

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 1995

## TASTE BUDS



CHEF LARRY JAMES

Harvest and preserve  
the fruits of your labor

**D**on't you just love this time of year? The kids are back in school, the days are getting cooler, and the nights are getting longer. It's the peak of the harvest season, and a trip to the vegetable market offers just about anything Michigan fields and orchards have to offer.

Raven-colored eggplant, cabbages bigger than basketballs, and apples so sweet and crisp that they explode when bitten into. My reusable mesh vegetable bag is bulging at the seams, and the freezer is jammed with blueberries, tomatoes, and blanched green beans.

Thyme, mint, basil, tarragon and dill have given my garden an aroma that just begs you to walk through it barefoot.

## Canning guides

Canning season is under way. There are a multitude of books that answer just about all you ever needed -- and wanted -- to know about canning and food preservation. One of the best and most widely used -- is the 32nd edition of the "Ball Blue Book," available wherever canning supplies are sold.

The rules have changed since momma and I put up some peaches a few years back. Whereas in the olden days I might be tempted to get a canning book from my local library, or rely on a 1982 edition of "The Farm Journal's Canning and Canning Book," now I rely on the "Blue Book," which won't set you back more than \$10. But if you're short on time and money and need a quick fix, help is available from the Oakland County Cooperative Extension Service, (810) 868-0004 weekdays 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and the Wayne County Extension, (313) 494-3013, Wednesdays 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

There are even a few recipe books on the market that offer exotic tips for "putting food up." Some of the suggestions and recipes are gourmet. A favorite is "Home Made in the Kitchen" by Barry Blustein and Kevin Morrissey (copyright 1994, Viking Books, \$24.95). This tome includes traditional recipes and household projects that are easy to prepare. From herbal candies to meatless mince meat, I can personally attest to the red pepper jelly and blackberry cordial recipes.

If your vegetable garden is overflowing, check out "Salads, Sambals, Chutneys and Chow-chows" by Chris Schlesinger and John Willoughby (copyright 1993, Morrow Books, \$20). Their cucumber chowchow can be made and refrigerated for up to one month. I've learned the longer it sits, the better it gets.

If you have herbs and have access to an assortment of peppers, your mouth will feel like an erupting volcano after making some of the chiles, dry rubs, salsas, vinegars and jellies in The El Paso Chile Company's "Burning Desires" by W. Park Kerr, (copyright 1994, Morrow Books, \$15). The two tomato Chipotle Salsa and Christmas Ketchup recipes are worth the price of the book. Pickle and Relish freaks will go bonkers over Andrea Chesman's "Pickles and Relishes," (copyright 1992, Storey Communications Inc., \$9.95) which features 160 different recipes for making everything from apples to zucchini. The recipe for plum sauce is better than anything I have ever dreamed of putting over fowl.

## U-pick directory

To coin a phrase from the Michigan Department of Agriculture's updated Farm Market and U-Pick Directory, "In Michigan, nothing's as good as homegrown." This year's updated directory includes nearly 800 farm markets and U-Pick farms where you can enjoy fresh homegrown Michigan produce. Many of these operations also offer related products such as plants, herbs, Christmas trees, cider, honey, jams, syrup and a host of other Michigan agricultural products that are part of our state's bounty. The book is free by calling or writing the Michigan Department of Agriculture, Marketing Division at P.O. Box 30017, Lansing, MI 48909, (517) 373-1059. This book has a permanent spot on my reference shelf and should on yours, too!

Some of the best times I've spent with momma were over a case of Mason jars and bushel of tomatoes. If you know of a senior, or better yet, want to share the experience with a youngster, the bounty couldn't be more readily available nor the time as well. The fruits of your labor will be appreciated. On a cold, blustery day in February, you'll thank me for the idea.

## LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

- Chef Larry James answers reader requests.
- Community gardens yield bountiful harvest.

## TASTE



STEVE CANTRELL/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

SEASON SWEET WITH

## Apples &amp; Honey

BY RENEE SKOGLUND • SPECIAL WRITER

**F**or centuries, apples and honey have played a significant role in harvest celebrations.

Cranbrook Institute of Science will celebrate the sweet taste of fall's harvest with a Honey and Apples Festival Sept. 23-24; Sept. 30 and Oct. 1. Bees are the festival's main focus, since without them there would be no honey and a lot fewer apples.

"A lot of people don't know that the bees make the honey. They know the bees collect the honey, but they don't know they make it," said Maureen Dolson, Cranbrook's head naturalist.

Glass-encased hives will give visitors a "bee's eye" view of the complex process of honey-making. If they're lucky, visitors may be able to spot the queen bee among her throngs of workers. She has a longer body and shorter wings and is often ministered to by a circle of "personal attendants." Eternally pregnant, she lays about 2,000 eggs a day. "She will die if she doesn't lay eggs," said Dolson.

Visitors also will be able to sample freshly harvested honey, made sweeter by the fact that it takes over 1,000 trips to a flower to fill one honeycomb cell. "People who don't like honey, like this honey," said Dolson.

Honey flavor and grade is determined by what the bees eat. Clover and wild flowers abound in this area, and there are no sticky estates among the Cranbrook bees. "They go out and get

tree nectar, flower nectar, whatever is on the grounds," said Dolson. "Clover and wild flowers would be considered mid-grade. It's a matter of personal taste and gradient of color."

Thanks to an ample honey bee population, which rebounded from a devastating mite infestation a few years ago, Michigan is enjoying a bumper apple crop this year. "It's been a very good year for insects because of the light winter and the hot summer."

Apple cider is a complimentary part of the Honey and Apples Festival. Cranbrook's entire

whole process, the crushing, the straining, everything that goes into the making of cider," said Lent. "It's about half a bushel for a gallon of cider. There won't be any containers. Bring your own milk jug with a cap."

Coinciding with fall harvest celebrations like Cranbrook's Honey and Apples Festival is Rosh Hashana, the Jewish New Year, which is Sept. 25-26 this year. Honey and apples play a significant role in the celebration of the Jewish New Year, symbolizing hope for a sweet year.

On the first day of their New Year, area Jews will gather around the dinner table with friends and family, light the festival candles, and recite the Kiddush, a New Year's blessing. Soon, a dish of apple sections with a small bowl of honey will be passed around, and guests will dip an apple slice into the honey.

"Prior to the meal, you have a special blessing for the sweetness of the honey and the taste of the apple. We pray for a good year and a sweet year," said Alicia Nelson of Southfield who owns "Tradition! Tradition!" a business specializing in Jewish ritual objects.

On Rosh Hashana, Nelson carries the apple and honey theme throughout the meal. "I always include an apple cake, or an apple pie, or a honey cake," she said.

Betty Winkelman of West Bloomfield enjoys surrounding her table with guests for Rosh Hashana. "We celebrate both days. When our kids were in college we always invited other students. Generally we have a good-size crowd. Sometimes we have some of our immigrant families," she said. Winkelman is president of Resettlement Service in Southfield.

Besides a honey or apple cake, Winkelman likes to serve "Tzimmes," a honey-sweetened vegetable stew of sweet potatoes, carrots and prunes. "I'll make it for Rosh Hashana, but it's a nice winter dish," she said. "You don't have to do it for the holidays. You can do it on Friday for the Sabbath."

Both honey and apples are in abundant supply at local orchards this fall. Honey will be sold at Cranbrook's Honey and Apples Festival, and Maureen Dolson guarantees it will be delicious. "Beekeepers are pure people," she said.

See recipes inside.

## Honey &amp; Apples Festival

Where: Cranbrook Institute of Science, 1221 North Woodward Ave., Bloomfield Hills.

When: 1-4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 23-24; Sept. 30 and Oct. 1. (810) 845-3222.

Admission: Museum admission, \$5 adults, \$4 children ages 3-17 and senior citizens 65 and older; children under 3 admitted free. Cranbrook Institute of Science is open 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday and 1-5 p.m. Sunday.

Highlights: Those who wish to bring their own apples to press on an antique cider press should bring 1/2 bushel of apples, which makes approximately one gallon of cider, and a clean, gallon jug to carry the cider home.

## Act now or you'll miss 1993 red Burgundies



BY TAY &amp; ELEANOR HEAD

In our May 15 column we sent you a 1993 Red Burgundy Alert! Consider this a reminder. Since then, we have tasted estate Burgundies selected by Dan Haas of Vineyard Brands. We've visited some of the estates Haas represents and can report that these producers grow their own grapes and make their own wine. That is the definition of "estate" Burgundies.

Haas genuinely considers it his privilege to bring wine producers and consumers together supplying dependable wine to the wine lover while supporting serious, quality-oriented vintners. He believes that when growers own their vineyards and work with the grapes year after year, the quality improves.

According to Haas, dependable brands and suppliers reinforces the integrity of Vineyard Brands. The more successful brands an importer has, the more distributors are interested in doing business. There is also great satisfaction when an importer achieves success with a quality product.

Haas continues to search out top producers in Europe as well as the New World and to stay in front of the consumer with top-drawer products.

"As importers and marketers, our business involves



VINEYARD BRANDS

Wine tasting: At Domaine Jean-Marc Boillot, Vineyard Brands' Dan Haas (left) tastes with Jean-Marc Boillot.

bringing together consumers and producers," Robert Haas (Dan's father and company founder) concluded. "Our job is to find good products to bring to the consumer and be able to jump through the necessary hoops to get them together."

In our opinion, the 1993 red Burgundies are very good. If you are not familiar with real Burgundy, remember that the word Burgundy is not on the label. Burgundy is a place where pinot noir is the red grape responsible for the wines. Burgundy labels give more detailed place names. In our notes below, the place name is given first, followed by the producer's name in

Wine continued inside

## Wine Selections

Rich, luscious chardonnays for creamy pastas, risotto with wild mushrooms or just about any recipe with corn.

- 1993 Dondach-Burichu Chardonnay \$18
- 1994 Murphy-Goodie Chardonnay \$18.95
- 1992 Dry Creek Reserve Chardonnay \$18
- 1993 Sterling Winery Lake Chardonnay \$18

The following bigger, after-flavored cabes are best with prime rib, leg of lamb, tuna, pepper steak, duck or venison.

- 1992 Columbia Crest Cabernet Sauvignon \$18
- 1994 Rosemont, Australia, Cabernet Sauvignon \$18
- 1992 Raymond Cabernet Sauvignon \$18
- 1992 Merryvale Cabernet Sauvignon \$24
- 1992 Glen Cabernet Sauvignon, Alexander Valley \$18

1992 Graef, Napa Stage Leap District \$22

Merlot has the seduction of softness, but tantalizing with herb-crusted grilled meats; recipes with pepper or anise spice, steaks, lasagna and pastas with tomato sauce.

- 1993 Fazzari Eagle Peak Merlot \$8
- 1992 Columbia-Crest Merlot \$11.95
- 1993 Chateau Souverain Alexander Valley Merlot \$18

Boi buys under \$10:

- 1994 Richmond Old Cabernet Blanc \$8
- 1994 R.H. Phelps Chardonnay Borel Course \$7
- 1992 Glen Elen Cabernet Sauvignon \$8
- 1993 Marquis de Chasse Bordeaux \$8