occur year-round, the bulk of it tends to correspond with the local harvest season. A cannery program works better in concert with other community kitchen programming, to prevent the kitchen going idle for some of the year while still incurring rent, insurance and utility costs.

Insurance

Insurance may be available through a community partner in a commercial, community-based kitchen (though there may be requirements for their staffing on site during programming to maintain the policy). Insurance may also be available as part of an organization's other activities if they are related. Insurance for a community cannery on its own can be prohibitively expensive, providing another important incentive for pursuing partnerships with more established groups.

Equipment

Community cannery equipment can range from the most basic materials for hot water bath canning: large canning pots, ladles, knives, peelers, etc. for the cooking; tongs, magnetized wands and headspace measuring devices for the canning. The latter tools are sold by companies that manufacture the jars and promote canning, and also in Canada at Canadian Tire and online at Golda's Kitchen (www.goldaskitchen.com), separately or in canning kits. If these are needed in quantity, ordering in bulk from online distributors is probably the more cost-effective method of purchase.

Jars can be purchased from these same suppliers, directly from jar manufacturing companies like Ball / Bernardin, or even acquired in large quantities through a jar donation drive. Used jars need to be examined for cracks and chips, and to ensure only safe jars are used (not, for instance, ones marked “atlas” that pasta companies use).

They should be cleaned and sanitized just as any jars would be. The jar drive approach was very successful for the West End Food Co-op and has the added advantage of helping to build awareness of the project. While we did not pursue corporate donations, jar manufacturers like Ball/ Bernardin have an interest in promoting canning and may be willing to provide discounts and other forms of support including, in some cases, free training and supplies.

A community cannery can benefit from having access to a car or a bike trailer to transport this equipment; some people may have a great many jars they are willing to give the project but pick up is required. Bike trailers are also useful in moving the fruit and other vegetables from point of purchase to the kitchen if the producer cannot deliver directly (for instance, pick up might be at a local store or farmers’ market). The choice of kitchen should consider the ease of delivery or the accessibility to sources of produce.

Much cannery equipment can probably be located at yard sales as well; large pots, aprons, etc. Another useful piece of equipment is a portable burner (electric or propane); the latter requires good ventilation, or outdoor use. These are relatively cheap and widely available. The amount that can be canned in one session or workshop may depend on how many burners you can command. An extra burner is helpful for cannery projects using existing kitchens (especially with 4 burner stoves); a stove with more than four burners (or multiple stoves) is virtually essential for a cannery starting from scratch.

Produce:

The cost of the fruits and vegetables is complex, and certainly dependent on participating producers, the local market for produce, etc. In some cases, low income groups will buy from wholesale

markets like Toronto's food terminal, or seek out the discounted product from retail. Other groups may be able to access donated fruits and vegetables through food bank systems or local food recovery or gleaning programs (eg. Not Far From The Tree in Toronto), or even from local gardeners. This is particularly appropriate where the final product is to be donated or used in a charitable program.

On the other hand, some community canneries (like the West End Food Co-op) are designed to create stronger links between producers and consumers, and to generate new markets for local farmers. In this case, pricing becomes a matter of negotiation; in many cases the actors will not have a standard price for this situation.

Cannery production offers a number of positive benefits to farmers: advance planning (an established cannery can make estimates on the types and quantities that will be needed); bulk purchases (reducing packaging and preparation costs); use of seconds or grade B product that cannot be sold at retail; less marketing than a direct sale; and flexibility with availability.

Cannery production offers a number of positive benefits to farmers.

Some of these considerations suggest a lower than retail price; on the other hand, if the project is new it may require extra effort on the part of producers to work with the new project to meet their needs; and in places such as Canada, where prices on food are low compared to income levels (as compared to other countries), it may not be possible for small or sustainable/ organic producers to discount the product very much.

The options for prices lower than retail also depend on the product. For instance, organic strawberries have a very short season in Canada and sell out very quickly (often they are gone within an hour at farmers' markets). In addition, the labour is a large part of the cost for berries; the harvest is finicky and the loss is high, regardless of whether the order is large or small. The cannery therefore could not expect to ask producers to charge less for something that they could easily sell for more, just because it was a large order.

On the other hand, small apples that would not sell well at retail might be perfect for apple rings in syrup (since they would fit well in jars), and the producers might be happy to offer a good price. These are just a few considerations in a very large subject; producers should be consulted while the community cannery is being planned, and should be part of the evaluation process at the end of the first season. The question of sourcing produce is also discussed in a later section (pg. 49).

Promotion:
Promotion is an essential part of the success of a new community cannery. If the community cannery is a project of a community

organization or has partners who are local non-profits, promotion can be done using existing outlets and systems. Otherwise, the cannery will need to create a website and mailing list. Sometimes local non-profits will share their mailing list with like-minded organizations, or at least distribute material.

In addition, the project will need to create some print materials to post at local cafes, organizations, etc. If the organization has decided on recurring events (bi-weekly workshops, for instance) it is worth putting the time and effort (and money) into creating a strong initial template. After that, new information—times and dates—can just be substituted in the template and the main cost is the printing.

The organization will need to participate, either with volunteers or paid staff, in community outreach events as well to raise awareness, and will need materials for the table display (these can be very simple if the budget is limited; the most important thing is personable and enthusiastic tablers to talk to the public about the new project). Many community organizations can access a lot of these promotional needs through volunteers and in-kind donations; otherwise, promotional efforts can become expensive.

Staff

It is probably essential for the project to have the resources for at least one paid project manager, either from a community partner or from the organization. The project needs to have sufficient resources to maintain continuity with staffing, since informal processes and policies are likely to be undocumented until later, and require one person to be familiar with the whole project to trouble-shoot, answer questions and make quick decisions. This project could also be run by a very dedicated and responsible group of volunteers, but it will require about 20-30 hours per week in the initial stages.

In addition to the project manager, there should be several people able to facilitate preserving sessions with extensive knowledge and experience; they are likely to have to work independently in some sessions, so the choice of these staff is important. These positions can be paid for by workshop and session fees, whereas the project manager position in the first year would be difficult to cover just with fees. In latter years, once the system is in place, project management and facilitation can probably be integrated and will not require the same time commitment.

Community canneries are excellent projects for a community intern, as it often corresponds to the summer term, and provides a great variety of experience and a chance for considerable responsibility and initiative on the part of the intern.Volunteers can be crucial to the success of a community cannery, and can be involved in everything from promotion and outreach to facilitation of a recipe.

Again, given the complexity of a start up and the need to ensure adherence to food safety regulations, the continuity and expertise of paid staff is still highly recommended. Ideally, volunteers would receive good training and consistent supervision to maximize the benefits of their experience.

Training for staff

It is absolutely essential for an organization, once the team has been identified, to find the resources to provide any training that seems necessary for volunteers and paid staff. In addition, it makes sense to use the training also as a chance to plan the season and to design any community training sessions. In the case of the West End Food Co-op, these trainings were used to introduce the concepts of popular education and to apply these ideas to designing workshops that addressed social and food justice, equity issues, and food system problems, as well as offering basic training in preserving.

A small amount of research in the cannery's local community will identify the range of workshop fees that the local market displays.

Workshops

A small amount of research in the cannery's local community will identify the range of workshop fees that the local market displays. In the case of Toronto, the fees cover a very wide range, from expensive ones with celebrity chefs (several hundred dollars) to very affordable rates ($25, or as part of volunteer training).

New community cannery projects should review these and compare the offerings from each: How much food does a participant take away? How long is each session? How many recipes are covered? Are more general questions of preserving covered (history, social context, seasons, issues of acidity, sugar and other chemical combinations in general) or is the focus on the practical aspects of one or two recipes? Are handouts/ manuals offered with the session?).

CSOs

The Community Supported Orchard should create a more detailed budget to ensure that if all the shares are sold, the costs of the project are fully covered. The cost estimate can include: produce, project management (probably covered in the first year separately from share sales), jars or other equipment like snap lids, ingredients for each recipe (an estimate in the first year— the prices may be high for this as the source will necessarily be retail rather than wholesale unless the project is associated with an existing food enterprise or the group is very large), facilitation staff, handouts and administration (booking space, creating handouts, keeping records, paying suppliers).

The West End Food Co-op calculated the first year cost of CSO shares at $200 each, covering $25 per session for 8 sessions. The calculation turned out to be too low for the cost of staff and ingredients

and too high for the cost of the fruit. However, ideally a CSO share, like a CSA share, would designate a fixed amount that would go to the farmers/ orchards, and calculate the rest of the cost accordingly.

For example, the West End Food Co-op did have a target amount to go to farmers, and in some cases gave members surplus raw produce to ensure that the target was achieved (the amount that could be canned in this case was constrained by time (the budget only covered a certain amount of staff-time) and by kitchen facilities). In keeping with this approach, the Co-op will probably raise the cost of shares next year to ensure the same or a higher amount goes to farmers.

Drop-in Centres

The budget for community centres that work with marginalized groups is of course calculated differently. Projects can charge enough for sessions to be able to offer subsidized spots; however, sessions that are only for community centre members are essential to reach a broader group. In this case, the community centres probably have a well-established community kitchens, so the project becomes integrated with their existing programming once the key kitchen staff are trained.

community kitchens can act as business incubators for people who might not have access to the kitchen equipment and space to start food-based enterprises.

In addition, their supply chains are different, relying very much on donated food. They must be more flexible and less formal with their preserving (as it must respond to what comes in the door that day); it is also likely that they are not sending participants home with jars, as many people who access these centres don't have regular access to kitchens at home, or may have marginal shelter (temporary, unstable, or non-existent).

The preserving can be done in this case for future meals provided by the kitchen, or for the development of social enterprises; that is, if the centre has a commercial kitchen, product can be preserved there to be sold in various venues. In this way, community kitchens can act as business incubators for people who might not have access to the kitchen equipment and space to start food-based enterprises.

Basic Workshop budget (Community Workshops)

Item	Cost	Notes
Lead facilitator	$100	
Sous chef	$50	Provided social justice and history or preserving sections as well as cooking support
Fruit	$40	variable
Ingredients	$20	variable
Admin	$75	This includes logistics such as location, purchasing and transporting ingredients, printing handouts and managing online workshop registration
Equipment	$10	This was sometimes less if equipment was donated (jars)
Total Expenses	$295	
Gross income per workshop	$300	
Net profit margin	2%	A grant supported the initial start up of these workshops; future fees will probably be raised to $50 per participant, still well within the average for local workshops

Basic Budget for Social Service Workshops

Item	Cost	Notes
Lead facilitator	$60	
Sous chef	$40	
Fruit	0	donations
Ingredients	$10	variable
Admin	$50	
Equipment	$5	Mostly donated or already in kitchens
Wages for attending trainees	$320	Participants were not charged; in most cases the drop in centre provided wages during these trainings
Cost per workshop (not including wages)	$165	These workshops would need grant support to continue; however, the wages were generally covered by participating organizations, so the cost is low in comparison to the results.

Sample budget from WEFC

These are the original budgets from the West End Food Co-op cannery.

The specific line items can serve as a basic template for a community cannery budget. Individual projects will have different items depending on their specific goals and outcomes.

Basic Budget for Community Supported Orchard (based on 14 shares)

Item	Cost	Notes
Income		The share cost was for 8 sessions; each share contributed $25 to each session
Share cost	$200	An extra $5 was charged for Co-op membership for non-members
Total income	$2800	
Expenses per session		Note: the 14 shareholders attended in two groups of 2.5 hour sessions each
Fruit/ vegetables	$110	
Facilitator	$100	
Sous chef	$100	
Ingredients	$35	
Equipment	$5	Although shareholders were asked to bring their own jars (an e-mail informed them which to bring), there was some expense as the Co-op inventoried jars and exchanged them when necessary. The Co-op also received donated jars, so the main expense was tongs, snap lids, and magnetic wands (used to retrieve lids from boiling water)
Admin	$0	In 2010, this was covered by the grant and the Cannery Intern; it should probably be about 10% of the cost ($300)
Total expenses per session	$350	
Total expenses	$2800	The project was supported by a grant initially; share prices will be raised in the future.
Net profit margin	0%	

Sourcing Food

Sourcing ingredients is a key part of the cannery. How you source things is affected by the model of your cannery, the goals of the project and where it is located. Some questions you will need to answer include:

- What are your purchasing priorities? local, organic, low spray, fairtrade, affordable, ...?
- Who are you getting the produce (and other ingredients) from?
- How will you get your ingredients? Delivery, pick-up, shopping at a market or store?
- Do you have storage?

Purchasing Priorities

Decisions about purchasing have to be made based on the group's priorities and goals as well as availability and capacity. Being clear on your priorities will help you to make decisions about what to buy, and from whom. This can be relatively informal and the group can trust the person doing the purchasing to make the right decisions, or the group can create a document to guide the purchasing.

Who are you Purchasing From (and how will you get it?)

Buying directly from farmers is really worthwhile. You will have to figure out whether the farmer can deliver directly to your cannery location, or whether you need to pick things up. A farmer coming in to town for a farmers' market or to deliver to a store or restaurant will probably be willing to drop things off.

Benefits of purchasing directly from a farmer include supporting local independent growers and the local economy (money goes directly to the producer), receiving fresh and ripe produce, enhancing your awareness of what is in season, selecting from an assortment of interesting or even heritage varieties, learning great stories, knowing your ingredients and how they are grown, building relationships with and appreciation for the people who grow our food, and minimizing pollution and waste of shipping long distances.

At the same time there can be challenges with this sourcing strategy including: needing to order/receive or pick up from multiple sources (as one farmer may not grow all the items you are looking for) and changes in availability (such as too cold, too hot, too much rain, no rain, a serious blight).

To supplement direct relationships with local farmers, especially in early stages while you are still building up your local connections and at awkward or transitional times of the year where small farmers may have limited produce, a local food distributor can be a good option. These businesses purchase from local producers and deliver to

restaurants, stores, and others. If your purchase amount is large enough they may deliver directly to your cannery location.

In Toronto several different organizations, including several with a conscious ecological orientation, deliver food around the city: 100km Foods (www.100kmfoods.com), Kawartha Ecological Growers (http://kawarthaecologicalgrowers.com), and 100 Mile Market (www.100milemarket.com) are good examples. FoodShare Toronto (www.foodshare.net) delivers produce to local schools and agencies and gets a significant amount of their produce directly from local farmers.

Local food distributors are also a potential source for imported produce for special ingredients you can't get locally (eg. citrus, ginger). You may also have a wholesale or chefs' market (or even a food terminal) in your city or town which could be a great place to purchase directly from farmers or from a distributor working with local farmers, as well as for some imported items. Also don't forget your local food co-op grocery store or other independent grocers that specialize in local produce. They may be willing to bring in extra produce for you if you let them know in advance.

Local food distributors are also a potential source for imported produce for special ingredients you can't get locally.

Shopping, Delivery, Storage

Whether you are picking things up, or getting deliveries, timing and storage is very important. Most produce needs to be kept cool at all times, and much of it needs refrigeration (although some produce, like tomatoes, suffers from it and should be canned as soon as possible after delivery so that it can be kept at cool room temperature!).

Some kind of refrigeration space and dry storage is essential. The closer you can time your delivery (or pick up) to the start of processing the produce the less storage is needed. Storage for other ingredients and equipment is also essential.

Planning with Purchasing in Mind

When planning and deciding on recipes, purchasing should be kept in mind. This is especially true if you are prioritizing local produce from small-scale producers. It may also, however, require a certain amount of flexibility as availability changes.

By working directly with farmers, you can plan to do a recipe based on something specific they are growing and the timing they give you for availability. Having a backup supplier (another farmer, distributor, or store) is a good idea, then if something falls through you aren't left empty handed. You can also have two or three recipes ready to go and adjust to what the farmer has available.

On the other hand, you can also do a special round of something when a farmer has a bumper crop. For example, you can arrange an

Not Far From the Tree

Not Far From The Tree is a fruit gleaning organization in Toronto, Ontario started by Laura Reinsborough. At the Spadina House Museum, Reinsborough saw that the City and the museum lacked staff to pick the fruit from the museum's historic orchard so she invited a few friends to join her in the effort. Since then the project has exploded, concentrating primarily on fruit trees on private property. The owners of urban fruit trees often lack the resources, tools, expertise, or interest to harvest the abundant fruit from those trees, let alone make use of it. Not Far From the Tree organizes volunteers to pick the trees and distribute the fruit – as an added bonus they clean up fallen fruit and help educate home owners about their trees. One third of the bounty goes to the tree's owner, if they want it, one third goes to the volunteers, and one third is delivered – by bike trailer - to local meal programmes, food banks, and community kitchens.

The program has been enormously successful and grown at a tremendous rate. In their first full season in 2008, run entirely with volunteer labour, Not Far From The Tree picked 3,003 lbs of fruit from 40 trees around the city. By the summer of 2010 they had 8 staff and 700 volunteers who together picked 19,695 lbs of fruit from 228 fruit trees around the city. This incredible number still represents only one quarter of the trees registered with them, as demand far outstrips their ability to organize picks and distribute fruit. Fruits and nuts picked include: sweet and sour cherries, mulberries, pears, apricots, apples, black walnuts, grapes, and ginko nuts, among others. Website: www.notfarfromthetree.org/

extra session of making tomato sauce (and adding some tomato jam and chutney) when a farmer calls you to say they have a load of tomatoes they haven't been able to sell.

Other ingredients

Purchasing non-perishable ingredients in bulk and having them on hand works well. These include vinegar (this can be local too), lemon juice, spices, salt, and sugar. Keeping an inventory of what you have is important so that you can make sure to have enough on hand for the next recipe.

Cost

Cost is obviously important, but needs to be balanced with your other priorities. When considering cost keep in mind that buying fresh, bulk, whole fruits and vegetables, to process together with a group is already a potential cost savings.

Balancing the need to make the project viable and the desire to pay growers a fair price is possible, but the exact balance struck will depend on the particular circumstances and goals of your cannery. One way of adding to the cannery's ability to purchase local produce is to apply for extra funding to support local agriculture, or funding to make healthy food more accessible.

PRESERVING PARKDALE

The Parkdale Community Cannery Pilot Project

The Preserving Parkdale Project was conceived as a pilot project which ran during the spring, summer, and fall of 2010 in the Parkdale neighbourhood of Toronto, Ontario. It was a partnership of two local organizations, described below. The next phase of the project will be launched in the growing season of 2011 and will hopefully see expanded versions of many of the programs described below.

Partners and Networks

WEFC

The West End Food Co-op (http://westendfood.coop) is a non-profit multistakeholder food co-op located in the Parkdale area of Toronto. The Co-op is focussed on creating a hub for food change in Toronto's West End. The Co-op responds to the needs of all stakeholders in the local food system, and seeks solutions to shared problems. Owner-member groups include farmers (12 members; 25 market members), consumers (284 members), workers (2 members and an active board) and community partners (5 members and 2 partners). As a non-profit, the Co-op seeks to create a community-based food hub that will change the relations between producers and consumers, and create long-lasting, democratic solutions to a food system that currently generates food insecurity and unsustainable agriculture.

The Co-op's activities include a weekly farmers market, community food programming and the development of a community owned store. The Co-op ran a successful farmers' market in 2008 before formally

incorporating in 2009, following intensive strategic planning and business and financial plan development. In 2009, the Co-op completed an innovative community food mapping project to find out where community members get their food and their recommendations for food change in the west end. The co-op was the main fundraiser for the Preserving Parkdale Project, successfully applying for a $30,000 Co-operative Development Grant to pursue the pilot project with PARC as the major partner.

PARC

Since 1980, Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre (PARC) has been a refuge for survivors of the mental health system. During this time adults with mental health & addiction experiences have come to PARC and developed alternative businesses, responded to the lack of affordable housing and addressed poverty with advocacy and employment opportunities. PARC operates a seven day a week drop-in and one of the largest food security and hunger response programs in the west end of Toronto, serving an average of 300 free meals each day to community members.

Operating significantly on second-hand donations, which are received in flux, means that there is a natural abundance of lovely produce during the height of the growing season. PARC began looking at how it could help this produce last longer. Approached from a culinary perspective, it was a natural progression to think about how food can be saved and stored in the context of poverty. Through basic preservation techniques PARC's kitchen is better able to stabilize its access to a healthy and nutritious food supply.

Hunger in the Parkdale community is compounded by a significant shortage of high quality and affordable foods in its neighbourhood. Many of the people who access PARC's hunger response kitchen face a constant struggle to secure a meal daily. PARC has demonstrated through its essential programming that food should not be another issue to tackle when experiencing poor health and poverty. In PARC's kitchen food preservation and bottling initiatives have been of great importance because the nature of drop-in food supply is sparse, erratic and difficult to stabilize.

The Co-op responds to the needs of all stakeholders in the local food system, and seeks solutions to shared problems.

From the Land to High-tech and Back Again - Lea Zeltserman
(profile from WEFC's newsletter)

Bob Baloch's life has come full circle. He grew up on the family farm started by his great-grandfather in Pakistan. It was a large-scale, mixed farm, with cash crops such as sugar cane, wheat, and cotton, orchards for mango and banana, and tropical vegetables. About twenty-two years ago, he walked away from farming to build a career in software engineering, the antithesis of agriculture. "I didn't think I would end up back here," he says.

Farming never quite left his soul though, and he made it a habit to buy produce from local farms around Ontario, always taking the time to observe their operations and note the differences between small farms here and the much larger farm he'd grown up on. One day, he saw chemical fertilizers being used on a farm and thought, "Why am I driving so far for this?" He started planting his own garden, and from there, it was just a few steps to The Fresh Veggies, the one-acre farm he now owns on the edge of Brampton.

In the beginning, he wasn't sure he still had the skills, but with assistance from FarmStart, who helped provide him with land and some necessary courses, Bob was on his way. "I had too many ideas, and they helped me refine them," explains Bob.

His life has in no way become easier since making the transition from engineer to farmer. Or, more accurately, adding farming to his existing life. He still continues to work in his former profession, although only in the winter months, and he'd eventually like to see the farm become self-sustaining. Getting used to our climate has been another challenge—instead of worrying about crops being over-exposed to the sun, Bob now has frost to deal with. Many crops are different from those he grew up around. Others, such as zucchini, related to the common tropical bitter gourd, have a comforting familiarity.

Bob's family—wife Farida, who's expecting their third child, and children Hirra, 9, and Ali, 7—help when they can. And he's been fortunate in that his in-laws were able to come out and help establish the farm. Their assistance and farming expertise has been invaluable, as he's mostly on his own otherwise. The days are long—by 6 a.m., he's already working, and apart from a midday lunch and short rest, he goes until he "can't walk anymore." "There are times when I love it," he says. He particularly relishes his interactions with customers. The farm is in a sub-division, so people feel comfortable walking in, asking questions, and even offering to help.

An unexpected challenge has been the incursion of our modern foodways into his customers' expectations of farmers. "I find myself explaining why things are not available when they want them. People have trouble understanding that there are seasons." That disconnect is one reason the farm is so important to Bob. He's always happy to show customers around the farm, let them select their produce, and ultimately, to challenge their ideas about local and seasonal.

Brampton is now building a park and community area next door, but Bob doesn't fear the encroachment of city life on his farmland. He looks forward to the chance to become part of the community. And possibly, educate a few more people. He'd like to eventually add another couple acres and establish pick-your-own strawberries.

Word is getting around about Bob's produce. One customer drove in from Waterloo to buy a case of fenugreek, a delicate plant which has to be cooked within 24 hours of picking for optimal flavour. Bob thought he might be buying for a restaurant, but it was for a party he was throwing; a friend had told him about The Fresh Veggies. "Those are things that make me feel good," says Bob. "It makes me feel that I'm doing something good; my skills were able to please my customers."

Visit Bob at the Market or online at www.thefreshveggies.com.

Watch for fenugreek at the market in early summer, and cook up some Baloch family Methi Aloo. Visit their website for more recipes.

Methi, or Fenugreek, Aloo

- 1 lb Methi (fenugreek)
- 1 lb potato, cut in small chunks
- 2 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 tsp salt, or to taste
- 1 tsp crushed red peppers, or to taste

1. Remove Methi leaves from stem and discard stems. Wash Methi leaves and dry them with a paper towel to remove water.
2. Add some cooking oil to a hot pan and add chopped onions, cooking until they turn light brown.
3. Add chopped tomatoes, salt and peppers and cook until they are mixed.
4. Add potato and Methi leaves, and continue cooking until all water is evaporated and you can see the oil separate from the cooked Methi.
5. Serve hot with pita or Nan (Indian flat bread).

Planning with the Community

The Parkdale community is extremely diverse. Toronto is one of the most multicultural cities in the world and Parkdale is an important example of this. It is also diverse in terms of class, with the northern part of Parkdale rapidly gentrifying while the southern part is largely low-income with high rates of unemployment. Finally, Parkdale contains a strong mental health consumer/survivor community, due in part to the proximity to Canadian Addictions and Mental Health, as well as an older institution, now closed, that housed many local residents struggling with mental health issues.

Halfway houses and boarding homes are a historic feature of the neighbourhood. As such the Cannery project had the goal of serving quite distinct populations, developing programs that could benefit both comparatively affluent and low-income consumers.

Planning sessions with the community and at PARC engaged community members in consultation on the form that the Cannery would take. This gave important input into the development of the pilot project. Meetings and informal discussion with producer-members of WEFC also provided an opportunity for them to contribute their perspectives as members of a broader regional community.

Informal discussions through outreach at the Sorauren Park Farmers' Market and other events as well as evaluation following workshops and in the final session of the CSO program also provided important feedback during the course of the program. This type of observation and feedback throughout the project, combined with further sessions with the community at large and potential partner organizations, will provide input into the next phase of the cannery.

Cannery Programs

The Cannery carried out several interrelated programs. In the initial development stages we devised a work plan to guide the work and keep the group to a schedule. This work plan was revisited and revised throughout the project and many pieces of the ultimate programming were developed in co-operation, with WEFC and PARC representatives meeting regularly through the summer season to coordinate their activities.

The goals of the project included developing job skills and employment opportunities for PARC Kitchen Crew, developing canning skills in community members at large, increasing the role that preserving played in PARC's kitchen, and improving the market opportunities for WEFC producer-members. Many programs were multi-functional. For instance, the Community Supported Orchard Project (discussed further below) had both a job-creation and a skills-training component for Kitchen Crew members while simultaneously

developing the preserving skills of other community members and purchasing sustainably grown fruits from local farmers.
Professional Development trainings were carried out at PARC and by the West End Food Co-op in a variety of contexts. The West End Food Co-op provided facilitation training as well as various integrated on-the-job training programs including having a PARC kitchen crew member act as a co-facilitator in numerous sessions and providing the opportunity for multiple kitchen crew members to participate in promoting the cannery at events and farmers markets. The program also included professional training for an intern from York University who received extensive training in facilitation, organization, promotion and other areas.

Training at PARC was partially integrated with the existing extensive kitchen programming and served both to enhance the skills of Kitchen Crew and to increase the significance of preserving in PARC's kitchen, helping to make it a part of their everyday practice. One important program operating in the PARC kitchen, alluded to in several places above, is Kitchen Crew Training which helps to prepare qualified members for a career working in commercial kitchens while also providing some paid employment.

The West End Food Co-op provided facilitation training as well as various integrated on-the-job training programs.

Peer Kitchen Crew Leaders work extensively in the kitchen, organizing the preparation and serving on their scheduled days. The kitchen leader position involves planning a meal using available donated food, organizing kitchen volunteers, and overseeing the entire preparation and serving program. This work is paid, providing employment opportunities in addition to valuable experience in leadership and working in a busy kitchen. The Kitchen Crew also participate in different kinds of leadership training as part of the drop-in's programming and receive support from PARC staff to help them work to rebuild their lives.

Canning and preserving skills were integrated into this program – three members of the Kitchen Crew opted to pursue preserving and worked closely with the chef to integrate preserving into the everyday practice of the kitchen. They solicited stories and recipes from PARC members and invited those with preserving expertise to teach recipes in the kitchen: one member, of Tibetan and Indian heritage, came forward to teach a hot sauce recipe to the Kitchen Crew and interested community volunteers.

The Crew Members also attended an off-site workshop with WEFC members in the historic kitchen of a local museum that dealt with the history of preserving and gave participants the opportunity to make a traditional rhubarb jam over a wood fire. Throughout the project outreach about the preserving going on in the kitchen attracted interest from the members and numerous experts on generational and

cultural canning came forward with offers to teach community workshops and share their skills with kitchen members.
Two of the Kitchen Crew members also attended WEFC farmers' markets on a regular basis, doing outreach for the cannery and gaining experience in promotions.

In addition to enhancing the culture of preserving at PARC, increasing the number of preserves produced in the kitchen, and allowing all Crew Members to develop their ideas about the meaning and significance of preserving, the Cannery program also helped to create employment opportunities. One member participated as a paid co-facilitator in the CSO sessions (described below), contributing a great deal of expertise and personal experience to the program.

He plans to continue in this role, as well as co-facilitating community workshops, during the next phase of the program. This job was

created out of the partnership between WEFC and PARC and represents an example of the kind of employment opportunities that could exist as the Cannery expands.

Lack of immediate and significant employment opportunities made it difficult for crew members to dedicate a significant amount of time to the initiative. Nonetheless their new skills in preserving have enhanced the PARC kitchen and will continue to be valuable to them in future workplaces. Furthermore, this aspect will hopefully be explored more in the next phase of the cannery program: the transformation from being dependent on a community service to leading workshops in the same community is an empowering experience and a potential path to further training, employment, and prestige.

In addition to providing training to Kitchen Crew members, PARC staff worked to offer workshops to groups from other social service agencies. The Youth Green Squad, a group of young adults in a youth employment and training program facilitated by Greenest City (www.greenestcity.ca/), and a group of homeless and at-risk youth from Eva's Initiatives (www.evasinitiatives.com/) participated in preserving workshops facilitated by the lead chef at PARC and in some cases co-facilitated by Kitchen Crew.

In the case of the youth from Eva's Initiatives an eight-week program was developed that emphasized general kitchen skills, preserving, and recipe creation and presentation for formal events and culminated in the youth preparing an appetizer, featuring their own preserves, and presenting it at a fundraiser. This program was a great success, increasing the youth's confidence and food skills, leading many to return to PARC as regular volunteers, and encouraging the desire of several of the youth to pursue careers in commercial kitchens. As such there are plans to repeat a similar program with future groups.

In addition to these workshops, PARC and WEFC organized several workshops open to the general public. The first two workshops took place at PARC and one was facilitated by the PARC chef. Because of the success and popularity of these first workshops it was decided to continue offering further workshops. The workshops, in general, followed a cost-recovery strategy and were mainly organized by an independent facilitator and the WEFC intern.

Each workshop consisted of a mix of discussion and hands-on preserving practice. The discussion section in several of the workshops used exercises and practices drawn from Popular Education Practice (See Appendix 1 on page 68 for further information) to provoke critical analysis of the food system, addressing issues of citizen versus corporate control, independence,

de-skilling, empowerment, class privilege, food (in)security, etc. in order to better understand possible motives for learning to preserve food, and the broader significance of such learning.

The discussion was accompanied by working through a recipe in the kitchen with a skilled facilitator. The 10-14 participants in each class were encouraged to ask questions, participate in filling jars etc., and share their own memories and experiences of preserving. The workshops were very successful and, promoted largely by word of mouth, most of them had almost twice as many people sign up as there were spots available. For further detail on the specific workshop plans see the workshop materials available in the “Documents and Templates” section page 75.

The final discrete program in the Preserving Parkdale Project was inspired both by the needs of producers themselves and by the activities of the Scoharie Co-op Cannery (www.schohariecannery.org/). This project was entitled the “Community Supported Orchard” project or CSO. This name alludes to the idea of “Community Supported Agriculture,” an idea originating in Japan in the 1970s.

In a CSA consumer members buy shares in a farm's produce up front and, in this way, shares in the fortunes of the farm.

In a CSA consumer members buy shares in a farm's produce up front and, in this way, shares in the fortunes of the farm. In leaner years CSA members receive less produce, and greater proportions of those crops that have flourished, whereas in good years they receive overflowing boxes of vegetables. Many CSAs historically also involved a work component, where members would come out several times during the season to work on the farms, but this has become somewhat less common as increasingly urban consumers have bought in to CSAs.

The variation from season-to-season has also been reduced as an increasing number of farmers feel an obligation to source a variety of produce from wholesalers if their own farm is not able to provide widely or abundantly enough in a given year.

CSAs were initially farmer led and they have two very important financial functions for farmers – they serve to control or distribute the farmers' risk and to equalize the flow of money over the year. Because farms require heavy investment in spring but pay off only gradually over the summer and fall many farmers have had to rely on expensive debt, paying large proportions of their already low earnings in interest. The CSA model makes it possible for farmers to avoid this burden.

At the same time, the CSA also has important benefits for buyers – as well as getting access to good quality and usually very reasonably

priced food, members also gain control over and connection to their food system.

It is not uncommon for members to visit farms whose CSA they subscribe to. CSA members are able to see where their food comes from, to ask questions about farmers' practices, and even to request speciality or ethnic vegetables they might not be able to get elsewhere. Many farmers place a high value on being able to educate people about their food while also conducting direct “market research” and learning what people want from them.

The CSO drew its inspiration from CSAs, responding to the needs of two of the West End Food Co-op's producer members. Duncan Smith, of Two Century Organic Farms and Christine (Krysha) Klucha, of Klucha Organics are both fruit growers with long family histories of farming.

In the case of Two Century Organic Farm the farm takes its name from the fact that it has been continuously cultivated by Smith's family for more than two hundred years. Klucha's farm has similarly been in

17 Kinds of cherry and one 160 year old tree!

There are seventeen different kinds of cherries on Two Century Farm, where Duncan Smith’s family has grown fruit for generations. He remembers growing up there, when the property stretched from the Niagara Escarpment all the way to the lake in Grimsby Ontario. He and his siblings would run across the Queen Elizabeth Way (QEW), which was somewhat tamer then, to go play at the lake. The rule he told us was that if you could see a car, it was too close.

In 1938 the QEW highway became limited access and they received some compensation for the loss; eventually they gave up the land on the other side, because it was too hard to get to it. The property boasts many other fruits besides the cherries—apples, peaches, pears, plums, grapes, nectarines, and apricots, as well as lots of plum tomatoes and a sizable vegetable plot.

We were meeting to talk about the new West End Food Co-op project, Preserving Parkdale, our new community cannery. We hope to provide shares in this and another fruit farm so that preservers can get a piece of the harvest, and the farmers can sell more of their fruit. We worked our way through the cherry orchard, tasting, admiring and learning.

Victor Cherries make good maraschino cherries; white cherries like the Napoleons and Vegas have a lovely delicate flavour but do not ship well due to bruising. Venus Cherries look like tiny plump hearts, while Vans are squarish and squat. We even learned that cherries have two kinds of growth habits—“precocious” grows up, while “determinate” grows down.

The trees are tightly pruned for easier harvest and better yield. The visit seemed short compared to the life of the farm—at the end of the tour, full of cherries, we stood in awe beside an apple tree that was 160 years old, gnarled, stubborn and still thriving. We hope our fledgling co-op shows the same determination and longevity!

Klucha Farm - Janna Lüttmann
(profile from WEFC's newsletter)

Two weeks ago Klucha Farm joined us at the market. Being mainly a fruit farm, the late season didn't yield enough produce to bring to the market earlier.

I bought my first Klucha Farm fruit last year, when the farm family made their market debut at the Green Barns Farmers' Market at St. Clair and Wychwood. My first $3 bag of plums was soon followed by homemade jam, pickled beets and other fruits as the season progressed.

As a response to the canning factory closure in the Niagara Region, Klucha Farm, which has existed for many decades, was looking for new ways to sell their produce. Klucha Farm is Krysha, her husband David, and other family members. The farm is run without any hired help. Her father who came from Poland with some farming experience decided to buy the farm in the Niagara Region in 1956 after having worked in mining.

Although always active on the family farm, Krysha and David have become increasingly involved in the past few years. This year they planted roughly 10 out of 15 acres. As environmentally responsible farmers, and in order not to exhaust the land, which would happen if you used it over and over again, the Klucha family uses crop rotation while fruits are only sprayed when needed. "I am going to loose some of my crop but it is better," says Krysha about her low-spraying technique. The water used for irrigation comes from an old well that Krysha's father built as "this is better for the environment, the trees and the taste".

Most of the ten acres are used for fruit, but at the market you can find not only several varieties of apples, plums and peaches, but also preserves, cakes, and a mix of vegetables. Krysha and her family always explore planting new varieties of fruits and vegetables. Last week at the market they sold local okra, and in a couple of weeks Krysha and David might bring sweet potatoes to the market, as they experimented with 200 sweet potato plants grown from organic stock this year.

Klucha Farm reminds me of the old-fashioned European town markets with farm families selling fresh produce as well as homemade goods.

the family for generations and she has recently taken over from her father, transitioning the farm gradually to organic production. Both of these farmers are growing in the Niagara region and have suffered from the closure of the industrial canneries that used to buy most of the fruit in that region. When the last tender-fruit processing plant closed Klucha began taking her peaches to farmers' markets throughout Toronto and the surrounding area. Smith is in a similar position.

While both growers have been, so far, able to stay on their land, selling at farmers' markets is labour intensive and not necessarily very profitable. It requires a lot of work from growers in a season when there is already a lot to do. Markets consume a lot of energy,

particularly if the growers must drive several hours to a major urban centre.

Furthermore there is no guarantee that everything will be sold, let alone at a price sufficient to turn a profit. In the case of orchards there are also special problems – fruit varieties are surprisingly subject to fashion. People's taste in fruit – what they think a peach, for example, ought to look and taste like – change rapidly and often in response to the products of large industrial growers. Heirloom varieties can be neglected because the taste or texture is not what people expect, but switching to a more favoured variety is not a realistic short-term option, and may be impossible on some pieces of land, under organic production, or in the case of seed-saving or fruit trees, which take years to begin fruiting heavily.

The CSO sought to address some of these issues, providing urban consumers with the opportunity to learn about their food and to savour new varieties of familiar fruits through preserving. Fourteen members signed up at the beginning of the season. Every two weeks the group arrived in the kitchen of the Parkdale Neighbourhood Church (in two shifts) to can several bushels of produce delivered by the farmers. Each CSO member participated in the canning and took home several jars of food – if they were unable to make it to a session they had the option of paying a $10 canning fee to Cannery staff or sending a friend or neighbour along to can for them.

The CSO provided urban consumers with the opportunity to learn about their food and to savour new varieties of familiar fruits through preserving.

Most, though not all, of the canners in the CSO had done some preserving before, but the program provided them with an opportunity to receive bulk discounts on produce without needing access to a car to drive to markets or farms. It was also an excellent opportunity to develop their skills, learn new recipes, and work in a social, communal atmosphere with many hands making light work.

While the scale for this year was quite small it provided the growers with an opportunity to make larger deliveries while they were in Toronto (we were able to co-ordinate, for the most part, with the Sorauren Farmers' Market, organized by WEFC, or with other deliveries in Toronto). It also provided an opportunity for farmers to receive a good price for fruits they had a surplus of – we were not picky about what we canned! Finally, it provided an opportunity for the growers to receive a good price for produce that would have been overlooked at markets due to small cosmetic imperfections, the minor scabs and bruises that are almost impossible to avoid, particularly in organic fruit.

One major function of the CSO program, as mentioned above, was to act as a training and job-creation program for PARC kitchen crew and one crew member was placed co-facilitating CSO sessions. The experience of instructing in the community has the capacity to provide

both valuable work experience and a sense of empowerment for workers.

Demand for the CSO considerably exceeded the number of shares we were able to co-ordinate and supply. In the next phase of the cannery it may be possible to sell a larger volume of shares and have preservers meet on multiple nights per week, thereby creating both more employment opportunities and a larger potential market for producers.

In addition to these benefits the program was very effective both for building a sense of community and for developing people's expertise over the longer term – It attracted many people who had some previous canning experience but wanted to expand their repertoire and found it helpful to have an encouraging group committed to canning regularly.

Feedback received at the end was overwhelmingly positive with participants anonymously providing comments like "I love the sense of community the cannery creates; people of all walks get to share in creating great food!" and "I got my money's worth in take home goods but more than that I learned so much that will last a lifetime."

The diversity of programs pursued by the Cannery on the whole allowed it to effectively serve a variety of populations and meet many different needs. The program was geared to the needs and capacities of the Parkdale Community specifically, responding to the needs of the community while also utilizing the resources of the partners as effectively as possible to have maximum effect.

While different communities will have different needs and different capabilities it is hoped that this case study will provide inspiration for pursuing similar projects, while the detailed considerations provided above will provide guidance for developing a project suited to another unique community.

REFERENCES, LINKS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

Some Projects

http://yeswecanfood.com
(Yes We Can Food, San Franciso, CA.)

http://www.keezletowncommunitycannery.com/
(Keezletown Community Cannery, Shenandoah Valley, Virginia.)

http://www.schohariecannery.org/
(Scoharie Co-op Cannery, Scoharie, NY.)

http://foodpreservationnetwork.net/
(The Food Preservation Network, Minneapolis, MN.)

http://www.communitykitchens.ca/main/?en&PeoplePreservingFood
(People Preserving Food, Vancouver, BC.).

http://www.foodshare.net/kitchen05.htm
(Foodshare's Toronto Kitchen Incubator, Toronto, Ontario)

http://www.toronto.ca/tfbi/
(The City of Toronto Food Business Incubator, Toronto, Ontario)

http://www.sundaykitchentn.com/
(Sunday Kitchen, Decatur, Tennessee)

http://www.shoalsec.com/facilities/SCC_index.html
(Shoals Entrepreneurial Center, Alabama)

http://www.notfarfromthetree.org/

(Not Far From The Tree fruit gleaning project, Toronto, ON)

http://www.shoelace.ca/
(Shoelace Collective, Toronto, Ontario)

http://www.foodnotbombs.net/
(Food Not Bombs, global)

http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=129402166
(Not actually a project, a story about canning on NPR, with recipes)

http://www.pickyourown.org/canneries.htm
(List of canneries in the United States by state including state-funded and Church of the Latter Day Saints canneries).

Partial list of USDA Community Canneries
Montgomery County, Virginia
http://www.montva.com/content/1146/98/133/1758.aspx

Hanover County, Virginia
http://www.co.hanover.va.us/works/canneryFAQ.htm

Caroline County, Virginia
http://www.visitcaroline.com/cannery.html

University of Florida
http://duval.ifas.ufl.edu/canning_center.shtml

Citrus County, Florida
http://www.citruscountyfl.org/commserv/extension/canning/canning_center.htm

Some Recipe Sources
http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/
(USDA National Center For Home Food Preservation)

Bernardin/Ball Recipes:

http://www.homecanning.com/

Some Blogs

(note: not all recipes that appear on blogs are necessarily safe to use. Use recipes from the USDA Centre for Home Food Preservation, Bernardin/Ball or from a reputable published source until you feel comfortable making your own judgements about what is safe!)

http://wellpreserved.ca/

http://tigressinapickle.blogspot.com/

http://tigressinajam.blogspot.com/

http://backyardfarmsto.blogspot.com/

http://puttingby.wordpress.com/

http://www.foodinjars.com/

Learn More / Bibliography

Baer, Roberta D., Katherine Kelley, Deborah Rosenberg, Rebecca Vollweiler, & Lanette Wilbur (1992) “Users of a Community Cannery: Patterns and Problems” City and Society 6(1) 90-95

Bernat, Cory Exhibition of War-Era Food Posters from the archives of the National Agricultural Library. Accessed online Nov 2010: www.good-potato.com/beans_are_bullets/index.html

Bruegel, Martin (2002) "How the French Learned to Eat Canned Food 1809- 1930s" in Belasco & Scranton eds., Food Nations: Selling Taste in Consumer Societies New York, New York: Routledge.

Click, Melissa A., and Ronit Ridberg (2010) "Saving Food: Food Preservation as Alternative Food Activism" Environmental Communication 4(3) 301-317.

DuPuis, E. Melanie (2002) "Nature's Perfect Food: How Milk Became America's Drink" New York: New York University Press

Jaffe, JoAnn and Michael Gertler (2006) "Victual Vicissitudes: Consumer de-skilling and the (gendered) transformation of food systems" Agriculture and Human Values 23 143-162

Levenstein, Harvey (1988) Revolution at the Table: The Transformation of the American Diet, New York: Oxford University Press

Petrick, Gabriella (Forthcoming) "Industrializing Taste: Food Processing and the Transformation of the American Diet, 1900-1965"(working title), Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press

Petrick, Gabriella (2009) "H.G. Heinz and the Creation of Industrial Food" Endeavour, March.

Petrick, Gabriella (2010) "The Ambivalent Diet: The Industrialization of Canning" Magazine of History July 35

APPENDIX 1 POP ED APPENDIX

Popular Education describes an orientation towards teaching and learning that challenges many of the presuppositions of the conventional educational system. "Popular" in this case is derived from the Portuguese "populaire" meaning "of the people" and connoting a political orientation of solidarity with the oppressed and marginalized rather than simple mass appeal. The usage and the term come out of the work of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire who founded a major school of thought about education with his work *The Pedagogy of The Oppressed.*

Popular Education understands all education as political. As Freire said “Washing one's hand of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral”. Popular educators argue that in ordinary educational environments people recapitulate, unconsciously and unintentionally, the dynamics of power present in their society already.

As such, efforts to teach marginalized people, even when pursued with good intentions, are often carried out in ways that entrench their disenfranchisement. The dynamics of an ordinary classroom often rely on and reinforce the idea that the educator holds all the knowledge and that the students are incapable or incompetent, fit only to passively receive information. This plays out in a variety of ways including a tendency to assume that, where the student's experience conflicts with what is being taught the student must be mistaken or misunderstanding the situation.

Popular Education understands all education as political.

Popular education seeks instead to take seriously students' own analyses of their lives and situations rather than imposing on them an idea, developed elsewhere, of what their “real problem” is. For this reason popular educators emphasize that both “students” and “teachers” are learners – while the teacher is presumably there because they have some special skills or knowledge to impart, they are not assumed to have the ultimate answer and do not get the final say. Their beliefs and assumptions can be challenged by students as teacher-learners and student-learners work together to develop their shared ideas.

The function of popular education, as expressed by Freire, is to find ways to challenge and break up the habits that reinforce existing power structures. Recognizing the presence of multiple kinds of oppression and power imbalance between the teachers and students – both because of their roles within the class room and because of their social roles outside the class room including race, class, and gender identity – allows people to work together to develop new "liberating" relationships that respect the humanity of teacher and learner alike.

Because for students and teachers alike, the internalization of social power runs deep and is reinforced constantly in social life, the process of overcoming and working through and around these dynamics of oppression is a complex one which requires a continual interplay between practice and reflection. Freire names this process "Praxis" and describes it as thoughtful action or active reflection.

The intimate relationship between theory and practice is a cornerstone of popular education, reacting against a generalized tendency in society to treat theory as abstract and disinterested while practice is considered in some sense intuitive or instinctual. Popular Education thus demands that you take seriously both your own experiences and the experiences of the people with whom you are working. This is one reason why evaluation is a very important part of popular education practice – it is one method for practice to feed back into theory and challenge it, revealing weaknesses and mistakes.

Popular Educators from Paulo Freire onwards have developed a large set of techniques and exercises to disrupt the conventional power dynamics in a classroom - from simple actions like setting up chairs in a circle to complex techniques like "decoding" situations portrayed in photos or drama to uncover students' experiences and analyses of power.

It is important to keep in mind that popular education is not merely a set of techniques.

The resources below list a great many different exercises for popular education. However it is important to keep in mind that popular education is not merely a set of techniques. The exercises are tools which can be used to advance an agenda of liberation or can, equally, be used in ways which are neither profound nor liberatory and that, at worst, disguise and perpetuate conventional power dynamics.

The movement between action and reflection described as praxis is key to keeping both theory and practice “honest”. Techniques must be employed in the context of a robust analysis of power and analysis itself must be continually tested against your own experience and against the analysis of your fellow-learners.

Exercises

The type of practice that Freire refers to most often in The Pedagogy of the Oppressed is called “decoding”. This relies on taking a picture or image (a video, painting, cartoon, or photo can be used) that portrays some politically relevant situation and having a group analyse it together, identifying what is happening and what it means.

The situation ought to be one which does not directly portray, but can be related to, situations in people's lives. A cartoon showing an interaction between a beggar and a wealthy businessman might spark a discussion of class, worthiness, social security, the causes of poverty etc.Ideally the picture or cartoon should be simple and open

to a number of different possible descriptions – depending on people's own life situations they may perceive very different things in the image.

Augusto Boal, developer of “theatre of the oppressed,” provided many excellent exercises particularly in his famous book “Games for Actors and Non-Actors”. Theatre of the oppressed employed dramatic techniques to achieve goals very similar to Freire's.

One central exercise that Boal would use was to have people collectively script a scene that represented a problem in their community – for example somebody being unfairly harassed by police, or a scene of racial conflict or tension. After the scene has been performed once, people discuss the problem and how the scene could have gone differently. After a certain amount of discussion the scene is repeated but this time group members have the opportunity to stop the scene at any time and either (depending on the version) take the place of one of the actors or make a suggestion to one of them.

This process continues, with the scene repeated until a resolution is reached or until the group feels it has done all it can in this particular situation. This provides an excellent way for people to both diagnose and examine a problem in their society and to move towards thinking creatively about solutions to that problem. It is a powerful exercise for group problem solving.

Exploring forms of expression other than the verbal, including drama, visual art, music, dance, sculpture etc. is important in popular education for a number of reasons. Different mediums for thinking often allow people to explore and develop ideas that might not occur to them in more conventional formats where we have many deeply ingrained habits of thought.

At the same time, many popular educators argue that because verbal skills are so strongly associated with power and success in our society alternate mediums also offer a more “level playing field” where people who are often silent (or silenced) can make themselves heard. For instance, in North America, mastery of English is often very important for people's financial and social success. Recent immigrants, people with learning or physical disabilities that interfere with speech or writing, or people who for other reasons may not be comfortable “speaking up” are therefore much more likely to be marginalized.

Working through another medium can help to encourage people used to being heard to pause and let others be heard. Helping people to work with mediums they are less comfortable in can change social dynamics appreciably and alter whose stories are heard.

On the other hand more accessible media like art and drama are often rejected by popular culture (powerful culture) as legitimate modes for expression and discussion. Popular Education defends the value of these other ways of knowing and of communicating and argues that they can be as important and subtle as discussion.

This means challenging the current near-monopoly on the production of knowledge held by those with excellent English-language (in Canada) verbal skills. This is often, unsurprisingly, met with resistance. This usually takes two forms: on the one hand a suspicion in our society that art, music, etc are “silly” or “childish” and, on the other hand, apparently opposite but closely related, a belief that they are specialist fields, reserved for professional artists. Popular Educators resist both of these claims and argue that artistic, musical, and dramatic practices are powerful tools for thinking and communicating and that they can be used by anyone and are not the sole domain of “artists”.

More accessible media like art and drama are often rejected by popular culture (powerful culture) as legitimate modes for expression and discussion.

Educators often develop their own exercises and share them. They generally have a clear idea of what the exercise is intended to do – a simple physical exercise might be used to break tension in a discussion, to raise people's energy, to help people get to know each other etc.

Other exercises like decoding images can be “heavier,” involving deep and often difficult thinking. To avoid fatigue, to keep people creative, and to ensure that they actually find the session empowering and rewarding rather than simply exhausting, facilitators must both plan sessions carefully and respond fluidly to the needs of the group.

It is useful both to have a series of “back-up” exercises that can be used – for example a few quick energizers that can be thrown in if the group seems discouraged or tired – and a detailed session plan. One important tool for session planning is described next.

The Loom

A loom is a tool for thinking through and planning a workshop. Provided below are both a blank template and an example from a West End Food Co-op workshop. This template was developed by the Catalyst Centre (www.catalystcentre.ca) in Toronto.

Looms provide an excellent way to organize your thinking about a workshop, breaking it down into manageable sections and thinking about how much time and what resources you will need for each section.

The imperative to identify the goals of each section is particularly useful. It forces you to think deeply about your reasons for holding a session and how you will be able to judge if it is successful or not and helps discourage unintentionally using exercises just for their own sake. At the same time it serves a more pragmatic function – if something goes wrong and it is not possible to do a specific exercise for any reason, having the goal and time set out makes it much easier to come up with a replacement exercise that will serve the same function.

Design loom for Draft - 24/01/11 **1**

Dream list of goals/outcomes:

Brainstorm list of possible activities:

Principles activities	Warm-ups/Energizers	Evaluation

Design loom for Draft - 24/01/11 2

Session Plan:

TIME	OBJECTIVE	METHOD	DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS	STUFF	WHO

All You Can!

For more information consider the following sources as starting places for your research in Popular Education. Searching for local collectives and associations that practice Popular Education, like the Catalyst Centre in Toronto, can also be extremely helpful.

Resources

Books

Barndt, Deborah. "WildFire: Art As Activism" Toronto, ON: Sumach Press. 2006.

Boal, Augusto. "Theater of the Oppressed," translated by: Charles A & Maria-Odilia Leal McBride, New York, NY: Urizen Books, 1979.

Boal, Augusto. "Games for Actors and Non-Actors," 2nd ed. translated by: Adrian Jackson, New York: Routledge, 2002.

Freire, Paulo. "Pedagogy of the Oppressed" translated by: Myra Bergman Ramos, New York: Herder and Herder, 1970.

Freire, Paulo “Pedagogy of Hope” translated by: Robert R. Barr, New York: Continuum, 1994

Ledwith, Margaret and Jane Springer "Participatory Practice: Community-based Action for Transformative Change” Bristol, UK: The Policy Press. 2010.

Miller, Sally "Edible Action: Food Activism and Alternative Economics" Halifax, NS: Fernwood Press. 2008.

Online Resources and Resource Lists

The Catalyst Centre:
ttp://www.catalystcentre.ca/resources

The Popular Education News:
http://www.popednews.org/resources.html

Trapese Popular Education Collective:
http://trapese.org/

International Theatre of the Oppressed Organization:
http://www.theatreoftheoppressed.org

Information on Community Mapping:
http://communitymap.blogspot.com/

APPENDIX 2 CANNING BASICS

Botulism Facts and Fears

Canning or Jarring food preserves it in two ways. On the one hand ordinary spoilage bacteria – molds, yeasts, and bacteria that are present in food normally – are destroyed by pre-sterilizing jars before filling them and processing the filled jars at a high temperature for the recommended period of time. These microorganisms are then kept out by an airtight seal. On the other hand the dangerous bacterium botulism (Clostridium Botulinim), which flourishes in very low-oxygen environments, is present in soil and therefore in most food, and is difficult to destroy at ordinary temperatures is dealt with in one of two ways.

In pressure canning a machine known as a pressure canner makes it possible to heat food above the ordinary boiling temperature of water, thereby creating temperatures high enough to kill botulism spores. In hot water bath canning an environment must be created inside the jar which prevents the botulism spores from reproducing: the spores themselves are not dangerous but create a powerful toxin, botulotoxin, as a byproduct when they reproduce.

Botulism can only reproduce in relatively low-acid and low-sugar environments – this is why acidic foods like pickles and sugary foods like jams can be canned safely without a pressure-canner whereas low-acid foods like beans, meat, and fish must always be pressure canned. Essentially, if it is sweet or sour you are safe!

When using a water-bath canner, because the safety of the canning depends on the acidity and sugar content of the food canned, it is important to follow recipes from a recognized source like the USDA centre for home food preservation or Bernardin / Ball who test the PH of final recipes before publishing them.

Most cookbooks can also be assumed to be safe, but sources like blogs should be treated with caution until you are very comfortable with canning and feel able to assess recipes yourself. Be careful when following a recipe not to change the proportion of vinegar or sugar to produce – while minor changes to spices etc. are usually safe, replacing one ingredient with another, changing the proportion of vinegar to water, reducing salt or sugar in some recipes, or changing the relative quantity of produce to brine can all change the acidity of the final product and produce potentially dangerous food.

Most cookbooks can also be assumed to be safe, but sources like blogs should be treated with caution until you are very comfortable with canning and feel able to assess recipes yourself.

Botulism does not have any taste or odour, or produce visible changes in your product, so it is important to be sure of your recipes and follow instructions closely to make sure everything is safe.

If you are concerned about salt and sugar in your canning Bernardin and the USDA both provide recipes for low-sugar and low-salt recipes

that are perfectly safe to use. Rely on these rather than altering other recipes to suit your taste.

While this can sound alarming, most people's fear of botulism when they start canning is exaggerated. Botulism poisoning is extremely rare, especially in fruit and vegetable canning. If you follow recipes and make sure to pressure-can any low acid foods, home canning is extremely safe.

Thousands of people have been doing it for over a hundred years with relatively few cases of severe poisoning. Our understanding of botulism is now extremely good and we know in great detail what conditions are needed to kill it. Furthermore popular recipes for beginner canners – pickles and jams – generally err very far on the side of caution, using very large quantities of sugar and vinegar and therefore posing very little risk.

Canning with a more experienced preserver is wonderful because they can reassure you and have a clear understanding of what is safe and what is potentially dangerous. If you do not have access to a mentor, however, there are many good sources out there to help you to create safe and delicious canned goods (see the end of this section).

If you follow recipes and make sure to pressure-can any low acid foods, home canning is extremely safe.

Seals and Lids

Aside from 'the botulism question' the part of canning about which there seems to be the most confusion is the question of sealing and what exactly happens in a canner. Most glass canning jars feature a two-part lid: a flat lid with a rubber seal around it and a metal ring that holds the lid in place during canning. Other types of jars – with separate rubber rings, glass tops etc., do exist but this is by far the most common and widely available type.

The rings and jars can be re-used indefinitely so long as they are not damaged, but the lids themselves are equipped with only a small quantity of rubber for sealing and thus are not recommended for re-use. While some people do, in fact, re-use them there is a greater chance of the jar not sealing.

When a jar is placed in a hot-water bath canner the pre-warmed lid should be centred on the top with the metal ring holding it in place but tightened only “finger-tight”. The reason for this is that the eventual seal on the jar is formed because, as the contents of the jar heat and expand, air is forced out of the jar. The lid must be loose enough to allow this to happen but tight enough that the lid will not be dislodged entirely and water will not get in.

The lid is pre-warmed to soften the rubber on the lid so that it will form a weak seal with the top of the jar which will only be broken when

enough pressure builds up inside the jar to force air out, preventing water from entering. When jars are removed from the canner they will "pop" - most modern lids come with a "button" in the middle that will be pulled down when a vacuum is created inside by the cooling contents.

Sometimes jars will pop immediately as they are being removed from the canner, sometimes it can take up to an hour or more – so long as you do not jostle or open the jars this should not have any effect on their safety. Occasionally a jar will "pop" before being put in the canner – for instance when a jar is filled with hot brine and a lid placed on top. Generally it is a good idea to open and re-lid these jars in case the seal interferes with air leaving the jar in the canner.

If a jar does not pop after an hour or two out of the canner, it has failed to seal. If you are not sure if a jar has sealed or not you can test it by pressing on the centre of the lid and seeing if it moves, or by removing the ring and lifting the jar by the edge of the lid – a jar with a strong seal should always be able to support its own weight in this way without a problem. If in doubt do this over a sink or soft surface to avoid a mess!

Jars can fail to seal for several reasons – a nick or scratch on the edge of the jar (always check your jars before filling!) is relatively common but a small piece of food on the rim can also be responsible. Occasionally an off-centre or defective lid may be the problem. If a jar does not seal you can re-process it with a new lid but this will sometimes change the texture or flavour of the food – jams in particular may suffer, as prolonged exposure to heat can break down the pectin that is responsible for "setting" jam. In most cases, unless several jars fail to seal, it is simplest to just refrigerate the jar immediately and use it within two to three weeks.

Beyond Canning

There is a great deal more to say about canning, much of which is covered in the sources provided below. This section is intended only to serve as a very brief introduction and an encouragement to read and research more widely.

In addition, there are many other forms of preservation from fermenting to drying, that deserve to be explored more widely. What types of preserving you choose to explore will, like many other aspects of your cannery, depend on your community and what people are interested in learning. There is information to be found about dozens of different methods of preservation and they all have different advantages, suiting different interests and palettes.

Canning
The USDA Centre for Home Food Preservation: (gold standard of safety)
http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/publications/publications_usda.html

Bernardin (Canadian):
http://www.bernardin.ca/

Ball (American)
http://www.freshpreserving.com/

BC Health:
http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthfiles/hfile22.stm

Other Preserving
Wild Fermentation:
http://www.wildfermentation.com/

Drying: (NCHFP)
http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/how/dry.html

Curing & Smoking: (NCHFP)
http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/how/cure_smoke.html

Provided by https://pickyourown.org/starting_a_cannery.htm

APPENDIX 3 DOCUMENTS AND TEMPLATES

List of Documents and Templates

Promotions
Press release
Workshop posters
Cannery FAQ Flyer
Workshop announcement email

CSO Documents
CSO info sheet & sign up
Recipes July 27th
Recipes August 10th
Recipes September 7th
Recipes September 21st
Recipes October 5th
Recipes October 19th
Recipes November 2nd
Recipes November 16th

Workshop Documents

Handouts
June 18th
June 25th
August 3rd
August 17th
September 14th
September 28th

Workshop Resource Sheet

West End Food Co-op
416-533-6363
www.westendfood.coop
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Press Release

Attention: Assignment Editor

March 18, 2010

Preserving Parkdale:
Local food project launches community cannery, focusing on communities at risk

Toronto: The West End Food Co-op (WEFC) in partnership with the Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre (PARC) announced today the launch of a community cannery. The value-added processing program will offer skills training and community workshops in food preserving and canning.

"We can barely contain our anticipation! What an enlightened idea – especially as it encourages us to conserve our bounty which is a life skill that has been lost," says PARC's Executive Director Victor Willis.

Ayal Dinner, Co-op President and Farmer Market Coordinator said "I am delighted at the new capacity this funding brings to the co-op and the community, the West End Food Co-op is committed to developing strong community food programs and better capacity for healthy and culturally appropriate food in Toronto's west end."

The Parkdale Processing Project will begin in April 2010 with a series of community planning workshops. The processing workshops will be held during the growing season to draw from the Co-op's producer members and provide an additional market outlet during peak harvest times.

The Co-op is the first-ever recipient of funding from the Robert Owen-Henri Lasserre Fund. The grant is from the Co-operative Development Foundation of Canada and will be administered by the Canadian Worker Co-op Federation.

The WEFC was founded in 2008 and runs the highly successful Sorauren Farmers' Market (weekly starting in May, once a month in the winter). The Co-op's membership is made up of farmers, consumers, workers and community partners. The Co-op completed a successful community food mapping project across the west end in the summer of 2009, and is currently offering community bonds to raise money for the future co-op store. WEFC will be holding information sessions on this community investment option over the next several months, and hopes to open the store in 2011.

PARC has been a refuge for survivors of the mental health system for 30 years. Some of the community services PARC provides include: case management/ outreach services, a daily drop-in and one of the largest food security programs in the west end. PARC actively helps to re-skill their clients.

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PRESERVING PARKDALE PROJECT

Presents two community canning workshops with food activist Heather Kilner, Michelle Quintal from Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre (PARC) and Karin Ng from West End Food Co-op (WEFC)

Friday June 18 5:00pm-8:00pm PARC, 1499 Queen Street West
Friday June 25 5:00pm-8:00pm PARC, 1499 Queen Street West
Cost: $25 for WEFC members, $30 non-members
register: info@westendfood.coop or at www.westendfood.coop

WEST END FOOD COOP

PRESERVING PARKDALE PROJECT

Join us for our next Community Cannery Workshop!

Tuesday September 14 from 6:00 to 8:30

Cost: $30 for WEFC members, $35 non-members

To register: info@westendfood.coop or at www.westendfood.coop

Provided by https://pickyourown.org/starting_a_cannery.htm

West End Food Co-op's Preserving Parkdale Project

What is the Parkdale Processing Project?

The project will have members of the Parkdale community gathering together to learn and share methods for preserving fruits and vegetables. This project will increase the amount of local and affordable, delicious and nutritious food in Parkdale!

Why a Processing Project in Parkdale?

Led by the West End Food Co-op with Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre (PARC) this project will create new opportunities for PARC Peer Kitchen Crew Leaders, people who diligently work at addressing hunger in the Parkdale area. These leaders will learn advanced methods of conserving and then act as experts in the community, teaching others. The West End Food Co-op and PARC will offer community workshops in preserving with a focus on local and healthy food.

Throughout this project the West End Food Co-op, with the cooperation of its many farmers, producers and members, will be exploring their path towards community kitchen programming at the co-op while creating a how-to manual on food canning and processing within this community kitchen model.

In partnership these two groups hope to achieve a significant revival of the long standing canning and preserving traditions.

Where can I get more Information?

Info for Farmers and Producers:
Sally Miller, West End Food Co-op Coordinator sally@westendfood.coop

For Drop-Ins, Kitchen Leaders and Program Staff:
Michelle Quintal, Community Mental Health Worker/Program Chef mquintal@parc.on.ca

For Volunteer Opportunities and General Inquires: www@westendfood.coop or info@westendfood.coop

Subject: Can All You Can! September 28th Preserving Workshop
From: Community Cannery

Hello Everyone!

I am pleased to announce that the West End Food Co-op will be running another canning workshop on **Tuesday September 28th** in the Parkdale Neighbourhood Church at 201 Cowan Avenue!

The workshop will be led by Heather Kilner, an expert preserver with many years of experience.

You will learn about the theory and practice of preserving, gain hands-on experience using a hot water bath canner, and leave with a jar of delicious preserves to take home with you. We will also take time to reflect on the meaning and significance of learning to preserve our own food, and our experiences of preserved food.

The workshop will run from 6:00-8:30 with registration starting at 5:30. The total cost for the workshop is $30 for West End Food Co-op members or $35 for non-members (which includes the cost of a lifetime membership). Payment can be made in person at the workshop.

Please register online by visiting our website at westendfood.coop. (If the hotlink does not work please paste the following link into your browser address bar: http://westendfood.coop/civicrm/event/info?reset=1&id=40 or follow the link entitled Community Cannery Workshop on the left-hand side of the main page of our website at http://westendfood.coop).

Spaces are limited and previous workshops have filled very quickly so don't delay!

If you have any questions about the workshop please don't hesitate to contact me at katie@westendfood.coop

Happy Canning!

Katie

Westend Food Co-op - www.WestendFood.Coop
Contact us: Info@WestendFood.Coop or call 416.533.6363
Toronto,
Canada

The West End Food Co-op Community Supported Orchard Project

Yes, we can-- enjoy a bountiful harvest all year! Join us to share in the local harvest and preserve fresh local fruit with us while supporting farmers. A Community Supported Orchard share means you are supporting farmers who get a guaranteed market and a fair rate. It means you get access to a wide variety of local fruit all year long.

How does it work?
Every two weeks (8 sessions), our producers will bring your share of their harvest to the community cannery. Members will get together to preserve the fruit, and take home their share—5- 10 pounds of fruit per session, or 8-16 250 ml jars. Shareholders get the fruit, recipe ingredients, equipment access, and expert assistance. You supply your labour, jars, your appetite and a total fee of $200. Each cannery session is from 1- 3 hours (depending on the recipes, the process used, and other factors). The fruit is delivered to the cannery Monday and processed on Tuesday.

The amounts and fruits will vary depending on the harvest, so your larder will reflect the climate. 2010 looks like a great year for fruit so there should be good quantities of most things. Crops include plums, nectarines, peaches, cherries, pears, apples, prunes, grapes, tomatoes and possibly apricots, red onions, okra and jalapeno peppers. Shares are limited in 2010 so don't delay!

How do I sign up?
Just fill out the following form and send it with your payment ($200 for members, $205 for non-members) to:

West End Food Co-op
32 Ridley Gardens
Toronto, ON
M6R 2T8

Shares are first come, first served. Payment can also be made at the WEFC table at the Sorauren Farmers' Market, Mondays from 3-7 at Sorauren Park.

Name_____

Address_____

E-mail_____ Phone number _____

Do you have particular preserving recipes/ methods you are interested in? Let us know your ideas here!

West End Food Co-op
416-533-6363
www.westendfood.coop
info@westendfood.coop

Community Supported Orchard
Recipes for July 27

Plum Jam

6lbs Plums, any kind
3 cups water
9 cups Sugar
2/3 cup lemon juice

Combine whole plums and water in medium sized pot and heat till boiling. Reduce heat to med-low and cover. Simmer 20 minutes until soft, stirring occasionally. Pits will float to the surface, remove with slotted spoon. Add sugar and lemon juice and increase heat to medium. Cook for 20-25 minutes stirring often, until thickened.

Remove from heat and skim off foam if necessary. Pour into hot sterilized jars, leaving ½ inch headspace. Wipe jar rims to remove anything sticky. Add seals and rings- tighten rings to finger tight. Process in boiling water for 10 minutes, remove from pot and let cool. Check seals before storing. Once opened, keep chilled.

Makes 12-15 250ml jars

Apricot, Blueberry & Basil Jam☐
☐
3 c pitted & chopped apricots (10-12 apricots)☐
3 c whole blueberries, stems removed☐
1/4 c lemon juice☐
1 package powdered pectin☐
7 c sugar☐
1/4 c chopped basil, optional (measure after chopping, start with about 1 cup of leaves)☐
☐
In a large enamel or stainless steel saucepan combine the apricots, blueberries & lemon juice. Mash a little with your spoon to break down some of the blueberries. Whisk in the pectin until completely dissolved. Turn heat to high & bring to a boil (it should not stop boiling when stirred). Stir in the sugar all at once. Return to a boil. Boil hard while stirring for 1 more minute. Remove from heat & stir in the basil. Skim off the foam.☐
☐
Ladle into eight hot sterilized half-pint jars leaving about 1/4-inch headroom. Wipe jar rims to remove anything sticky. Add seals and rings- tighten rings to finger tight. Process in boiling water for 10 minutes, remove from pot and let cool. Check seals before storing. Once opened, keep chilled.
Makes 8 250ml jars

Peach Salsa

6 c. chopped peaches
1 c. chopped onion
1 c. chopped red bell pepper
2-4 jalapeno peppers (or hot banana peppers), seeded and finely chopped
1/2 c. loosely packed chopped cilantro *or* 2 T. dried cilantro (optional)
1/2 c. white wine vinegar, 5% acidity
2 T. bottled lime juice or lemon juice
1/2 c. firmly packed light brown sugar
1 clove garlic, finely minced
1 tsp. chili powder
1 tsp. ground cumin

In a large stainless steel or enamel saucepot, combine peaches, onion, bell pepper, hot peppers (always wear rubber gloves when cutting and seeding hot peppers to protect hands from being burned), cilantro, white wine vinegar, lime juice, sugar, garlic, chili powder, and cumin. Bring mixture to a boil and simmer over low heat for approximately 15 minutes or until salsa reaches desired consistency; stir frequently to prevent mixture from scorching. Remove from heat and ladle hot salsa into clean, hot, canning jars, filling to within 1/4-inch of jar tops (headspace). Remove air bubbles by sliding a rubber spatula between glass and salsa; readjust headspace to 1/4-inch. Wipe rims and threads with a clean damp cloth, place lids on jars and screw on bands. Process in boiling-water canner for 15 minutes Remove jars from canner; place on wire rack or thick cloth. Allow to coo. To fully develop flavor, allow salsa to cure for a minimum of 2 weeks; refrigerate unused portion of salsa after opening. Yields approximately 4 pints (500mls).

Sweet Cherry Preserves

8 cups sweet cherries, pitted
6 cups sugar
3 tbsp lemon juice

Pit cherries. In a stainless steel or enamel pot layer cherries and sugar and allow to sit for 1 hour to draw out juice. Bring to a boil over low heat, stirring gently until sugar is dissolved. Increase heat to medium, boil for 10 minutes stirring gently to prevent scorching. Remove from heat, stir in lemon juice. Cover with cloth and allow mixture to cool (overnight if possible)

Bring mixture to a rapid boil for 10-15 minutes while stirring- mixture should begin to thicken. Ladle into sterilized jars leaving ¼ inch headspace. Wipe rims, seal jars and process for 10 minutes.

Makes 6-7 250ml jars

Parkdale Community Cannery Recipes and Tips: September 7

Processing Tomatoes-Whole or Halved (with liquid)- Ideal for use in soups, stews, casseroles and sauces.

Approximate Yields:

20 pounds whole tomatoes will give approx 6 quarts. (1 litre jars)

12 pounds whole tomatoes will give approx 7 pints. (500 ml Jars)

To remove skins, wash tomatoes and dip in boiling water for 30 to 60 seconds or until the skins begin to split. Then dip in cold water, slip off skins, core and remove any blemished or discolored parts. Leave whole or cut in half.

Hot Pack

Place prepared tomatoes in a saucepan Heat to a boil and boil gently for 5 minutes. Add 1 tsp lemon juice to 500 ml canning jars (along with 1/4 teaspoon salt if desired) to each pint jar, 2 tsp lemon per litre jar. Pack hot jars with hot prepared tomatoes leaving ½-inch head space. Remove air bubbles. Wipe rim and screw threads and adjust lids and screw bands.

Process in Hot Water Bath Canner

* Pints 40 minutes

* Quarts 45 minutes

Tomatoes can also be frozen in freezer bags. Follow recipe same as above but omit lemon juice. Using med size freezer bags (17.7 x 19.5 cm) fill bags ¾ full (approx 2 cups). Remove air and seal. Freeze on a flat surface for better storage.

Parkdale Community Cannery Recipes and Tips: September 21

Ontario Blue Grape and Rosemary Jam

(from dish cooking studio - www.dishcookingstudio.com)

Ingredients:

5 lbs Coronation or Concord Grapes, stemmed
4 cups sugar
3 tbsp lemon juice
1 sprig fresh rosemary

Method:

1. Slip the skins from the grapes and keep separate.
2. Puree the skins with 1 cup of sugar in a food processor. Transfer to a wide, heavy pot.
3. Stir in the lemon juice, peeled grapes, rosemary and remaining sugar.
4. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring frequently and skimming as necessary until the pulp has broken down (approx. 20 minutes).
5. Force the jam through a food mill set over a large pot or bowl. Discard solids.
6. Return the jam to the pot and cook at a slow boil, skimming and stirring frequently as mixture thickens (about 35 minutes).
7. To test for doneness: drop 1 teaspoon of the jam onto a chilled plate, and then chill for 5 minutes. The jam should resist running and remain somewhat in a mound. If the jam is very runny, continue cooking at a very slow boil a further 5-20 minutes, testing every 5 minutes. Grape jam will sometimes take a few days to set completely!
8. 8. Using a canning funnel, spoon finished jam into washed, sterilized and hot jars. Seal the jars, immerse in the boiling water bath and process 10 minutes. Remove and let cool before testing the seals and storing.

Makes 4-5 250 ml jars

Pears in Syrup

Recipe and Directions (From PickYourOwn.org)

Step 1 - Selecting the pears varieties for canning

The most important step! You need pears that are sweet, and ripe. A little known fact: Pears are picked unripe - they don't ripen well on the tree. So, unlike peaches, pears WILL ripen at home! Proper ripeness of pears at canning time is important to the quality of the product; as it affects color, flavor, aroma, and over-all quality of finished product

Choose ripe, mature fruit of ideal quality for eating fresh or cooking. They should not be mushy, but they also should not be rock hard: just as ripe as you would eat them fresh. If they are to be transported or not processed immediately, pick while slightly green and allow them to ripen in a cool, dark place.

Store fresh pears in the refrigerator for up to 3 weeks.

Step 2 - How many pears and where to get them

An average of 17½ pounds is needed per canner load of 7 quarts; an average of 11 pounds is needed per canner load of 9 pints. A bushel weighs 50 pounds and yields 16 to 25 quarts – an average of 2½ pounds per quart. A pound of pears yields 2 cups of sliced pears.

You can pick your own, or buy them at the grocery store. But for large quantities, you'll find that real farmer's markets, like the Sorauren or Dufferin Grove markets have local grown produce at the best prices.

- not the cutesy, fake farmer's markets that are just warehouse grocery stores that call themselves farmer's markets.

Step 3 - Prepare the sugar (or other sweetener) solution

Pears must be packed in a solution of water and sugar or fruit juice. It's up to you which to use. Sugar is added to improve flavor, help stabilize color, and retain the shape of the fruit. It is not added as a preservative. Sugar solution is much less expensive (unless you have a supply of cheap grape juice), so use a light solution to keep sugar (and the added calories) to a minimum.
Sugar Syrup

Syrup	Sugar	Water	Yield
Light	2 cups	6 cups	7 cups
Medium	3 cups	6 cups	6 1/2 cups
Heavy	4 cups	6 cups	7 cups

NOTE: you can ALSO use fruit juice (if you want a natural alternative; white grape juice or apple juice are ideal) or water
To prepare syrup, while heating water, add sugar slowly, stirring constantly to dissolve. Bring to a gentle boil. Fill jars while syrup is still boiling hot. After preparing the liquid syrup, keep it hot (but not boiling).

Hot packing is recommended for all fruits because it is a bit safer and makes fruit easier to pack in jars. Raw packs also make poor quality pears. Hot packed pears are less likely to float than pears canned by the raw-pack method. Just put the cut pears into the boiling syrup solution for 5 minutes. (If you want to use the "cold pack" or "raw pack" method, just skip this step!)

W**ater bath canner:** Put the sealed jars in the canner and keep them cover with at least 1 inch of water and boiling. Boil them for at least 20 minutes for 500ml, 25 minutes for 1 L (but no more than 30 min or your fruit will go mushy).

Tips!

You can add whole spice to the syrup for a variation in flavour, either cooked in the syrup or added to each jar individually. Pears go well with cinnamon (use whole sticks), allspice berries, cardamom pods. Do not use ground spices as they will cause your syrup to go cloudy.

Canned fruits often will float if the sugar syrup is too heavy, if jars are packed too loosely or if air remains in the tissues of the fruit after processing. To avoid this use a light or medium sugar syrup, make sure fruit is firm and ripe and pack fruit tightly in jars without crushing.

If fruit is not covered by liquid it may darken during storage (but does not necessarily mean it is spoiled, as all fruits will darken somewhat). To avoid this be sure fruit is covered by remove air bubbles from jars liquid while still leaving the recommended head space. Also be sure to remove trapped air bubbles as described earlier.

Pears and apples may also show a blue, red or pink color change after canning. This is the result of natural chemical changes that sometimes occur as fruits are heated. It is harmless and won't affect flavor!

Also, avoid storing canned food near heat sources such as a furnace, water heater, hot water or sunny areas. Jars need to be kept cool and dark for longer storage life and to protect against spoilage. Be sure to store in a dry place. If the lid or band rusts, that can cause the seal to break.

Parkdale Community Cannery Recipes and Tips: October 5

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers,
A peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked.
If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers,
How many pickled peppers did Peter Piper pick?

But if Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers,
Were they pickled when he picked them from the vine?
Or was Peter Piper pickled when he picked the pickled peppers
Peppers picked from the pickled pepper vine?

-- from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tongue-twister

How to Pickle Peppers

3 lbs mixed peppers
1 bulb of garlic, peeled
4 cups white vinegar
2 cups sugar
2 tsp of pickling salt

Cut peppers in half lengthwise and remove seeds. Cut in strips. (for hot peppers leave intact but cut two slits lengthwise).

Pack peppers and 1-2 cloves of garlic tightly into sterilized jars leaving 1 inch headspace.
Heat remaining ingredients to boiling and pour over peppers leaving 1/2 inch headspace.

Process for 10 minutes in hot water bath.

Applesauce Recipe
From Complete Book of Preserving, Bernardin ed. Kingry and Devine
Note that you can omit the sugar for a tarter flavour, and vary the apples for your taste.

Makes 8 X 500 ml jars or 4 X 1 quart jars

Ingredients:
12 lbs apples: peeled, cored, quartered and treated to prevent browning and drained
3 cups granulated sugar

4 tbsp lemon juice

Recipe:
1. Prepare canner, jars and lids.

2. In a large stainless steel saucepan, combine apples with just enough water to prevent sticking. Bring to a boil over medium high heat. Reduce heat and boil gently, stirring occasionally, for 5-20 minutes, until apples are tender (time will depend upon the variety of apples and their maturity). Remove from heat and let cool slightly, about 5 minutes.

3. Working in batches, transfer apples to a food mill or a food processor fitted with a metal blade and puree until smooth.

4. Return apple puree to saucepan. Add sugar, if using, and lemon juice; bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring frequently to prevent sticking. Maintain a gentle boil over low heat while filling jars.

5. Ladle hot applesauce into hot jars, leaving ½ inch (1 cm) headspace. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace, if necessary, by adding hot applesauce. Wipe rim. Center lid on jar. Screw band down until resistance is met, then increase to finger-tip tight.

6. Place jars in canner, ensuring they are completely covered with water. Bring to a boil and process both pint and quart jars for 20 minutes. Remove canner lid. Wait 5 minutes, then remove jars, cool and store.

Variations:
Spicy applesauce: In Step 4, add 4 tsp (20 ml) of ground spices, such as cinnamon, nutmeg or allspice, to the sauce with the sugar and lemon juice.

Chunky applesauce: In Step 3, coarsely crush half of the cooked apples and puree the remainder. Combine before adding sugar.

Parkdale Community Cannery Recipes and Tips: October 19

Mixed Vegetable Pickles—*recipe from Heather Kilner*

3 c Carrots, 1 inch slices.
2 c Celery, 1 inch slices
1 c White Turnip, 1 inch slices
2 c Onions, 1 inch cubes (or use whole small onions)
2 c Sweet Red Pepper, 1 inch
1 c Green Pepper, 1 inch cubes
4 c Cauliflower, broken
1 c Salt
4 qt Cold Water
2 c Sugar
1/4 c Mustard Seed
2 tb Celery Seed
2 tb Dried Whole Black Peppercorns
1 tb Coriander Seed
6 1/2 c Vinegar 5% white or cider

Combine vegetables in a large bowl. Dissolve salt in water and pour over vegetables. Soak for 1-3 hours in a cool place. Drain. In a large kettle, mix sugar, salt, spices, and vinegar. Bring to a boil and boil for 3 to 4 minutes. Add vegetables and simmer 5 to 7 minutes. Pack hot into eight pint jars, leaving 1/4 inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Adjust caps; process 15 minutes in boiling water bath. Yield: 8 x 500 mls.

Spiced Apple Rings
Recipe from http://motherskitchen.blogspot.com/2010/10/spiced-apple-rings.html

12 lbs firm tart apples (maximum diameter 2-1/2 inches)
12 cups sugar
6 cups water
1-1/4 cups white vinegar (5%)
3 tbsp whole cloves
8 cinnamon sticks
Yield: About 8 to 9 pints

Wash apples. To prevent discoloration, peel and slice one apple at a time. Immediately cut crosswise into 1/2-inch slices, remove core area with a melon baller and immerse in ascorbic acid solution. To make flavored syrup, combine sugar water, vinegar, cloves, cinnamon sticks and in a 6-qt saucepan. Stir, heat to boil, and simmer 3 minutes. Drain apples, add to hot syrup, and cook 5 minutes. Fill jars (preferably wide-mouth) with apple rings and hot flavored syrup, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process for 10 minutes in a boiling water bath.

Parkdale Community Cannery Recipes and Tips: November 2

Pickled Beets —*recipe from Heather Kilner*

Beets - enough to make 3 quarts
2 c Sugar
1 stick of cinnamon
1T whole allspice
1T whole cloves
1 tb Coriander Seed
3 1/2 c Vinegar
1 1/2 cups water

Wash beets- Cut stems to about 2 inches, and leave on the tap root. To skin beets cook in boiling water until skins will slip off. This will take a couple of minutes. It helps to scrape a spoon against the beets while cooking to see when the skins start to scrape off easily. Remove from water and cool in very cold water. When cool enough to handle, use your hands to slip the skins off. Use a knife for the stubborn spots. Cut off the tops and tap roots at this point.

Slice or chop your beets to the desired size.

Prepare the pickling solution - Combine vinegar, water, sugar, cinnamon, allspice, cloves. Bring to a boil. Simmer for 5 minutes. Add beets and cook an additional 10 minutes

Pack prepared beets into hot canning jars, leaving 1-inch head space.

Cover beets in jars with hot vinegar solution leaving 1-inch head space. Remove air bubbles with a plastic knife or other small tool.

Wipe rims clean and process for 15 minutes.

Yield: 6 x 500ml jars.

Fall Fire - *Hot Sauce Recipe from James Partanen*

2lbs Carrots
2 spanish onions
1 bulb garlic
1 cup vinegar or cider vinegar
4 cups relatively tasteless oil (sunflower, soy, canola)
hot peppers, bell peppers
salt, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, allspice to taste

Scrub, rinse, and, if the skins are thick, peel the carrots. Chop roughly into small pieces for quick roasting.

Peel and roughly slice onions, roughly mince the garlic, and place both together with the carrots into an oiled roasting dish. Roast at 400 for twenty minutes or until carrots are cooked.

Meanwhile, begin preparing the peppers. Two dozen Scotch Bonnets makes for an exceptionally hot sauce. One dozen Jalapenos makes for a sauce with distinctive but inoffensive heat. Aim for about six cups of chopped peppers, top up with sweet bell peppers as needed. Leaving the seeds in makes for a significantly hotter sauce. The peppers must be roasted. Options are grilling them whole, or roughly chopping them and either roasting them uncovered in a hot oven, or frying them in a dry pan. They should not be chopped too small or they will steam themselves rather than roast.

Once roasted, process everything in batches in a food processor until smooth. Mix the purees together in a large pot, add the vinegar, heat just to boiling (take care, this mixture will likely splatter like tomato sauce and can burn) and season to taste.

Season before adding the oil, but keep in mind that the oil will somewhat mellow the flavours. Be easy on the nutmeg, a small amount goes a long way. Add the oil, stir well, and prepare to can.

Process in small jars with 1/2 inch headspace, for fifteen minutes.

Yield: approx. 12 x 250ml jars

Parkdale Community Cannery Recipes and Tips: November 16

Red Root Relish - recipe from Bernardin website

Enjoy this zesty relish in place of horseradish. Use a food processor to shred beets for a finer texture, if desired.

4 cups prepared beets, about 6 medium
4 cups (1000 ml) finely chopped cabbage, 1 small head
3 cups (750ml) white vinegar
1 1/2 cups (375 ml) granulated sugar
1 cup (250 ml) finely chopped onion
1 cup (250 ml) finely chopped red pepper
1 tbsp (15 ml) prepared horseradish
1 tbsp (15 ml) salt

• Place 5 clean 500 ml mason jars on a rack in a boiling water canner; cover jars with water and heat to a simmer (180°F/82°C). Set screw bands aside. Heat SNAP LID® sealing discs in hot water, not boiling (180°F/82°C). Keep jars and sealing discs hot until ready to use.

• Trim all but 2 inches (5 cm) of beet stems. Cook beets in boiling water, until tender, about 35 to 45 minutes. Remove from water and allow to cool slightly. Remove skins by easily slipping off beets. Dice beets and measure 4 cups (1000 ml).

• Place beets, cabbage, vinegar, sugar, onion, pepper, horseradish and salt in a large stainless steel saucepan. Bring to a boil; boil gently 10 minutes.

• Ladle relish into a hot jar to within 1/2 inch (1 cm) of top of jar (headspace). Using nonmetallic utensil, remove air bubbles and adjust headspace, if required, by adding more relish. Wipe jar rim removing any food residue. Centre hot sealing disc on clean jar rim. Screw band down until resistance is met, then increase to fingertip tight. Return filled jar to rack in canner. Repeat for remaining relish.

• When canner is filled, ensure that all jars are covered by at least one inch (2.5 cm) of water. Cover canner and bring water to full rolling boil before starting to count processing time. At altitudes up to 1000 ft (305 m), process –boil filled jars – 15 minutes.*

• When processing time is complete, remove canner lid, wait 5 minutes, then remove jars without tilting and place them upright on a protected work surface. Cool upright, undisturbed 24 hours; DO NOT RETIGHTEN screw bands.

• After cooling check jar seals. Sealed discs curve downward and do not move when pressed. Remove screw bands; wipe and dry bands and jars. Store screw bands separately or replace loosely on jars, as desired. Label and store jars in a cool, dark place. For best quality, use home canned foods within one year.

Yield: about 5 x 500 ml jars.

Lebanese pickled turnips - *recipe from James Partanen*

2.5kgs small to medium sized turnips
1 large beet
2l water
2l vinegar
(optional) 4 jalapeno peppers

Peel and chop the turnips and beet into "french-fry" pieces. If using jalapeno peppers, slice them in half and remove the seeds.

Mix and bring to a boil the saltless brine. When using saltless brine, safety requires the acid level to be a bit higher, at least 2.5% acetic acid. Thus this brine is half-and-half table vinegar. Safety also requires at least 125ml of 2.5% brine per 500ml jar.

Pack your steralised jars, starting with the optional jalapeno pepper and two or three beet "french-fries" on the bottom. Use a measuring cup when adding brine to the jars to ensure that each jar gets at least 125ml of brine. Top off leaving 1cm head room, and process ten minutes.

Yield: approx. six to eight 500ml jars

Step 1: What You Need to Make Horseradish

Lay out all the ingredients you need to make horseradish before you begin.

Horseradish Ingredients

Fresh horseradish root, about 10 inches long
1 tablespoon white vinegar
1/8 teaspoon salt

Horseradish Equipment

Paring knife
Vegetable peeler
Knife
Food processor

Step 2: How to Make Horseradish

Wash and trim the horseradish root.
Peel the skin off white a vegetable peeler.
Cut the horseradish into large chunks.
Place the horseradish, vinegar, and salt into the food processor.
Pulse to mince.
The horseradish will keep for 3-4 weeks in a jar the refrigerator.

Beet Horseradish

Ingredients

- 2 (10-ounce) medium beets, peeled and finely shredded
- 1 fresh horseradish root (about 2 1/2 ounces), trimmed, peeled, and finely shredded
- 1/2 cup red wine vinegar (or white)
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons salt

Preparation:
Combine beets and horseradish in a food processor, and pulse 20 times.
Add vinegar, sugar, and salt; process 2 minutes or until pasty. Jar immediately, Keeps up 3-4 weeks refrigerated.

Workshop Resource Sheet

Canning Guides & Recipes

The National Centre For Home Food Preservation (US).
www.uga.edu/nchfp/
Recipes, FAQs, a free online course, and numerous publications including the encyclopedic “USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning” available free to download.

Pickyourown.org (US). www.pickyourown.org
Slightly more adventurous and easier to read, partially drawn from the USDA guides but includes information on more general local food as well as instructions for picking etc. (Excellent collection of publications to download including USDA and more: www.pickyourown.org/canningpubs.htm)

Bernardin Canning Jars (Private Corporation) www.homecanning.ca/
Although obviously attempting to sell you things this website does contain good recipes and some canning instructions.

Local Food Resources

FoodLand Ontario: www.foodland.gov.on.ca
This Ontario Government website includes an availability chart letting you know roughly when to expect certain local foods as well as some recipes.

The Toronto Farmers' Market Network: http://tfmn.ca
Helps you to locate local farmers markets including reasonably-priced Good Food Markets (Direct link to Good Food Markets information on FoodShare's website here: www.foodshare.net/animators04.htm#gfm)

Toronto Community Garden Network: www.tcgn.ca
Places to grow your own fresh, lovely food for canning!

Toronto Environmental Alliance's Locally Grown Cultural Food Guides:
www.torontoenvironment.org/campaigns/greenbelting/foodguide
Guides to purchasing locally-grown produce that you didn't know grew here.

Ontario CSA Farm Directory http://csafarms.ca/index.html
Finding a CSA to guarantee a variety of fresh, delicious foods

Eat-Local.ca http://eat-local.ca/

Provided by https://pickyourown.org/starting_a_cannery.htm

Ontario Canning Blogs

http://seasonalontariofood.blogspot.com/

http://wellpreserved.ca/

http://tigressinajam.blogspot.com/

http://tigressinapickle.blogspot.com

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a brief history of preserving

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Then there is fermentation—the first beers were made about 10,000 B.C. As trade brought sugar cane to northern climates, people began the preservation of fruit in jams and jellies. In the 1790's, the first sterilization by heat was discovered (and not understood) by a Frenchman, Nicholas Appert. (Over)

Recipes

Main- Crop Strawberry Jam

Makes about 3 ½ pints or about 7 cups
From *The Joy of Jams, Jellies and Other Sweet Preserves* Linda Ziedrich, Harvard Common Press, 2009

If you use small, tender berries, you may not need to mash them at all.

3 pounds strawberries, hulled
6 tablespoons lemon juice
seeds and membranes of 2 lemons
4 ½ cups sugar

Put the strawberries into a preserving pan and mash them if they are quite firm.

Add the lemon juice. Put the lemon seeds and membranes into a spice bag; add it to the pan and cover the pan. Simmer the strawberries until they are soft.

Remove the pan from the heat and add the sugar. Stir the contents over medium heat until the sugar is dissolved. Raise the heat to medium-high and boil the jam, stirring and skimming off foam, until a drop mounds slightly in a chilled dish.

Press the spice bag against the side of the pan and remove the bag. Ladle the jam into pint or half-pint mason jars. Add the lids and rings, process the jars for 10 minutes in a boiling-water bath.

Rhubarb Jam (aka "Pie-Plant Jam")

Mrs. T.W. Anderson *The Home Cook Book*. Toronto, 1877

Cut into pieces about an inch long, put a pound of sugar to every pound of rhubarb, and leave until morning; pour the syrup from it and boil until it thickens; then add the rhubarb and boil gently fifteen minutes; put up as you do currant jelly in tumblers; it will keep good a year.

[continued from page 1]

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People dehydrated apples by dipping thin apple rings in salt water and hanging them to dry from the kitchen rafters; they preserved rhubarb and other jams with a ring of paper soaked in brandy on top of the jam, then a cover paper soaked in egg white and stretched over the top of a glass tumbler.

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Brian Nummer, "Historical Origins of Food Preservation", National Center for Home Food Preservation. http://tiny.cc/134m3

Gabriella Petrick "Feeding the Masses: H.J. Heinz and the creation of industrial food" IN Endeavour v. 33, no. 1.

Recipe & Resources

Photo by Nathan Payne

Rhubarb, Rose & Strawberry Jam

From the *Rhubarb Compendium*
www.rhubarbinfo.com/

2 lb Rhubarb, trimmed weight
1 lb Small strawberries, slightly under-ripe
1/2 lb Highly scented unsprayed rose petals
1 1/2 lb Sugar
4 sm Juicy lemons

Slice the rhubarb and layer it in a large bowl with the whole hulled strawberries and the sugar. Pour on the lemon juice, cover and leave overnight.

Tip the contents of the bowl into a preserving pan. Add the lemon pips tied in a muslin bag and bring gently to a boil. Boil for 2 minutes then tip the contents of the pan back into the bowl. Cover and leave in a cool place over night once more.

Put the rhubarb and strawberry mixture back into the pan. Pinch out the white tips from the bases of the rose petals and add the petals to the pan, pushing them well down among the fruit. Bring to the boil and fast boil until setting point is reached, then pot in warm sterilized jars in the usual way. Makes enough to fill 6 or 7 jars.

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Recipes

Sweet Pickled Beans

(Makes 12 x 250 ml jars)

11 cups of fresh snap beans, green or yellow

2 tbsp minced garlic

5 cups white vinegar

1 2/3 cups sugar

1 2/3 cups water

4 tsp pickling salt

½ cup mixed chopped peppers (sweet or hot to taste- optional)

Wash and trim beans. Sterilize jars in boiling water or by baking wet, clean jars in the oven at 250F (120 C). Place lids in small saucepan, heat almost to boiling then turn to low and leave until ready to can.

To make the brine: In a large pot combine all ingredients except beans & peppers. Bring to a boil and time for 5 minutes.

Remove jars from oven and fill with beans. Pack tightly but make sure to leave ½ inch head space- trim beans if necessary. Add 1 tsp of pepper mix to each jar.

Add hot brine to jars to cover beans, leaving ½ inch head space. Gently bang jars to remove any air bubbles or use a chop stick to dislodge. Wipe rim to remove any stickiness. Centre snap lid on jar and apply screw band. Tighten to just finger tight.

Place all jars in canning pot. Process for 10 minutes, timing from when the water returns to a boil. Turn off heat and remove jars from water. Allow to cool and check seals.

Store in a cool dark place for minimum of 3 weeks before opening.

[continued from page 1]

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Recipe & Resources

Photo by Nathan Pavne

Refrigerator-Pickled Sugar Snap Peas
Adapted from The Joy of Pickling via Epicurious

1 1/4 cups white distilled vinegar
1 1/4 cups cold water
1 tablespoon kosher or pickling salt
1 tablespoon sugar
1 pound sugar snap peas, stems trimmed and strings removed
4 garlic cloves, sliced
1 or 2 small dried chile peppers, slit lengthwise or a couple pinches dried red pepper flakes

In a nonreactive saucepan, heat the vinegar with the salt and sugar until they are dissolved. Remove from the heat, and add the cold water. (This gives you a leg up on getting the liquid to cool).

When the vinegar mixture is cool, pack the sugar snaps, garlic and chile peppers or flakes into a 1-quart jar or bowl, and pour the brine over it. Cover with a non-reactive cap or plastic wrap.

The original recipe suggests you store the jar in the refrigerator for two weeks before eating the pickled peas, but good luck with that. They're quite delicious and already lightly pickled by 24 hours later.

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Recipes

Earle's Dills

From Heather Kilner

(In Imperial measurements because my dad is old school! 1 qt = 4 cups = 0.95 l)

2-3 lbs pickling cucumbers (the freshest possible; pick smaller cukes to fit many per jar)
1 bunch of flowering dillweed
2-3 bulbs of garlic, separated in cloves and peeled
1 grape leaf per jar (optional)
1 qt vinegar (5%)
2 qt water
3/4 cup pickling salt

Soak cukes in water for min of 3 hours. Wash and sterilize 4 or 5 quart jars. Heat snap lids to just boiling and turn off heat.

In a large non reactive pot heat water, vinegar and salt until boiling.

Add one dill flowerhead and 2-3 cloves of garlic to each sterilized jar. Stuff each jar with as many cukes as will fit, leaving 1/2" head space.

You can cut cukes to fit but they tend to be less crisp so we try to avoid this when possible. Add one grape leaf, another dill flower and more garlic if there's room and stuff in the spaces between cukes.

Pour brine mixture over cukes, leaving headspace as above. Fit snap lids finger tight and process immediately for 10 minutes.

Allow jars to sit for min 3 weeks before opening.

[continued from page 1]

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11 cups of fresh snap beans, green or yellow
2 Tbsp minced garlic
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1 2/3 cups sugar
1 2/3 cups water
4 tsp pickling salt
½ cup mixed chopped peppers (sweet or hot to taste- optional)

Wash and trim beans. Sterilize jars in boiling water or by baking wet, clean jars in the oven at 250F (120 C). Place lids in small saucepan, heat almost to boiling then turn to low and leave until ready to can.

To make the brine: In a large pot combine all ingredients except beans & peppers. Bring to a boil and time for 5 minutes.

Remove jars from oven and fill with beans. Pack tightly but make sure to leave ½ inch head space- trim beans if necessary. Add 1 tsp of pepper mix to each jar.

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Recipes

Peach Chutney

Ingredients

2 cups (500 mL) chopped onion
1 tbsp (15 mL) yellow mustard seeds
¼ cup (62 mL) chopped ginger
1 tsp (5 mL) cinnamon (or 2 cinnamon sticks)
1 tsp (5 mL) salt
½ tsp (2 mL) ground cloves (or 5-6 whole cloves)
1-2 jalapeno or hot chili pepper, diced fine
1-2 cloves garlic, diced fine
¼ tsp (1 mL) black pepper
8 cups (2 L) sliced peeled peaches
2 ½ cups (625 mL) granulated sugar
1 cup (250 mL) golden raisin
1 cup (250 mL) cider vinegar

Preparation:

In large Dutch oven, heat oil over medium heat; cook onions, mustard seeds, ginger, cinnamon, salt, cloves, garlic, hot pepper and pepper, stirring often, until onions are softened, about 5 minutes.
Add peaches, sugar, raisins and vinegar; bring to boil, stirring. Reduce heat to medium; simmer, uncovered and stirring often, until reduced to 8 cups (2 L) and thick enough to mound on spoon, 1 hour.

Pour into four pint (500 mL) sterilized canning jars, leaving 1/2-inch (1 cm) headspace. Seal with prepared discs and clean bands. Process in boiling water canner for 10 minutes; transfer to rack to let cool. Store in cool dark place for up to 1 year.

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Recipe & Resources

Photo by Nathan Pavne

History of Chutneys

In farmhouse kitchens in the past, using excess and windfall fruit to stock up on chutneys and preserves was an ideal way to ensure that precious produce didn't go to waste. It also meant that there was always a delicious condiment to accompany chunky salads like ploughman's lunch, cheese plates and platters of cold meats.

There is something quintessentially British about home made chutneys and yet their origins lie in the east, not in the country kitchens of middle England. The rise of popularity in chutneys in the west probably dates back to the days of the British Raj when exotic recipes were brought back to Britain by soldiers returning from India. The savoury, and sometimes spicy, mix of fruit, vegetables, vinegar and sugar proved a hit with western taste buds and its popularity spread until it became an everyday item in kitchen cupboards throughout the British Empire. The word chutney derives from the Hindu word 'chatni' which was the term used to describe the relishes that accompany many Indian meals. It has evolved to mean a type of fruit preserve that includes both fresh and dried fruit and usually includes spices that are not grown in cooler climates, such as cloves, cumin and allspice. It can be mild or hot depending on your tastes.

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Recipes

FRESH PEAR CHUTNEY

12 c. sliced pears, about 6 lb.
3/4 c. finely chopped green pepper (or any colour sweet pepper)
1 1/2 c. raisins
4 c. sugar
1/2 c. ginger (about 1 large knob)
3 c. vinegar
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. whole cloves
1/2 tsp. whole allspice
3 (3 inch) cinnamon sticks

In large kettle, stir together pears, green pepper, raisins, sugar, ginger, vinegar, and salt. Tie cloves, allspice, and cinnamon sticks in double thickness square of cheesecloth; place in kettle. Heat pear mixture to boiling, stirring frequently. Reduce heat. Stirring frequently, simmer 1 1/2 to 2 hours or until chutney is dark and syrup-like.

Prepare 250 ml jars as directed. Remove spice bag from chutney. Fill jars and process 10 minutes in a hot water bath.

Makes 7 x 250 ml

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