

Grange Food News

December 9, 2012 - Compiled by Chris Williams

Grange Food News is a newsletter that I write about food and farming on Whidbey. It grew out of the Food Basics classes held at the Deer Lagoon Grange. Anybody can get on the list, it's free, just E mail me. If you want to put something in about an event or something wanted or for sale that is food or farming related, that too is free but it is my decision whether to include it. Please give as much advance notice as possible because this newsletter goes out on an irregular schedule. Grange classes may appear in multiple issues, other events may appear only once. For a complete events calendar, go to the blog <http://whidbeyislandfarmandfoodnews.blogspot.com> being maintained by Claire Acord, sheep raiser and Border collie trainer, who is compiling information from this Newsletter and other sources. This is a team effort trying to figure out how local food and farming works on Whidbey and to make the information available. We'd welcome input and help from others. If you know of new farmers, services or food buying opportunities, let me know.

Little Brown Farm Store is open. www.littlebrownfarm.com

The store is open on Sundays at noon now and will open on Saturdays as well at noon, starting Dec 29 once the Bayview Holiday Market is over. Check out Vicky's latest products, caramels, toffee, several varieties of goat milk cajeta and now some cultured butter and dulce de leche made from cow milk coming from a local dairy (but not from Whidbey, there are no commercial cow dairies left on Whidbey.) Cheese classes are also in the works.

New business, the Strix Varia Meadery, operated by Jeff and Erica Barlow of Clinton.

They are making and selling fermented beverages based on honey and local fruits and herbs. To do this, they had to go through all the state regulatory process associated with selling alcoholic beverages. I found them selling their meads at the Bayview Holiday market, but to buy from them after the end of the year, get on their E mail list to receive notification when new batches of product become available. zipmont@whidbey.com 341-3331. Strix Varia's emphasis is on cyser, melomel, and traditional mead, with a dry and sweet version of each. See their short youtube video <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9cEanvWEKzA>

Three Generations Jam.

Jan Gross of Greenbank, together with her daughter and grand daughter are the team making these delightful preserves. Their top seller is fig jam and the huckleberry jam always sells out, so if that is what you have to have, get over to Bayview Holiday Market and get some quick. It is also on sale at the Little Brown Farm Store www.littlebrownfarm.com

Seville Oranges and PFI.

It's that time of year for making proper marmalade from Seville oranges. Last year, the folks at the Goose supermarket tried to get some, but the fruit never appeared in their distribution channels. But they are trying again this year, so keep checking the produce department and ask

if they've succeeded. If that doesn't work, you can buy some on-line. Gwen Goodbee has purchased some from www.ripetoyou.com and was very satisfied with the fruit quality.

Seville Sour (*from the Ripe To You web site.*)

The highly acidic flesh of this attractive orange has a very distinctive bitterness which makes it superior for marmalades but far too sour for fresh eating. Sevilles are used commercially in the production of liqueurs, orange flower water, perfumes and rind oils. A classic Cuban mojo or marinade is made with equal parts of sour orange and olive oil, along with garlic and onion.

As a last resort, you can try a can of Mamade, Seville pulp with the peel already chopped. All you do is add water and sugar, heat and stir. You can get Mamade at Pacific Food Importers retail store in Seattle, down by the baseball field, in an old brick warehouse at the far end of a parking lot! You just have to know it's there. www.bigjohnspiseattle.com Definitely worth a visit. They sell all kinds of European and Middle Eastern food. They buy bulk spices in 5 qt containers and dump them into 5 gallon buckets labeled with Magic Markers for customers to serve themselves, nothing fancy here. They have the biggest selection of cheeses in Seattle. House rule is one pound minimum of olives or cheese, but there is an unusual measurement of weight, a shy pound. If you take your own water tight containers, they will give you extra brine for storing things like feta cheese and olives.

Founding of The Grange.

It was on this date in 1867 that [Oliver Hudson Kelley](#) **founded the Order of the Patrons of Husbandry, also known as The Grange.** It's the oldest national agricultural advocacy organization. Kelley was born in Boston in 1826, and moved to Itasca, Minnesota, to become a farmer when he was 23. After the Civil War, President Andrew Johnson sent him to the Southern states to report back on the condition of the farms there. It was during this trip that Kelley began to think about a fraternal organization, similar to the Freemasons, which would work to improve conditions for farmers and bring the North and South back together in a common cause. So he formed the Order of the Patrons of Husbandry for this purpose, and his organization was unusual for the time: it encouraged women and teenagers to participate. In fact, the charter required that four of the elected positions must be held by women. The Grange represented the interests of farmers in disputes with the railroads, it established free rural mail delivery, and helped farmers improve their lives through research-based education. It also championed other, non-agricultural causes like temperance and women's suffrage. Click on the Oliver Hudson Kelley link above for the whole article from the Minnesota Historical Society . Thanks to Christina Baldwin for sending this information

Tuesday Dec 11, 5.30 pm at Oak Harbor City Hall , Food and Waste

Americans throw away 40% of their food which costs the average family of four over \$2,000 a year. The Leftover Queen, aka Kim McJury, will show you how to organize your kitchen, plan, shop, prepare and freeze meals to minimize food waste.

Find out how peelings, cores, teabags and coffee filters can be transformed into nutrient rich, soil supplements for your garden by creating a worm bin, with tips from Environmental Educator Maribeth Crandell 360-279-4762

Dec 14th is the end date for funding the Kickstarter project

<http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/theorchardkitchen/the-orchard-kitchen> to raise funds for an Orchard Kitchen/classroom at the Nattress family farm in Bayview Corner. Please help if you can.

Vincent did a great job demonstrating his cooking techniques last Wednesday at the Grange. I thought it was much better than watching chefs on TV . I learned some really useful things, plus the food was fabulous. How many of you use Italian porcini powder? I came straight home and put some dried mushrooms in a blender! I live nearby so you can be sure I will be hanging around when he gets cooking classes underway.