

# CO-OP Digest

September/October 2011

North Country Food Cooperative

For the community. By the community.

## Pickle-palooza by Melissa Hart

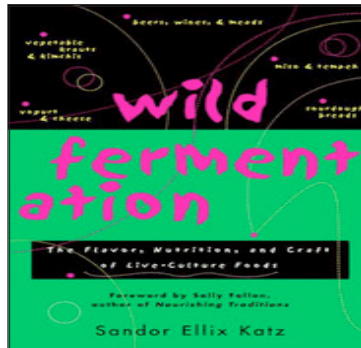


There's a revolution going on, one that's been quietly happening for thousands of years. A revolution of fermentation. Or maybe, as one comrade phrased it, more like a cult following. But once you're in it, you're in for life!

For those of you interested in the centuries-old traditions of pickling, beer brewing, yogurt-making, sourdough bread baking and other concoctions, I highly recommend picking up a copy of "Wild Fermentation" by Sandor Ellix Katz. Pretty much the bible of fermented food and drink, the book is full of easy to make recipes and anecdotal story telling. Besides offering a range of complex flavors and the fun that can be had of creating some of them, fermented foods are literally alive and much as been said of the "probiotic" health benefits. But today I'm going to sing the praises of pickling, since that's been my summer food preservation project of choice. Namely, cucumber pickles.

The quest for a perfect pickle lies in the crunch. Katz recommends adding grape leaves to the recipe; as the tannin-rich leaves help keep the crispness. I've yet to try that, but am eager to test it out. And by the way, the co-op carries ready-to-use pickling spice in the bulk spice jars, both organic and non-organic varieties. Not to mention all the great canning products, I've been all set to pack away provisions...

I recently purchased my first food-grade crock, which is a big boost to my fermenting hobby. In honor of the event, I share Katz's steps for brined dill pickles:



1. Rinse cucumbers, taking care to not bruise them, and making sure their blossoms are removed. Scrape off any remains at the blossom end. If you're using cucumbers that aren't fresh off the vine that day, soak them for a couple of hours in very cold water to freshen them.
2. Dissolve sea salt in ½gallon (2 liters) of water to create brine solution. Stir until salt is thoroughly dissolved.
3. Clean the crock, then place at the bottom of it dill, garlic, fresh grape leaves, and a pinch of black peppercorns.
4. Place cucumbers in the crock.
5. Pour brine over the cucumbers, place the (clean) plate over

them, then weigh it down with a jug filled with water or a boiled rock. If the brine doesn't cover the weighed-down plate, add more brine mixed at the same ratio of just under 1 tablespoon of salt to each cup of water.

6. Cover the crock with a cloth to keep out dust and flies and store it in a cool place.

7. Check the crock every day. Skim any mold from the surface, but don't worry if you can't get it all. If there's mold, be sure to rinse the plate and weight. Taste the pickles after a few days.

8. Enjoy the pickles as they continue to ferment. Continue to check the crock every day.

9. Eventually, after one to four weeks (depending on the temperature), the pickles will be fully sour. Continue to enjoy them, moving them to the fridge to slow down fermentation.

Are there other canning enthusiasts out there interested in holding an informal canned goods swap? I, for one have an abundance of relish and wouldn't mind mixing it up. If interested, drop a line to [hart.melissa@rocketmail.com](mailto:hart.melissa@rocketmail.com) and we can figure out a date/time/place.

## My Daughter, The Vegetarian by Julie Canepa

When writing for the North Country Food Co-Op Newsletter, I get the feeling that I am "preaching to the choir", i.e., reaching a group of individuals with like-minded interests and sensibilities. And although not all Co-Op patrons are vegetarians, I'm guessing that if you took a poll the percentage of vegetarians would be higher than in the general population of Plattsburgh. That said, when people hear that my daughter, 10 ½ going on 17, is a self-proclaimed vegetarian, and has been eating that way since birth, the first

*Disclaimer: The Co-op Digest is written by individual volunteers. Opinions expressed herein are those of each author.*

question they ask is "Is she getting enough protein?"

One look at her and their concerns should dissipate. At five feet one and consistently in the ninety some odd percentile on adolescent growth charts, if anything we need to stop watering her. Also, as a parent and current provider of her sustenance, I understand the important role protein plays in bone and muscle building and keeping cells in good working order. I also know that you can't look at a kid and assume they are getting enough of anything in their diet. But this question begs the first of many misunderstandings about a vegetarian lifestyle, and a major gap in many people's understanding of the nature of what they are currently ingesting.

Adolescents need between 45 and 60 grams of protein per day for healthy growth and muscle maintenance. The sad thing is that when you look at suggested sources of protein for adolescent health in the media and health community, they focus on animal products as the main source, namely, beef, pork, chicken, egg and dairy products. Beans, legumes, nuts and tofu are mentioned usually as an aside. Now, if you line up all these protein sources and examine their bang for the buck, it may give you pause. Here is a quick peek at protein amounts in a variety of foods:

Pumpkin seeds - 19 g protein in ¼ cup  
Soybeans - 25 g protein in 1 cup  
Spinach - 5 g protein in 1 cup  
Oatmeal - 6 g protein in 1 cup  
Quinoa - 9 g protein in 1 cup  
Whole wheat spaghetti - 8 g protein in 1 cup  
Peanut Butter - 8 g in 2 Tbsp  
Whole Wheat Bread - 3 g per slice  
Steak - 38 g protein in 6 oz

Whoa, hold on! 38 grams of protein in 6 oz of steak? That's almost a full day's requirement of protein for my daughter. A few eggs or slices of bacon and that would fulfill her protein needs for an entire day. If only it were that easy. Of course, the wild card in this equation is fat content, and saturated fat to be more specific. The meat contains 44 grams of fat, 16 grams of which are saturated.

Unless you have been living in a cave, you know enough about the words "saturated fat" to know that they are not exactly the "healthy fats". The American Heart Association recommends limiting intake of saturated fats (in butter, full-fat dairy products and fatty meats) to less than 7 percent of daily calories. That's 16 grams, if you're consuming 2,000 calories. Therefore, if you eat the steak, you have officially maxed out your intake of saturated fat for the day.

Monounsaturated fats like that found in olive oil are considered among the "healthy fats", as are polyunsaturated fats (found in peanut butter), which include essential fats our body's need

but can't produce. So while red meat is packing the protein punch, it falls flat when you factor in the saturated fat. This information may give the skeptics of vegetarianism, particularly in adolescents, pause and may possibly make a vegetarian lifestyle begin to look a lot more "appetizing". To support this, studies continue to suggest that plant-based proteins are healthier than those from animals. In the Cornell China study, for instance, researchers studying diet and health in rural China found that low rates of heart disease were associated with consumption of plant-based rather than animal-based protein. In a study of older men in the U.S., protein from beef was more likely than soy-based protein to raise cholesterol levels.

How did my daughter become a vegetarian? Her father was a pescetarian, a person whose main diet consists of plant products with the occasional fish thrown in, and I had gradually moved away from eating red meat and pork over the years. When she was an infant, and gradually ready for solid food, feeding her baby food with meat in it seemed just plain wrong (and kinda smelled bad). When she entered daycare, on the application under Child's Special Needs, I had to write in: Vegetarian. This was like asking the daycare provider to feed an alien. If you couldn't feed the child hot dogs or pepperoni pizza, what else was there besides mac and cheese? We found McDonald's to be more accommodating, actually serving a "grilled cheese" with her Happy Meal, basically just a cheeseburger without the burger.

It wasn't until my daughter was four and visiting a neighbor's house at dinner time that she ate her first bite of meat. I remember seeing her running around with a stick of something clenched in her fist, and spotting her take surreptitious bites out of it. Not knowing what it was, I proceeded to investigate. I unfolded her sticky fingers only to find a hunk of baked ham, and boy, was she enjoying it.

The ham incident opened up a period of investigation into the world of meat. I was not going to be a dictator, so she proceeded to try all manner of meats: pepperoni, turkey sandwiches, bacon, etc. But somehow she came back full circle to a mostly meatless lifestyle on her own. I haven't had to tell her about all the environmental problems caused by the livestock industry, or show her videos of the cruelty to animals inherent in our raising them so that we can eat them, or even tell her about children starving in Africa while we raise grain solely to grow animals for human consumption. She just worked her way back around to the veggies, and soy products, breads, grains, beans and nuts that we enjoy on a daily basis. When a peanut butter sandwich is considered health food, how can you go wrong?

## September/October Films:

by Andy MacDougall

Hey cinephiles, our twin offerings showcased in this edition couldn't be more different in content, but share MUST-SEE status.

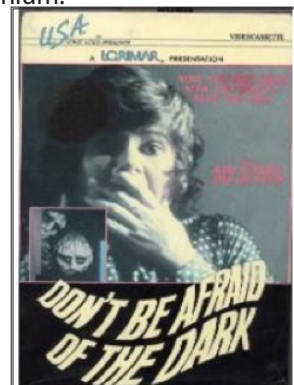
As ever, these are all-16mm, all-celluloid events. Please help support film preservation/appreciation! And now without further ado, on Saturday, Sept. 24th, at 7 p.m., brace yourselves for "The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-In-The-Moon Marigolds" (1972).

Behind one of the oddest titles in film history hides one of the greatest performances ever captured on film, that of the superlative Joanne Woodward starring in the directorial debut of her legendary husband, Paul Newman.

Woodward is stunning as the brash, vulgar, unstable mother of two young girls who alternately loves, bullies, supports, and alienates her daughters with an almost manic degree of emotion.

The intensity of Woodward's passion is almost overwhelming in its fiery honesty, and one is never quite sure whether to despise her character for her at-times reprehensible behavior, or pity her because of our fondness for the actress who is so mesmerizingly bringing her to life.

As the children, Roberta Wallach (daughter of Eli) and Nell Potts are excellent. Btw, Nell Potts is the real-life daughter of Woodward and Newman, and today is the CEO of Newman's Own Organics, carrying on her father's "socially responsible, politically involved, and philanthropic" ethic into the new millennium!



And brace yourselves (to say the least) for our pre-Halloween special, the ORIGINAL "Don't Be Afraid of the Dark" (1973) on Saturday, Oct. 29th at 7 p.m. Yep, this is the milestone spooker, starring Kim ("True Grit") Darby and Mount Assumption Institute graduate Jim Hutton, that reportedly haunted Guillermo del Toro's childhood and set the stage for his recent remake. And not just del Toro's childhood, but my own and that of countless others.