
The Grapevine

FALL 2010

♦ JOURNAL OF THE MIDWEST FRUIT EXPLORERS ♦

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President's Message

Do you know what I find most interesting about our club? It's not the different varieties of fruit that our members are growing. It's not seeing how people are growing fruit with the orchard tours. It's not even getting to taste unique home grown fruit. Sure all of these things are very interesting, and they rank at the top for why I'm a member, but the thing I find most interesting about our club is (wait for it) the people. Gardening itself takes a certain kind of person, but fruit growing requires someone with even more patience, commitment, perseverance, organization, intelligence, and courage. Yes, I said courage. I know you probably think I'm crazy, many people do. You're probably thinking, "It's growing fruit for Pete's sake. What could be courageous about it? You put a tree or bush in the ground, and it grows." It seems like it's no big deal. Like our name suggests, we're explorers. We are willing to go down the proverbial path that many people avoid., to forage through the uncharted wilderness of home orcharding. Well, ok, so home orcharding isn't uncharted. I'll give you that, but it's not mainstream because there aren't as many people out there that as brave and courageous as you are.

How do I know this? I stand before you today as someone who has to face the fear of growing fruit every time I pick up my pruning shears, bring home a new plant, or pick up a spade. I know I'm not alone out there. Sure, I've been gardening for years. Sure I read about grafting when I was a wee boy scout. Yes, I've planted trees before, but there are so many questions when it comes to growing fruit: What's the best place to plant that tree? Do I have enough light in this area? How do you prune a fruit tree? Wait, there's a difference between pruning an apple and peach tree? When do you spray? What do you use when you spray? How to you deal with pests? How do you deal with thieving critters? What if the tree doesn't fruit? What if the fruit tastes bad? All the questions, all the unknowns can be frightening and daunting. You may not realize it, but it takes a courage to push these questions aside and put that plant in the ground. Still don't believe me? Well, then let me recap our summer picnic.

MidFEx 2010 Summer Picnic

This year's picnic was held at Al Cosnow's with over 40 people in attendance. Thanks go to Al for being such a gracious host, and to Ron Malcom who chaired the picnic and took care of the logistics. It was a beautiful summer day. There was no shortage of people to help set up. The catered chicken was great, but the desserts and sides that everyone brought were phenomenal. I think we're still looking for the person who brought the quince jam. We'd love to have that recipe for the Grapevine. After the meal, we had a short business meeting. There was a call for volunteers for Harvest Fest 2010 (see more inside). We discussed the Orchard-Guide.net site that member Randy Suvada created and has opened up to our members. A motion was raised and passed to fund the site. Dates were given for the 2011 grafting workshops at Cantigny and Chicago Botanic Gardens. Shortly after the meeting, Al

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April Apple Blossoms at Springbrook Nature Center, Itasca

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began the tour of his orchard. Talk about someone who is fearless, Al is growing trees in places that I never would have even considered in a small lot. Sure his yard is slightly bigger than some of his neighbors because he has a corner lot, but really there's not a lot of space. He's got espalier against his house, above his garage opening, against fences and squeezed into just about any available space. He's got grafted trees that are over 30 years old, and they're not so dwarf anymore. Al theorizes that the scion wood has grown down from the graft union to the soil, and the trees are now becoming standard. Al discussed the various animal traps that we scattered through the yard. What appeared to be bottles growing on trees, turns out to be Al's attempt at growing a pear in a bottle. Several of them had failed, but Al explained how this experiment taught him how to do things differently next year. It was an incredible learning experience for all. My contribution was to let everyone know that the best time to spray for leaf curl is in the fall after leaf drop. All in all it was a great time with great people. What I took away from the picnic is that you don't need perfect conditions to grow a tree, and don't be afraid to experiment. Another opportunity for group learning, or to just meet some of your fellow courageous explorers is at the Harvest Fest.

2010 Fall Harvest Festival Volunteers Friday, Saturday and Sunday October 15th-17th

The Fall Harvest Festival at the Chicago Botanic Gardens is our largest public event, fund raiser, and membership drive all rolled into one. It is our best opportunity to encourage others to be brave and try their hands at growing fruit themselves. It's a fun exciting experience, and a great opportunity to socialize and network with MidFExers. See below for more details on Harvest Fest and how to volunteer. No prior experience or knowledge required. Speaking of volunteering and serving the club...

January 2011 Business Meeting

The Annual Business meeting is everyone's opportunity to face your fears about playing a greater role in our club. Now I may be fearless on this front or not very bright. I know there's a fine line sometimes. There will be officer positions that we need to fill. The specific positions that will be open are not known at this time. Are you courageous enough to serve your club? I promise you that it's the fastest way to get involved and a great learning opportunity. Again, no prior experience or knowledge required. One of the most important things that I've learned is that you can't be afraid of failure. Sure no one wants a graft to fail, or a tree to die, or squirrels to steal every last fruit off the tree, but we learn from our failures more than we do our successes. And when we learn we grow. And when we grow, we are just like the perfect fruit we aspire to harvest: full of sweet juicy knowledge and ripe with the confidence to stare fear in the eye and overcoming it. *Happy growing—fruit or otherwise. Dennis Wang*

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The MidFEx

Grapevine

Its important for a group such as ours to keep in touch with each other by traditional means. Email may have some advantages: immediacy, paper free, attachments, links, etc., but there's a good chance that when it comes to dates, events, directions and soul...

you heard it through the Grapevine

Grapevine September 2010

Harvest Festival Call

Volunteers (always) Needed

The MidFEx Fall Harvest Festival is scheduled for Saturday and **Sunday October 16 & 17, 2010** from 9 AM to 4:30 PM at the Chicago Botanic Garden in Glencoe, IL.

The fest serves multiple purposes for the club: it is our primary fund raising event and a chance for members to display their own locally grown fruits and nuts. More importantly it is an opportunity to engage and inform the public and encourage them to also 'grow their own'. From each Harvest Festival we gain numerous members to grow MidFEx as well.

The MidFEx Harvest Festival has worked so well in the past due to the efforts of so many members who volunteer to set up and staff the show. We need your support again this year. If you know you'll be coming please contact **Mike Zost** (chair) at 847-541-1846 to let him know which day, and which part of the day, you plan to attend. If possible, also consider helping with the Friday setup. If you've never been to a setup, it's a hoot and there's plenty to do. Setting up for a show at CBG consists of dozens of small tasks that must be completed before the lights go out Friday eve. The more helpers that can be there, even for an hour or two, the earlier Mike can get some supper.

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Pruning Workshop, April 2010, Springbrook Nature Center



Winter Pruning, January 2010, Springbrook Nature Center

Fruit Display at Harvest Festival

Bring your apples, pears, plums, pawpaws, persimmons, berries, nuts, etc. that you have grown for display at the Harvest Fest. The items you bring may be offered for sampling mid to late Sunday afternoon. Pick your early ripening fruit pre-prime and refrigerate at 40° F if possible. The fruit needs to be in good condition and should be identified on display cards (provided at event) with your name and the city or location of where the fruit was grown. Ideally, bring your fruit to Burnstein Hall (same place as usual, newer name) Chicago Botanic Garden not later than 3:00 PM on Friday, October 16 for the set up; Contact **Mike Zost** (chair) at 847-541-1846 to confirm the timing. Please consider sticking around to help and enjoy the organized chaos.

MidFEx Recipe Collection

...a work in progress...

In addition to this reminder about our forthcoming recipe book (cookbook?) we'll be asking for recipe titles at our 2010 get-togethers. As soon as you read this, make a mental note of one or two personal favorites. If they are ones that you've tasted but not actually prepared yourself, seek out the source for a copy and preparation hints. If there is a story or a historical note tied to the recipe, please consider it for inclusion.

Apple Raisin Bread Pudding

From the University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Service;
Recipes for Diabetics.

Ingredients:

4 cups "lite" white bread cubes (about 6 slices)
1 medium apple, chopped
1 cup raisins
2 large eggs
12 ounces non-fat evaporated skimmed milk
½ cup apple juice
¼ cup Splenda
1½ teaspoons cinnamon

Directions:

●Preheat oven to 350°. ●Spray an 11x7 inch baking dish with cooking spray. ●Combine bread cubes, apple, and raisins. ●Beat eggs in a medium bowl. ●Stir in evaporated milk, apple juice, Splenda, and cinnamon; mix well. ●Pour egg mixture over bread mixture, pressing bread into egg mixture. ●Let stand for 10 minutes. ●Pour into baking dish. Bake at 350° for 40-45 minutes, or until set and apples tender.

Servings per Recipe: 12
Amount Per Serving
Calories 112
Total Fat 1 g
Cholesterol 35 mg
Carbohydrate 22 g
Exchange 1 starch, ½fruit

Calories from Fat 9
Protein 4 g
Sodium 105 mg
Dietary Fiber 2 g

REPORTS FROM 2010 NAFEX MEETING

From Al Cosnow

North American Fruit Explorers (NAFEX) holds a convention each year in August, varying the site from year to year all over the U.S. and Canada. I was a member of NAFEX in the early 80s before MidFEx was founded; it was at a NAFEX meeting in Ohio that I first met Bob Kurlle, and he proposed starting a Midwest club. This year the venue was West LaFayette IN, seat of Purdue University and their world-famous fruit development programs. Something was going on for all 4 days, Wednesday August 18th through Saturday the 21st, although you weren't locked in to attending the whole thing. There is always a lot to learn at these conventions, but to me, equally valuable is the socializing and comradeship of NAFEX members from all over, greeting people you haven't seen since last year, or maybe several years ago, and picking up the conversation where you left off last time. Heck, I have cousins I don't see nearly as often as some of the NAFEX members from other states and provinces. (*I drove down with **Gene Yale** and **Oriana Kruszcowski**. As we approached the South Side of Chicago driving on Rte. 94, Oriana said, "Who wants to stop in Chinatown for lunch?" Of course we couldn't resist spending an hour or more doing that---it was a real treat having Oriana bring us to a special place where she is recognized and ordering food that only insiders know about.*)

Activities for the meeting began in the afternoon on Wednesday August 18 with registration, a tasting of unusual fruit wines made by White Owl Winery in Illinois, and the ever-present friendly fruit talk in the lobby (well, in the bar too) well into the evening. Every day there was fruit being cut up that members had brought to taste. I experienced several varieties I am now eager to grow. Other MidFEx people who were there for at least some of the days were **Craig Evankoe**, the **Krieg Boys**, **Scott and Richard** from Indiana, **Ron Malcom** and **Jeff Postlewaite**. (Surely I've left somebody out—please forgive me, I'm forgetful.) Ron mentioned something very true, that he was getting to meet people he had only ever read about, like Lee Reich.

The next day, Thursday, was for formal presentations---talks and demonstrations by Purdue fruit faculty and by knowledgeable members of NAFEX. Just as an example, member Pete Tallman from Colorado spoke on "Blueberries for the pH-challenged." He is the same man who has developed and even patented a primocane-bearing black raspberry, the first one ever, and named it 'Explorer' after the club. And all the time holding down a day job—what a guy!

Thursday evening saw a banquet with an after dinner speaker whose talk and demonstration were so good I would have been happy to pay a special admission fee to attend. Then after the dinner some real fun began: NAFEX has an auction of things members have brought in, but not a silent one like the one we have at our picnic;

it is the kind with an auctioneer. This year the president, Ethan Natelson from Houston did the job, and did it very well, too. Also a number of nurseries donated gift certificates which went for a top bid of nicely under face value. (I bid on and won a pretty large fig tree in a pot, which I managed to bring home in the back seat of my car.) A few of the members collect old horticulture books, and there were some very high bids on antique books.

On Friday we boarded a bus for the research orchard, all of us passengers talking fruit for the entire ride. Again, this is one of the best parts of a NAFEX convention. As far as the research at Purdue's orchards, I can only say that the work they are doing there on many kinds of fruit is spectacular. We also toured a commercial pick-your-own orchard that day and were served lunch there.

Saturday was not an official convention day, but many members went on their own to visit **Jerry Lehman's** paw-paw orchard near Evansville, and then home.

Does NAFEX sound like something attractive to you? They are on the Web at NAFEX.org.

From Scott Krieg

When my young cousin Richard and I found out that the Convention was to be held 1-1/2 hours from my house, We were ecstatic. With our newly acquired grafting skills, (Cantigny 2010), we are becoming increasingly serious about orcharding. Most of what I have learned of growing apples, I have learned from books. Michael Phillips and L.H. Bailey are some of my favorite teachers. While important, reading doesn't compare with being in the presence of some of fruit growing's "greats". To sit in lectures with Lee Reich, Tom Burford and Jerry Lehman was inspiring. Many years ago, I read that Ed Fackler is a famous grower and lives in Indiana, as we do. I told my wife that someday I was going to meet him...he signed us in at the convention. I was impressed with the speakers from Purdue, especially Janna Beckerman. Her work with disease resistant apple varieties has given my organic orchard a new direction.

All of the people that we encountered were of the type that could become friends. The long tour-bus rides allowed us time to make friends and further our friendships with the MidFexers that we met at Cantigny, Gene Yale, Allen Cosnow and Ron Malcom. The orchard tours were very educational.

I'll never forget Tom Turpin, the Entomologist from Purdue. As the keynote speaker at the banquet, he shocked us with preparing and serving fried mealy worms,(tasted like potato chips). His thesis: that it may be healthier to eat the insects rather than the poison we kill them with, was believable.

The convention enriched our lives. It was worth every ounce of energy, planning and money that it took to attend. Maybe my wife will let us go again!

Reducing Apple Scab Risks and Saving Scab Sprays

Excerpted from UMass Extension Factsheet F-134-2009
www.umass.edu/fruitadvisor/factsheets/f134.html

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Department of Plant, Soil and Insect Sciences
University of Massachusetts Amherst

Introduction

In a commercial orchard, virtually all of the spores that can start an apple scab epidemic come from within the orchard. Scab spores don't travel very far, generally no more than 100 ft. Add to this the fact that early in the season, from green tip to tight cluster, only a very small proportion of the scab inoculum matures and is available to cause infection. This means the risk of scab infection early in the season can be greatly decreased by reducing or eliminating any old infections in apple leaves on the orchard floor.

Research in New England has shown that either flail chopping or urea applications will reduce apple scab inoculum. In addition, in very low inoculum orchards, it is possible to delay the first scab fungicide applications as late as pink, or until after three infection periods have occurred (whichever comes first). In this fact sheet, we present methods describing how to do both things: reduce the amount of scab inoculum in an apple block; and measure the inoculum in a block in order to decide whether the first scab fungicide may be delayed.

Inoculum Reduction

Regardless of the scab management program used in an orchard, we recommend reducing apple leaf litter and the scab inoculum it contains. It is a relatively inexpensive and reliable method that decreases the risk of apple scab.

Shredding leaves. Shredding all leaves on the orchard floor in November or April reduces the number of scab spores by about 85%. If the strip under trees cannot be reached with shredding equipment, then flail chopping the remaining area between trees will reduce scab spores by about 50%. Small leaf pieces break down quicker, and are more readily consumed by earthworms. If shredding is done in April, it will flip leaves, and leaf pieces, over. The scab fungus has already started to grow by the spring, and forms fruiting structures that will release spores up and into the air. Flail chopping flips probably about half the leaves or pieces over, and spores formed in those pieces of leaves cannot release into the air.

Urea treatments. Spraying the surface of the leaves on the ground with urea will reduce spores by about 66%. Use feed grade urea, which is 46% N, and mix a 5% solution in water. (This is 44 lb. per 100 gal.) Feed grade urea is

more expensive but dissolves in water much easier than granular (fertilizer grade) urea. Thus, feed grade is recommended, though the cost is higher – app. \$20/acre vs. half that price for granular urea. The nitrogen content of both is the same, so granular urea can be used, but with more effort. Spray the ground surface at a rate of 100 gal. per acre. You can use an air-blast sprayer with only the lower nozzle(s) turned on, but it's best to use a boom-type herbicide or field crop-type sprayer. Make applications approximately two to four weeks before bud break, with a longer interval being more effective. Consider that this supplies app. 20 lbs. actual nitrogen per acre, so you will need to adjust your N fertilizer application rates later in the season.

Shredding and urea treatments can be combined, for even greater reductions.

Peach Salsa

This recipe uses fresh ripe peach primarily for sweetness. If peach is highly flavored, and more than indicated is used, it will also contribute its peachy flavor. Additional herbs/spices, if used, will dilute the peach flavor.

1 1/2 lb Italian tomatoes
1/2 of a large red bell pepper
1 small onion (2")
1 large peach (1/2 lb)
1 Tbs sugar (or less to taste)
1 clove garlic (pressed)
1 tsp salt
1/2 tsp pepper
3 Tbs fresh lime juice

Pre-chop first 4 ingredients.

Add all to food processor.

Run 30 seconds or till desired consistency.

Keeps up to one week in fridge.

Fruit for thought

“You've got to go out on a limb sometimes because that's where the fruit is.” Will Rogers

“Judge a tree from its fruit, not from its leaves” Euripides

“Love is a fruit in season at all times, and in reach of every hand.” Mother Teresa

“Wishing to be friends is quick work, but friendship is slow-ripening fruit.” Aristotle

“Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet.” Jean Jacques Rousseau

“Time flies like an arrow; fruit flies like a banana” Groucho Marx



Picnic Under the MidFEx Big Top

Gene Yale S



Examining Auction Bargains

Al Cosnow Leading Picnic Tour



On the Picnic Tour



Dennis Wang Reviewing Dessert G

Showing Off



Gene Sharing His Experience



MidFEx
Midwest Fruit Explorers



Foodies



Sampling Ron Malcom's Peaches

Handling, Processing & Freezing of Pawpaw Fruit

Ohio Pawpaw Growers Association
www.Ohiopawpaw.com

Storing Fresh Fruit. Like bananas, the pawpaw fruit will continue to ripen at room temperature. You can slow the process down by putting them in the refrigerator. The best method seems to be to wrap each fruit in a paper towel and put in a covered container or zip lock bag. Although the skin will eventually turn brown (after about a week), this does not affect the quality of the fruit. You may be able to keep the fruit for several weeks if you don't plan to freeze it.

Preparation. The simplest way to eat fresh fruit is to wash it, then take a sharp knife and cut as deeply as you can all around the fruit lengthwise and twist it apart (like you would an avocado). Then eat flesh with a spoon right from the skin, spitting out the seeds like when eating watermelon. A pulp sac surrounds each seed, which is also edible.

Processing. There isn't a mechanical processor available to the home kitchen yet to remove the seeds so it must be done manually: Cut the fruit same as above for eating, but take sharp edge of knife and scrape the pulp sac partially from the row of seeds so you can easily pick them out. Using a spoon, scoop out the flesh into a container. You do not have to puree the pulp before freezing. In fact, it is difficult to do this because the pulp is very thick and doesn't process quickly. It is easier to puree it with the eggs and liquid when you are ready to bake. Pawpaws will oxidize (turn a little darker) when frozen. This does not affect the taste or quality of the fruit. You can try adding Fruit Fresh (follow package directions) at this point if you want to avoid this.

Freezing. To freeze, spoon pulp into a freezer container the size you will need for your recipe. Use a spoon to press out any air bubbles. Press plastic wrap directly on top of the pulp (to suppress oxidation) before you put the lid on. Pawpaw pulp can be frozen up to 12 months for using raw (in smoothies and in making ice cream), and somewhat longer for using in baked goods.

Baking. You can use fresh or frozen pawpaw pulp in nearly any recipe that calls for pureed applesauce or banana. It can also be substituted for pumpkin in recipes but you would need to reduce the sugar since pawpaw is sweet. It is recommended that you use far less spices or flavorings since pawpaw has a delicate flavor you don't want to overpower. As an added bonus, since pawpaw is a natural fat substitute (has good fat), you can significantly reduce or even eliminate fats/oils in these recipes.

Nutrition. Pawpaw is higher in Niacin and Calcium than apples, oranges, and bananas. Pawpaws have 3 times as much Vitamin C as apples, 2 times as much as bananas and 1/3 as much as oranges, Pawpaws has as much potassium as bananas, and more than apples and oranges. Pawpaw is the ONLY fruit with ALL essential amino acids. In addition, it is loaded with antioxidants.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has not found any health risks associated with the consumption of pawpaw fruit.

Pawpaw Processing Ideas

Jeff Postlewaite

I've been exploring various methods to reduce some of the mess of pawpaw processing. The usually described method of simply slicing the fruit end-to-end, pulling out the seeds, and scraping the flesh from the peel can be quite frustrating. Using this "simple" method, I inevitably end up with pawpaw pulp up to my elbows and a real mess on all the surrounding work surfaces. Pawpaw flesh is very slippery so the more you handle it the messier the process. The seeds are surrounded by a difficult to remove pulp sac — especially challenging with slippery fingers! If you don't clean the pulp from the seeds, a lot of pulp is wasted. The flesh also sticks to the peel. The peel often tears while trying to scrape the flesh off which makes the process more tedious and messy trying to find and remove little bits of peel.

Some things I've learned so far:

- ⇒ Freezing and then thawing whole pawpaws doesn't seem to make them any easier to peel or seed.
- ⇒ Processing pawpaws a day or two before they are dead ripe makes them much easier to handle.
- ⇒ Dropping whole pawpaws into boiling water for a minute or two and then dropping them into ice water makes possible easy peeling with a paring knife. There is sometimes a light green film left after peeling that is bitter and can be skinned off with the knife or rubbed off under water if the pawpaws aren't too soft.
- ⇒ Heating the peeled pawpaws helps separate the seeds from the pulp sac. Heating in a saucepan with a little water to boiling made the seeds much easier to remove but I found that the flavor of the pawpaw flesh was changed too much. Stronger flavored and a little bitter. This method might be more successful with a very gentle heating, checking frequently with a spoon to see if the seeds can be lifted out.
- ⇒ Heating in a microwave has worked best for me with the least change in taste. I microwave 4 medium peeled pawpaws in a covered dish on high for ~4 minutes, let the pawpaws cool enough to handle, and simply pull the seeds out by hand. The seeds come out cleanly.

If anyone has their own tips or tricks for pawpaw processing please pass them on.

Apple Cider Social

The apple harvest should be in full swing as you are reading this. Do you have more apples than you know what to do with? Do some of them have blemishes or minor insect damage that would prevent you from eating them raw? Instead of tossing them into the compost heap or garbage, you can save them for the MidFEx Apple Cider Social. We always dust off the club owned cider press for Harvest Fest, but it seems like a shame to use it only once a year. This year we thought we'd get a little more use out of the press — and making cider is as good an excuse as any to get together and talk fruit

MidFEx will buy some quantity of apples, but members are encouraged to bring their own apples to convert into cider. In an attempt to make it equitable for members bringing apples, we'll reimburse you for your apples like \$5 a bushel. The actual rate will be determined when we order the apples. The imperfect fruit you grew can be put to a good cause, you get to drink fresh cider without having to buy your own cider press, you can make a few bucks out of it, and have a good time with fellow MidFEx members. It's a win-win all around. If there is any cider left over after the social, we'll divide it up as best we can so people can take some home. Bring your own container if you want to bring some cider home. Oh, and the pulp will be available for compost if you are interested.

All MidFEx members are welcome even if you don't have apples to bring due to low fruit production, or your apple trees aren't bearing yet, or perhaps all your apples are too perfect to use for cider making. We're also asking that everyone bring an appetizer, dessert, or fresh fruit for approximately 10 people for pot luck. This way we can eat, drink cider and be merry. Details of the event are below:

Date: **Sunday, November 7th**

Time: **2 pm**

Location: Al Cosnow's home (I know, we have to work on different locations, but he stores the press.)

**670 Longwood Ave.
Glencoe, IL**

R.S.V.P: Send an email to president@midfex.org letting us know that you're planning on attending, how many people will be accompanying you, and if you're going to bring apples. Please RSVP by October 31st.

Zesty Peach Barbeque Sauce

(Posted by **Chris Holland** on the MidFEx Forum)

- 6 C. Finely Chopped Pitted Peaches
- 1 C. Finely Chopped Seeded Red Bell Pepper
- 1 C. Finely Chopped Onion
- 3 TB Finely Chopped Garlic (I mince with a mincer)
- 1 ¼ C. Liquid Honey
- ¾ C. Cider Vinegar
- 1 TB Worcestershire Sauce (For Vegetarians, there is a vegetarian version)
- 2 tsp Hot Pepper Flakes
- 2 tsp Dry Mustard
- 2 tsp Salt

Prepare canner, jars, and lids.

In a large saucepan combine all ingredients. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat and boil gently, stirring frequently, until mixture is thickened to the consistency of a thin commercial barbecue sauce, about 25 minutes. For me, I cook it about the 25 minutes and then hit it with the immersion blender. You could put it in a regular blender, but be very careful it is very hot.

Ladle sauce into jars, leaving a half inch head space.

Wipe rim. Center lid on jar. Screw band down until resistance is met, then increase to finger-tip tight.

Process in boiling water bath canner for 15 minutes (assumes half pints increase time for larger quantities).

Notes:

1. Peeling peaches is quite easy. Place peaches in boiling water for 60 seconds (if they are coming out of your refrigerator – 90 seconds). Then into an ice water bath for at least 60 seconds, the skins come right off.
2. I have doubled this recipe safely with no flavor compromise.
3. This is **not** super spicy, it is a very mild spicy sweet sauce. If you want some real zest you may want to increase the quantity of hot pepper flakes or add another pepper, such as Jalepeno or Habenero.

Take from the "Ball Complete Book of Home Preserving: 400 delicious and creative recipes for Today."

Preserving Apples

From the University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Service:
<http://urbanext.illinois.edu/apples/preserving.cfm>

Preparing Apples for Freezing

Enzymes in light colored fruits such as apples, pears and peaches can cause oxidative browning as soon as the fruit is peeled or cut. Browning can cause loss of vitamin C. Because fruits are usually served raw they are not usually blanched to prevent this discoloration. Instead, chemical compounds are used to control enzymes in these fruits.

The most common treatment is ascorbic acid (vitamin C). Ascorbic acid may be used in its pure form or in commercial mixtures of ascorbic acid and other compounds. Browning can also be halted temporarily by placing fruit in citric acid or lemon juice solutions or in sugar syrup. However, these measures are not as effective as treatment with ascorbic acid in its pure form.

Apples, as well as other fruits, retain better texture and flavor if packed in sugar or sugar syrup. However, sugar is not necessary to safely preserve fruit. Fruits packed in syrup are generally best used for uncooked desserts, those packed in syrup or unsweetened are best for most cooking purposes, because there is less liquid in the product.

◆Freezing Apples in Syrup

This syrup recipe will make 5 1/3 cups syrup which will cover approximately 6 pints or 3 quarts of apple slices. Use rigid freezer containers or zip-closure freezer bags.

2-1/2 cups sugar

4 cups water

3 pounds apples

1/2 teaspoon ascorbic acid powder (1500 mg)*

To make syrup, dissolve sugar in lukewarm water, mixing until the solution is clear. To prevent browning add 1/2 teaspoon ascorbic acid powder (1500 mg) or equivalent in finely crushed vitamin C tablets. Stir to dissolve. Chill syrup before using. Select fresh full-flavored apples that are crisp and firm, not mealy in texture. Wash, peel and core. Slice medium apples into twelfths and large apples into sixteenths. Place 1/2 cup syrup in each pint-size container and slice each apple directly into chilled syrup. Press apples down in containers and add enough syrup to cover apple slices. Leave 1/2 inch headspace in each pint (or 1 inch in each quart-size container). Place a small piece of crumpled water-resistant paper, such as waxed paper, on top of each container to hold apples slices down under syrup. Seal, label, date and freeze at 0°F or below. Use within one year.

*To use lemon juice: drop apple slices into a solution of two tablespoons lemon juice and two quarts water. Drain well before covering with syrup.

◆Freezing Apples without Sugar

Apples frozen without sugar are generally used for cooking. Can be used for pie making too.

Wash, peel and core apples. To prevent darkening, dissolve 1/2 teaspoon (1500 mg) ascorbic acid powder or equivalent of finely crushed vitamin C tablets in 3 tablespoons water. Sprinkle over apples. Place apple slices in zip-closure freezer bags, label, date and freeze. Treated apples can also be frozen first on

a tray leaving space between each piece. Pack into containers as soon as slices are frozen (approximately 2-4 hours). Freeze for up to one year at 0°F or below.

◆Dry Sugar Packed Apple Slices

Follow directions for "Freezing Apples without Sugar"; mix 1/2 cup sugar to each quart apples slices. Place apples in containers, press fruit down, leaving 1/2 inch headspace for pints and quarts. Seal and freeze for up to one year at 0°F or below.

Preparing Apples for Canning

Preventing Discoloration in Canning

After they are cut or peeled, apples, and other light colored fruit (pears and peaches) will begin to turn dark due to oxidation. To prevent this, as you prepare the fruit for canning, or cooking place in a holding solution made from ascorbic acid or vitamin C tablets. Tablets contain filler, which may turn the water cloudy, but it is not harmful.

Ascorbic acid powder can be purchased at health food stores or drugstores. It prevents darkening while enhancing nutritional value of apple recipes without changing flavor. Commercial ascorbic acid mixtures can also be used. Read the label on the container for the amount to use. Although lemon juice adds slight lemon flavor and may not be as effective, bottled or fresh lemon juice can also be used at a ratio of 1/2 cup per 1/2 gallon water.

Apple Chutney

Chutney is a piquant relish from the quinine of India. It is usually eaten in small amounts to add flavor and to accent a meal. To can: process chutney in a boiling water bath for 15 minutes for pints and 25 minutes for quarts. The following recipe is flexible as to which fruit is used.

1 cup pitted prunes, chopped

1 1/2 cups apple cider vinegar

2 cups brown sugar

1 teaspoon coriander seeds, ground

1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/8 to 1 teaspoon ground cayenne pepper (optional)

3 medium-sized (crisp) apples, peeled, cored and chopped

1 cup currents, chopped

1 cup onions, chopped

2 medium tomatoes, peeled, seeded and chopped

Cover the prunes with water and boil for 10 minutes. Drain and chop. Combine vinegar, sugar, coriander, cinnamon, salt and pepper in an enameled or stainless steel pan. Heat to boiling; add prunes, apples, currents, onions, and tomatoes. Cover and boil stirring frequently with a wooden spoon for about 30 to 40 minutes. Chill or serve warm. Refrigerate for up to two weeks.

To can: pour hot chutney into pint jars, remove air bubbles, use two-piece lids prepared according to manufacturers instructions, adjust lids and process for 15 minutes in a boiling water bath. Makes two pints.

This recipe can be doubled or tripled with very good results.

Red Cinnamon Apple Rings

Great side dish with Braised Greens, Roast Vegetables, Roast Turkey or other poultry. These apple rings can be canned for long-term preservation or stored in the refrigerator for up to 2 weeks.

5 pounds firm cooking apples
(Golden Del., Granny Smith, Jonathan, Gala, Jonagold, etc.)
2 cups sugar
2 cups water
Red food coloring (optional)
4 cinnamon sticks
Ascorbic acid powder, vitamin C tablets, or lemon juice*

Wash and core apples; do not peel. Slice apples into 1/2 inch thick rings. To prevent browning, drop apple rings into a bowl of cold water (about 2 quarts) containing 1/2 teaspoon ascorbic acid powder (1500 mg), or use equivalent in finely crushed vitamin C tablets or 1/2 cup lemon juice. Keep apples covered with ascorbic acid water until ready to use. Combine sugar, 2 cups water and cinnamon sticks in a large saucepan. Add a few drops of red food coloring, if desired. Bring syrup to a boil and boil for five minutes. Remove from heat. Drain apples, add to syrup. Return syrup and apples to a boil; reduce heat and simmer 30 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand until cool. Remove apple rings from syrup. Loosely pack apple rings into canning jars leaving 1/2 inch headspace. Return syrup to heat and bring to a boil. Remove cinnamon sticks. Ladle hot syrup over apple rings leaving 1/2 inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Adjust two-piece lids. Process pint size jars 15 minutes, or quarts 20 minutes in a boiling water bath canner. Yield about six pints or three quarts.

*May substitute 1/2 cup fresh or bottled lemon juice.

Source: *So Easy to Preserve*, Fourth Edition, University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service.

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Metal Duct Raccoon Foiler

! Photograph Your Orchard !

Consider this as your quarterly reminder to take more pictures in your own back yard.. Pick, say, one day a week (or a month) to walk outside with your camera (digital makes it easy) and find something interesting in your orchard that might be interesting to others. Time-lapse shots have always fascinated me. The 'lapse' can be days: (flower bud to full bloom), weeks: (full bloom to marble size fruit), months: (dormant to full leaf), or years: (little tree to big tree). Make a plan and put it in your daily planner.

Your membership may be expiring! **Check your Grapevine address label for your membership expiration date. If it says "9/30/10" or earlier, then it is time to renew.**

MidFEx Membership Application

New Member

Renewing Member

Name (please print)

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone

E-Mail

Amount Enclosed: \$15 (1 Year) \$25 (2 Years) \$30 (3 Years)

Mail to: MidFEx Membership
P.O. Box 93
Markham, IL 60428-0093

The above information (name, address and phone only) will appear in our Members' Only Directory (June issue)

MidFEx Calendar

October 16 & 17, 2010	Fall Harvest Festival at Chicago Botanic Garden
November 7, 2010	Apple Cider Social, Glencoe,
November 12, 2010	Grapevine submissions due for December issue
January 9, 2011	1:00 pm Annual Business meeting and Soup Bowl pot luck: TBD
March 27, 2011	Grafting Workshop, Cantigny Garden, Wheaton
April 3, 2011	Grafting Workshop, Chicago Botanic Garden, Glencoe
July 10, 2011	Summer Picnic: TBD
October 15 & 16, 2011	Fall Harvest Festival at Chicago Botanic Garden

MidFEx Officers and Contacts

President: Dennis Wang Secretary: Chuck Heisinger	Vice-President: Michael Zost Treasurer/Membership: Jeff Postlewaite
MidFEx Online Forum Members are invited to join the MidFEx forum. Get advice and share your fruit growing experiences with other members. Subscribe to the forum at: http://lists.ibiblio.org/mailman/listinfo/midfex Forum administrator: Sherwin Dubren (sherwindu@comcast.net)	MidFEx Web Site: http://www.midfex.org Send anything of interest (links, photographs, fruit info, etc.) to Brad Platt for consideration for web site posting. Email Brad at: midfexweb@buildabetersite.com
Grapevine articles wanted! Deadline for articles to Robin Guy for next Grapevine: 11/12/10. Please e-mail articles to Robin and type "GRAPEVINE" in the subject header. Gathering Editor: Robin Guy (editor@midfex.org)	Membership: Use enclosed application, see web site, email membership@midfex.org , or write: MidFEx Membership P.O. Box 93 Markham, IL 60428-0093

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