

Consolidated newsletters – English translation format – 2023

Table of Contents

2023 Newsletters

April 2023	Gardening 7 P's
May 2023	Skills and Talents
June 2023	Food Storage
July 2023	Addendum - Preserving tomatoes
July 2023	Canning and Seed Saving
August 2023	Spiritual or Temporal
September 2023	Saving Seeds
November 2023	Self-Reliance Classes
Oct 2023	No Newsletter
Dec 2023	Elders Quorum Connection

April 2023 Self-Reliance Newsletter – gardening

Welcome to April, Hurray! Spring is upon us.

What a great time to talk about Gardening!
You probably can't tell I get excited about this topic.

The last average frost-free date in this area, which is 28 April. Plus or minus 2 weeks. You are just in time to start your tomato, pepper and other 6-8-week plants for spring planting outdoors.

Hoop house happiness – Information on building a hoop house (aka high tunnel, aka greenhouse) allowing extended season growing.

[http://rockfordstake.selfrelianceclub.com/hoop house happiness.pdf](http://rockfordstake.selfrelianceclub.com/hoop%20house%20happiness.pdf)

Cool season vegetable growing – CES presentation on cool weather crops.

[http://rockfordstake.selfrelianceclub.com/Cool Season Vegetable Gardening.pdf](http://rockfordstake.selfrelianceclub.com/Cool%20Season%20Vegetable%20Gardening.pdf)

Container Gardening information

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/family-home-evening-resource-book/family-activities/gardening-in-containers?lang=eng>

Another resource on gardening you might consider:

Getting along with your Garden, Ezra Taft Benson Institute on Food and Agriculture

[http://selfrelianceclub.com/Getting Along with your Garden.pdf](http://selfrelianceclub.com/Getting%20Along%20with%20your%20Garden.pdf)

If you are interested in the other side of plants, ie, the medicinal values and uses, check out this website. We use these formulas regularly and have complete confidence in them. Besides, there is nothing proprietary in them, you can buy or grow all your own herbs and make them yourself.

<https://online.snh.cc/files/2100/HTMLredacted/>

If you need any help with any aspect of gardening or preserving food, please contact me.

Michael Goodwin

Rockford Stake Welfare and Self-Reliance Specialist

779-203-0451

The 7 P's of Gardening
By: Michael J. Goodwin
(miklgoodwin@gmail.com)
Revised 2-4-17
Revised 2-22-23

Doctrinal Overview: "We will see the day when we will live on what we produce."
Pr. Marion G. Romney

That through my providence, notwithstanding the tribulation which shall descend upon you, that the church may stand independent above all other creatures beneath the celestial world - D&C 78: 14

The focus of this article will be on vegetable and herb gardening – using natural and sustainable methods.

Why do you garden?

1 - Planning

The soil is a living organism. There are over 1000 living things in a teaspoon of live soil (bacteria, molds, insects, worms, algae, etc.)

"The more you deviate from nature, the more you have to fight nature!", Prof. Rich Alde.

Size of garden (start small)

Planting timing (frost tolerant, cool tolerant, heat loving, heat hating, ...)

Northern Illinois is in USDA Growing Zone 5

The last Spring frost is April 28 +/- 2 weeks

The first Autumn Frost is Oct 7 +/- 2 weeks

But always be prepared to cover plants for the unexpected frost.

Companion planting (some plants help other plants by repelling harmful insects, attracting beneficial insects, etc.)

Method – flat-lander, raised beds, containers, double dug, bio-intensive (living mulch) (French Intensive culture, Alan Chadwick, John Jeavons, SPIN Farming, Metro Farming, City Farming, Urban Agriculture, ...)

Ordering seed and nursery stock (buy only once per variety, if open-pollinated)

Buy seed this year for the next 2 years, depending on seed viability. Better yet, learn how to save your open-pollinated seed and you will have seed indefinitely.

Save Your Seeds == Savior Seeds. He will help you as you help yourself.

Store seed for next year, Vaughn J. Featherstone, April 1976

"Also remember to buy a year's supply of garden seeds so that, in case of a shortage, you will have them for the following spring."

Seedlings and nursery stock (buy or start your own through cuttings, division, etc.)

Ground work – soil conditions (rocky, ...) and soil type (sand, clay, silt loam, ...). Check the soil composition triangle for the best for your plants.

Location – trees (competition for sunlight, water and nutrients), shade from buildings, drainage, both water and cold air flow.

Discovery about container gardening:

Container gardening means you grow your plants solely in a large pot throughout the season. On each seed packet, there is number of days to maturity listed. This represents the time it will take a plant to produce edible fruit or vegetable. This is the time from direct seeding into the ground or transplanting seedlings into the ground. However, if you start plants in a container, usually indoors, this day count starts when you plant or transplant into the final container and can be many weeks ahead of the normal outdoor transplanting time. This would allow you to harvest food many weeks ahead of markets, allowing you to offset purchasing this food by a month or more and can stretch your harvesting period by that month or more. The number of harvested pruned shoots for propagating can be greatly increased, too. See early transplants section below.

Acidity

pH of water and soil – (Parts Hydrogen, H_2SO_4 is an acid where $NaOH$ is a base, HOH (H_2O) is neutral at pH of 7 (water), lime vs sulfur, baking soda vs ammonium nitrate) Scale is 1 to 14 with 7 being neutral = water, 6 is 10 times more acidic than 7, so 6.5 and 6.7 are huge differences.

Tilth – friability of the soil, looseness, (“Clay on sand is money in the land, sand on clay is money thrown away” old proverb.)

Humus – organic matter, high CEC (Cation Exchange Capacity) (“He who buys hay, buys land, old proverb. He who buys land gets the water rights too, which is why middle eastern countries buy land in our irrigated west to grow hay and ship it home to feed their dairy cows.)

SEED AND PLANT SELECTION:

1 seed for 1 vegetable - onion, carrot, cabbage, beet, radish, turnips, rutabagas, etc.

1 seed for many vegetables - tomato, pepper, broccoli, squash, beans, cucumbers, melons, etc.

Methods of planting:

Transplants: Start seeds indoors for transplants to place in the garden at the appropriate time.

Early transplants: plants started early in the year, harvesting shoots to greatly multiply the number of plants you can get from one seed. It takes 6-8 weeks to produce a transplant from seed while shoot to transplant size can be done in as little as 7-10 days, 1/6 to 1/8 the time.

Direct seeding: Seed is directly planted into the garden soil when the soil temperature is appropriate.

Three items to consider when selecting crops to plant:

1 – Carbon: for the compost pile: wheat, corn, oats, barley, rye, ...

2 – Calorie: Peas, dry beans, potatoes, garlic, onions, ...

3 – Vitamin, Minerals and Enzymes: tomatoes, squash, green beans, peppers, lettuce, cabbage, ...

Food calorie producers:

Food Item ----->	Potatoes	Pinto Beans	Spring Wheat
------------------	----------	-------------	--------------

Calories/#	279	1583	1497
------------	-----	------	------

Sq Ft/#	.5	10	10
---------	----	----	----

Sq Ft/2400 cal/day	1570	5475	5840
--------------------	------	------	------

Potatoes produce the most calories in the smallest area of land.

Types of seed:

Open pollinated seed: only have to be purchased one time as the seed can be saved from year to year.

Hybrid seed - a cross between two different parents, offspring will not grow true to variety.

GMO – genetically modified organism: seed has had its chromosome structure changed by man to produce offspring un-natural. Offspring can be planted but might land you in a heavy law-suit as they are patented, even by nature, and owners are aggressive in prosecuting violators. Usually sold by Seminis, Dow and Monsanto/DuPont.

Gene Edited - genes are either changed around, added or deleted by man to modify the end result of the plant or animal. The law treats these more casually than GMO.

2 - Preparing

Compost production

Tillage - rototilling, forking, etc.

Addition of organic matter in the soil helps greatly with water absorption, keeping soil loose, naturally decomposing into plant food.

Compost application: use as a side dressing or sheet composting.

Mulch acquisition, untreated grass clippings, hay, straw, leaves, etc. Watch for weed seeds in hay and straw. Mulch keeps top surface of the ground cool and weed free.

Plant residue from previous year if not diseased: tomatoes love to be planted in composted tomato residue.

Cover crops and green manure – cereal rye grass (*Secale cereale*) roots and root hairs can exceed 5000 miles from just one plant in one growing season. Useful for penetrating soil to gather nutrients and bringing them to the surface and puts a lot of organic matter into the soil when tilled in -

(www.sare.org/publications/covercrops/covercrops.pdf)

<https://www.sare.org/wp-content/uploads/Managing-Cover-Crops-Profitably.pdf> 248 pgs.

<https://www.rye-sus.eu/the-root-system.html>

Green manure plants are usually legumes that capture atmospheric nitrogen and puts it into the soil when tilled in and allowed to decompose.

Cover crops keep the ground 'covered' in winter, preventing erosion of soil.

Double crops or succession gardening, following early crop with another different crop in the same season.

Mineral content (long term – slow breakdown = rock phosphate, greensand, granite dust)

Soil fertility: Major nutrients: (N (alfalfa meal, legumes, manure) P (rock phosphate, wood ashes), K (wood ashes, crushed granite)

Minor nutrients: Ca, Mg, S

Micronutrients, also called trace elements: B, Cl, Co, Cu, Fe, Mn, Mb, Na, Ni, Zn.

Note: for our area, wood ashes contain too much lime for healthy plant growth.

Stale Seed Bedding: essentially early tilling of a designated grow area. As weeds grow up, they are tilled under. This can be done several times and exhausts the majority of weed seeds in the area so there is less cultivation later when the crop is planted.

Growing transplants:

3 rules to watering:

1 - use a well drained medium

2 - water thoroughly at each watering

3 - water just before signs of water stress appear - color, etc. Not wilting!

Proper drainage requires 3 feet of garden depth. In containers, this cannot be accomplished without adding a drainage medium such as perlite, vermiculite, etc.

Hardening of transplants: gradually expose to wind and full sunlight to strengthen. Can be partially done indoors by the use of fans to create air movement and brushing tops of plants.

3 - Planting

row vs intensive (hex pattern - living mulch)

seed depth - 2-3x diameter of seed

initial watering

warm water irrigation

soaker hose

drip irrigation

sprinkling

tillage

4 - Protecting

Plant protection is needed from insects, diseases and other critters.

Natural items to use:

Garlic spray, pepper spray and kaolin clay for insects

Reduce dryness, cultivation, and weeds through mulch

flame weeding - Propane torch

competition from trees, etc.

sunlight - 6 to 8 hours daily for most plants

tomato cages and support/trellises for vertical gardens

animals: deer, rabbits, raccoons; rodents - wood chucks (Fox Urine)

(blood meal, green hose lengths)

5 - Picking and post harvest handling

ripeness

collection containers

purpose – canning, table use, dehydration, ...

removing field heat

ethylene producers – tomatoes, honeydew melons, bananas, temperate climate tree fruits: apples, peaches, pears, plums, ...

ethylene sensitive – beans, potatoes, cucumbers, okra, summer squash and zucchini, and sweet potatoes, lettuce, beets, carrots, radishes, Brassicas, corn, peas, onions, mushrooms, turnips and rutabagas

ethylene neutral – eggplants, pineapples, watermelons, peppers, oranges and grapefruit, cherries, grapes, lemons, cranberries, other berries.

6 - Preserving the Harvest

pressure canning

boiling water bath canning

dehydration

root cellars

pickling

freezing

7 - Propagating and Perpetuating

annual – plant is killed by winter

biennial – plant produces seed in second year, then dies

perennial – plant grows year after year and is not winter-killed.

Seed saving and storage: seed stewardship

Bystrom Cherry Tomato – counted 89 seeds in 1 tomato, probably hundreds of tomatoes per plant.
Root and tuber cuttings, root division – potatoes, horseradish, chives, rhubarb, comfrey, ...
Local famous pioneer seedsman, R.H. Shumway, Condon Brothers of Rock River Valley
Buckbee Seed Company.
Plant cuttings, shoots, suckers

Stratification and Scarification - some plants need moist cold treatment to break dormancy and some need their seed coats sanded, nicked, broken to allow seed to imbibe moisture for germination.

Where do we go from here?

Get started NOW, DO IT!
Buy Fresh – Buy Local
Know your Food, Know your Farmer, (Know your Seedsman!)
Happy Gardening!

I would be happy to help anyone with gardening questions.
Another source of information is the Idaho Master Gardener Manual, available at:
<https://www.uidaho.edu/extension/master-gardener/handbook>

=====

May 2023 Self-Reliance Newsletter

Skills and Talents

In studying the Gospel, we learned about gifts of the spirit.
Everyone is given at least one talent/gift.
They are given to us to help others

This newsletter is to help you remember and identify all of your gifts and talents.

You can use them to help others, especially the youth who are looking for mentors in specific areas of interest. Please share your list with your Elders Quorum president and your Bishop as a resource for the local Bishop's Storehouse.

See the Skills and Talents Survey Form.xls, click below:
<http://rockfordstake.selfrelianceclub.com/Skills and Talents Survey Form.xls>

=====

June 2023 Self-Reliance Newsletter

FOOD STORAGE COUNSEL

Noah, Lehi, Jaredites: all needed a year's supply of food for themselves AND their livestock.

Noah preached for 120 years, then the flood came

Modern Day revelation

Genesis 41 – Joseph in Egypt

Joseph, son of Jacob

The Lord counseled the ruler of Egypt, through a dream interpreted by Joseph, to store food for the next 7 years to supply food for the following 7 years.

He was called on a 14 year mission by the Lord to preserve the nation of Egypt

How does Joseph's story relate to us today?

If we were to follow the example of Joseph, Son of Jacob, what would we do in our day?

How would you accomplish that?

The Lord conveyed through His Prophet to counsel his children on Earth, to store food.

Heber C Kimball 1857 recommended we store 7 years of grain, repeating what Brigham Young counseled earlier.

163 years ago

72 years since the council from the prophet to store food, came the Great Depression in 1929. It lasted almost 10 years! Just think of those who were diligent and stored 7 years of grain. They would have been able to pass a life-saving legacy to their children and grandchildren!

(another 71 years later)

We were counseled to store one more month of food storage and one more month of debt reduction by every General Conference (6 months) by Stake President Doug Nelson. That was 5 stake presidents ago. Probably for some 20 years now.

(Pr Nelson, Pr Ward, Pr Evans, Pr Stewart, Pr McConkie)

In 2002, Pr Hinckley reinforced the counsel to store food, again about 20 years ago.

Was the pandemic a wake up call? It is not over yet and we don't know how long it will affect economies and health, or how long it will take the US and the World to recover. I've heard about 10 years to get back to "normal".

Housing prices peaked in 2006 with new lows in 2012.

Have we ever recovered from the Housing bubble? Maybe in 2020. That was 14 years in the running and many people took a huge hit on their savings.

Getting back to Joseph saving Egypt.

What would you do if you were the only one able to save the United States?

What would you do if you were the only one able to save your family?

D&C 29:34

34 Wherefore, verily I say unto you that all things unto me are spiritual, and not at any time have I given unto you a law which was temporal; neither any man, nor the children of men; neither Adam, your father, whom I created.

D&C 75:28-29

28 And again, verily I say unto you, that every man who is obliged to provide for his own family, let him provide, and he shall in nowise lose his crown; and let him labor in the church.

29 Let every man be diligent in all things. And the idler shall not have place in the church, except he repent and mend his ways.

D&C 38:28-30

28 And again, I say unto you that the enemy in the secret chambers seeketh your lives.

29 Ye hear of wars in far countries, and you say that there will soon be great wars in far countries, but ye know not the hearts of men in your own land.

30 I tell you these things because of your prayers; wherefore, treasure up wisdom in your bosoms, lest the wickedness of men reveal these things unto you by their wickedness, in a manner which shall speak in your ears with a voice louder than that which shall shake the earth; but if ye are prepared ye shall not fear.

D&C 89:4

4 Behold, verily, thus saith the Lord unto you: In consequence of evils and designs which do and will exist in the hearts of conspiring men in the last days, I have warned you, and forewarn you, by giving unto you this word of wisdom by revelation

General Handbook 22.1

Build Self-Reliance

With help from the Lord, members build self-reliance in the following ways:

Develop spiritual, physical, and emotional strength.

Gain education and employment.

Improve temporal preparedness.

=====

Doctrine and Principles of Self-Reliance

Self-reliance is defined as “the ability, commitment, and effort to provide the spiritual and temporal necessities of life for self and family. As members become more self-reliant, they are also better able to serve and care for others” (Handbook 2, 6.1.1).

Three key teachings can help us understand how to lead self-reliant lives:

First, self-reliance is an essential commandment in the plan of salvation. President Spencer W. Kimball taught: “The Church and its members are commanded by the Lord to be self-reliant and independent. (See D&C 78:13–14.) The responsibility for each person’s social, emotional, spiritual, physical, or economic well-being rests first upon himself, second upon his family, and third upon the Church if he is a faithful member thereof” (Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Spencer W. Kimball [2006], 116).

Second, God can and will provide a way for His righteous children to become self-reliant. “And it is my purpose to provide for my saints, for all things are mine” (D&C 104:15).

Third, all things, including temporal concerns, are spiritual matters to God (see D&C 29:34). As we commit to living the gospel more fully, we can become more self-reliant both temporally and spiritually. President Dieter F. Uchtdorf taught: “The two great commandments—to love God and our neighbors—are a joining of the temporal and the spiritual. ... Like two sides of a coin, the temporal and spiritual are inseparable” (Dieter F. Uchtdorf, “Providing in the Lord’s Way,” *Ensign or Liahona*, Nov. 2011, 53).

=====

D&C 88:118-119

118 And as all have not afaith, seek ye diligently and bteach one another words of cwisdom; yea, seek ye out of the best dbooks words of wisdom; seek learning, even by study and also by faith.

119 aOrganize yourselves; prepare every needful thing; and establish a bhouse, even a house of prayer, a house of fasting, a house of faith, a house of learning, a house of glory, a house of order, a house of God;

Mosiah 18:19

19 And he commanded them that atthey should bteach nothing save it were the things which he had taught, and which had been spoken by the mouth of the holy prophets.

<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/media/video/2011-03-071-elijah-and-the-widow-of-zarephath?lang=eng>

=====

There Was Bread – edited

By Bishop W. Christopher Waddell, First Counselor in the Presiding Bishopric
October 2020 General Conference

<https://site.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/general-conference/2020/10/25waddell>
(available in English, Spanish (spa) and Swahili)

If we wanted to be assured that there would be bread, what would we do?

Store whole wheat kernels (grinder is needed) as it lasts forever vs flour would become stale and/or rancid after a short period of time.

What about leavening? freeze yeast or fresh sourdough starter for bread and rolls, baking powder for pancakes and biscuits, nothing for unleavened breads.

Oil? has a 2 year shelf life.

We could have an olive tree in our backyard in California, grow sunflowers, peanuts or rapeseed for oil, etc.

We have been told to be prepared.

How and when will we start this process?

Today, it is not too late to start a garden, approximately 90 days left until first frost.

I hope you might be inspired to continue to follow the counsel of the prophets and church leaders to strive to have some amount of food storages, if not for self-preservation then for obedience.

Michael Goodwin

=====

July 2023 Self Reliance Newsletter - Canning and Seed Saving

Independence Month -

What promotes independence more than putting up food for the winter, or longer and saving seeds for a perpetual source of food, practically free.

Food Preservation:

The main contamination we want to destroy or deactivate is *Clostridium botulinum*, hereafter referred to as CB, a nerve poison and is better known as the organism causing botulism.

I will discuss how to preserve food in the wet state. Canning or bottling is the process and the two major methods are boiling water bath canning and pressure canning.

Generally, foods that have a high acid content are boiling water bath canned.

These foods include tomatoes, pickles, fruits and other foods which have had vinegar or other acid added in the preparation process, or are naturally and sufficiently acidic. CB is prevented from growing in a high acid environment, therefore the temperature of boiling water, 212 F, is sufficient to render the food safe.

Most people think of tomatoes as being acid but they are on the border line and must have an acid added to them when they are canned. I use citric acid which doesn't affect the flavor of the final product. Other acidifying options to add include vinegar or lemon juice.

Foods with a low acid content MUST be pressure canned to render them safe for storage and use. These foods include meat, vegetables, dry beans, etc.

These foods need to be treated with the high temperature of 240F for specific amounts of time to kill the CB bacteria and any spores produced.

The pressure canner reaches 240F at the pressure of 10 psi. Pressure canning is totally safe and reliable if done properly.

Most foods including a blend of low acid and high acid foods, such as soups, stews, etc. must follow an approved recipe. Density of the canned product influences the time of processing as the heat must get to the center of the jar to provide the necessary temperature requirement.

It is important to rely on recently published information when canning and follow a specific recipe. The USDA has approved a food preservation manual located at the following resource:
https://nchfp.uga.edu/publications/publications_usda.html

Canning equipment:

Boiling water bath canning needs to have about a 2" water depth above the jar lids in the canner. Most blue enamel canners do not allow for this headspace with quart jars.

I recommend a 22 qt pressure canner for all canning needs. It provides the sufficient headspace for 2" above quart jars for boiling water bath canning of quarts yet can also serve any pressure canning requirements. You can process 7 quart jars or 9 regular pints using one level of the canner for either boiling water bath canning or pressure canning. You can also process 18 regular pints using two levels in the canner with the pressure canning method. That's a total of 9 quarts total compared to only 7 quarts when using quart jars.

Seed Saving

While you are harvesting your product, you might consider collecting the seeds for future generations. Of course, this begins with the initial selection of seed which you are going to grow in your garden and take into consideration isolation distances, if needed.

Why save seed?

Vaughn J. Featherstone said in April 1976 General Conference to "remember to buy a year's supply of garden seeds so that, in case of shortage, you will have them for the following spring."

If you save seeds from the current year's crops, you can easily supplement the purchased seed necessity, and have some to share with others too. If you participate in a seed swap club, the variety of seeds available greatly increases.

I counted the number of seeds from one Bystrom Cherry tomato and the result was 89. That is a potential of 89 plants for next year. If you harvest 50 fruit per plant from 10 plants, the seed saved could yield 44,500 plants potentially.

In my April 2023 newsletter under the heading of "Methods of planting/Early transplants", I explained how you can greatly multiply the number of plants you can derive from a single seed. This can extend your transplant production from seed even more. If you save shoots over winter, you can supplement the seed storage process, especially for hybrids, from which you cannot save seed at all.

Seed requires moisture and heat to germinate. This tells us that we need to keep our seed from moisture and heat to achieve the greatest viability in saved seed.

What do you do with the cantaloupe seeds you cut out from your melon?

You can dry/roast and eat the seeds directly. Really!

Or you can sprout and eat them as greens!!!

Other seeds that can be sprouted for fresh greens including alfalfa, peas, sunflowers, radish, broccoli and other cole seeds, clovers, etc.

Reduce food waste:

30% of all food grown is eventually wasted.

How do we eliminate this waste?

If you can do it well, you can reduce the size of your garden by 30%.

Coincidentally, bees and other pollinators help to create 30% of the food we eat.

Ways to reduce food waste:

Select and buy well.

Harvest promptly and watch postharvest treatment.

Preserve or give away any excess

Compost what you must

How to not waste Waste through composting.

Recycle all nutrient rich waste products into soil fertility with composting, vermicomposting with worms or using an anerobic digester to produce combustible methane gas to supply a burner or engine, putting the nutrient rich sludge and effluent on the soil.

=====
July 2023 Self-Reliance Newsletter Addendum

Preserving tomatoes

The various methods of preserving tomatoes can include:

Dehydrating, Freezing and Canning

Uses of processed tomatoes:

Sauce for pasta or pizza, paste, powder, rehydrated slices for pizza, soup, juice, chutney, etc.

Types of tomatoes to use:

Regular tomatoes can be used for all products but because of the high water content, more energy is needed to cook down the tomatoes to boil off the water and concentrate the tomatoes for certain products.

Cherry tomatoes can be used for a slightly sweeter product, again have more water than paste types.

Paste type tomatoes are best for use where a thicker product is desired as less cooking is required as they are very meaty and have little juice, and there are very few seeds.

Tomatoes can be prepared for processing by following this basic procedure:
Wash and remove the cores from all tomatoes, except cherry tomatoes.

Removing skins: by dipping into boiling water briefly and then into cold water so skins slip off easily or freezing and dip into water to slip the skins.

Removing skins, seeds and cores with a Victorio-type strainer or sieve: to create tomato sauce, paste, soup, catsup, pizza sauce, juice, etc.

Processing whole including skins and seeds: as diced tomatoes or chunks, cooking down into sauce. Whole tomatoes can also be blended in a food processor to reduce skin size for use as various products such as sauce or paste which include the seeds and the fiber of the skins.

Types of Preparation:

For Sauce, boil down the tomatoes under medium heat to desired consistency, stirring frequently to prevent scorching. Boiling concentrates the solids by evaporating the water from the product. This process will heat up the kitchen and put humidity into the air.

For tomato dices, again, concentrate by evaporation to the desired end product.

For tomato paste, boil down the sauce to a thick consistency in a large pot on a range top. Then transfer the sauce to an electric crock pot or roaster to continue the evaporation at a lower temperature and with less stirring than range top use. This reduces the chance for scorching and can even be done overnight with little attendance.

When finished, I put into ice cube trays and freeze, then store the cubes in bags in the freezer. I have yet to find a canning recipe for tomato paste as it is very dense.

Methods to Preserve tomatoes

Dehydrating requires a dehydrator and electricity until the tomatoes are dehydrated, then they are stored at room temperature in an air tight container until consumed.

The basic process involves washing, slicing, laying slices on perforated dehydrator trays and time. Finished product is a dry, crisp tomato slice which can be rehydrated for pizzas, etc., or blended into a powder to be mixed with water to the desired consistency. Paste type tomatoes work best as they have a lower moisture content to begin with.

Tomato sauce and paste can also be dehydrated and in a fraction of the time as most of the moisture has been removed from the tomatoes by the cooking process. A solid tray is needed for this process as the normal perforated dehydration tray is inadequate.

Freezing requires a freezer and electricity until the product is consumed.

Simply process the tomatoes into the form desired in the end product, put into freezer containers or bags. If bags, lay flat on cookie sheet in the freezer until solid then they can be easily stacked and stored in the freezer.

Tomatoes can be frozen whole with a minimum of processing. Wash and freeze on cookie sheets, then store in freezer bags. To use, dip in water to slip skins if desired, cook down for sauces or paste. They will be mushy as the freezing process breaks down the cell structure so cannot be used as fresh tomatoes in salads, etc.

Canning or Bottling

Canning is divided into two types of processes: Boiling water bath canning and pressure canning. Both require equipment and cooking over heat for periods of time.

Note: to reduce any mineral deposits on the outside of the finished jars, add a little vinegar to the processing kettle water.

If you don't yet have a canning kettle, I suggest you don't buy one of those blue enameled kettles as they are generally not tall enough to process quarts. Instead, if you can afford it, buy a 22 quart pressure canner. This will have adequate head space to boiling water bath process 7 quart jars. It will also serve as a pressure canner for low acid foods and you can up to 7 quarts and up to 18 regular size pint jars at a time.

Basic Procedure:

Put citric acid (see note below) in the bottom of the jar, then ladle the hot tomato product into clean, hot jars to the right headspace, wipe the jar rim to ensure it is clean, place a new lid on the jar, hand tighten the screw band on the jar and process for the required time.

For the boiling water bath process, you need a pot equal to the height of you jars, plus 2 inches plus boiling space. This is true if using half-pint, pint, 1-1/2 pint or quart jars.

Bring the water to a boil, lower the jars into the water. Bring the water back to a rolling boil and process for the required time.

Turn off the heat and let sit for 5-10 minutes, then remove the jars. Remove the jars and place them in a draft free environment until completely cooled. Remove the screw band and check the seals.

Label and store at room temperature.

For the pressure canning process, you will need a pressure canner. Normally pressure canning is required for low acid foods like meat and vegetables but optional for tomato products. Citric acid is still required when pressure canning tomatoes, though.

Why citric acid?

Tomatoes, while always thought of as an acidic food, are on the borderline of acidity for canning procedures. An acid product must be added to lower the pH, ie, raise the acidity of your product.

You can use either citric acid, vinegar or lemon juice to increase the acidity of tomato products. Citric acid doesn't affect the taste of the final product but vinegar and lemon juice can. Some processes use ascorbic acid to prevent foods from turning brown while preparing them but cannot be used to acidify foods as it is destroyed by the high heat of the processes.

To endure enough acid is present, add 1/2 tsp citric acid per quart jar or 1/4 tsp citric acid per pint jar of tomato product before filling.

For more and the latest information on all aspects of canning, see:

USDA home canning manual available at:

https://nchfp.uga.edu/publications/publications_usda.html

Michael J. Goodwin

Master Food Preserver certified by UI Extension Service.

FDA certified in Better Process Control for quality control of canning operations.

Formerly Winnebago County Food Service Sanitation Certified.

I have been pressure canning since 1973, starting in Alaska over a wood burning stove.

=====

August 2023 Self-Reliance Newsletter - Spiritual or Temporal

Most of the time when we think of preparedness and self-reliance, we immediately look at the temporal aspects.

However, the Lord has said that all things are spiritual to him.

How does all of that fit together?

Providing for Temporal Needs and Building Self-Reliance Lesson - Individual and Family Efforts
Build Self-Reliance

With help from the Lord, members build self-reliance in the following ways:

Develop spiritual, physical and emotional strength

Gain education and employment

Improve temporal preparedness

Spiritual is First on the list, followed by physical and emotional strength.

I want to focus on the last one, emotional strength.

Charlie Brown used to always say 'Good Grief' but is it always good?

"Grief can rewire our brain in a way that worsens memory, cognition, and concentration. You might feel spacey, forgetful, or unable to make "good" decisions. It might also be difficult to speak or express yourself.

These effects are known as grief brain.

Acute grief refers to the symptoms a person experiences during the first 6 months after losing a loved one. These are usually the most intense.

Your days may involve a mixture of yearning and sadness along with constant thoughts, memories, and images of the loved one. Small tasks can feel overwhelming and exhausting."

<https://psychcentral.com/lib/your-health-and-grief#what-is-grief-brain>

=====
The Bottom Line

"While we all get anxious, some experience this in extreme amounts. This pervasive form of anxiety, known as anxiety disorder, may pose numerous problems for your health and wellbeing.

And it doesn't stop there - the anxious cycle can rewire your brain, causing a load of changes to how your brain functions."

<https://www.calmclinic.com/anxiety/rewire-your-brain#:~:text=While we all get anxious,to how your brain functions.>

The Emotional Resilience Manual mentions grief 10 times.

"As we experience grief, it can feel unbearable, and we may feel a desire to isolate ourselves from other people. However, remember that we can find support through others."

It can be a trigger for anger.

We have experienced the effects of stress in our household recently and it is real. This has led to some intense searching for more information and reinforcement of our training from the Emotional Resilience course we have taken.

Now is the time to prepare for the consequence of life events to be able to handle or at least recognize or understand them, when they arrive at our doorstep.

This can be part of the preparing for end-of-life situations we will all experience at some time in our lives, whether our own, a loved one or a dear friend.

Spiritual strength helps promote emotional strength. Without it, it will be hard to focus on the physical and temporal needs of our lives.

Respectfully submitted:
Michael J Goodwin

=====

September 2023 Self-Reliance Newsletter - Saving Seeds

This Newsletter combines 3 essential functions of the temporal self-reliance topic of food production. I will only touch lightly on these as a full address of them would require much more space and time to read. Feel free to search and explore to your hearts content.

1 - Seed saving

Saving seed from annuals and perennials from one growing season to the next, and beyond.

2 - Plant saving

Saving perennial plants through the winter to propagate in the spring: Tomatoes and Peppers. Also involves the propagation methods of cuttings and splitting, along with roots, tubers, corms, etc.

3 - Pollinator saving

Plant species necessary for the feeding and maintenance of pollinators to provide a necessary function for most of your garden plants; vegetables, fruits and flowers.

1 - Seed saving:

The July 2023 newsletter touched a little on seed saving.

The April 2023 newsletter explains how to grow multiple plants from a single seed, thus extending your seed saving and storage efforts. Also talks about saving hybrid plants till the next year.

Before talking about seed saving, let's talk about the many ways seeds are used:

Planting in the ground or containers: all fruits and vegetables.

Eating: nuts, peanuts, almond, cashew, sunflower, sesame, poppy, mustard, cantaloupe and watermelon seeds, amaranth, teff, etc.

Oil source - sesame, poppy, sunflower, rape seed, grape seed, walnut, etc.

Sprouting and shooting - alfalfa, clover, radish, pumpkin, muskmelon, oat, sunflower,, ...

Other seeds that can be sprouted for fresh greens including pea tendrils, sunflower shoots, broccoli and other cole seeds, etc.

Spices: coriander, mustard, pepper, celery seed, dill, fennel, anise, nutmeg, etc.

Saving (for future planting): all non-hybrid, non-gmo (Like Money in the (Seed) Bank. Save your seeds and they will save You.

Toppings: sesame, poppy, sunflower, peanuts, pecans, cashews, etc.

Plant derivatives: cocoa and vanilla.

Decorations: Wheat Heads, balls inside capsules?, necklaces, etc.

<https://www.curiouscountrycreations.com/decorative-dried-pods-seeds-c-101.html?page=4>

https://www.etsy.com/market/decorative_seed_pods

Search seed pods used in decorations

History of collection, storage and transportation of seeds:

You will not be the first person with a desire to save seed.

Check out the historical accounts of:

Noah and his family

Lehi and his family

The Jeradites

Columbus brought seeds and cuttings for vegetables, wheat, grapevines, sugarcane, and fruit trees.

The Pilgrims had also brought seeds with them to plant vegetable and herb gardens, as well as barley, peas, and wheat.

From South America and Mexico to the rest of the world:

Cashews and Brazil nuts, avocado, pineapple, papaya, and guava. The very important cash crops are maize, coffee and cacao.

Personal Note: I have been saving the Bystrom Cherry Tomato seed since 1994 when first received from Melvin Bystrom, who helped build the Alpine Chapel. I do not claim to have saved the original seed for the past 29 years, however I grow them out for seed every couple of years to ensure an adequate, viable supply of this family favorite. This year, I planted seed saved in 2007 with good results, that's 16-year-old seed.

Save your seed and your seed will save you.

=====

2 - Plant saving

Saving perennial plants through the winter to propagate in the spring: Tomatoes and Peppers.

Also involves the propagation methods of cuttings and splitting, along with roots, tubers, etc.

Yes Tomatoes and Peppers are perennials in their native climates. They can be overwintered when prepared and stored properly and only need minimal light and watering about every 2 weeks.

Roots and tubers include potatoes, sweet potatoes, garlic bulbs, etc. These can be overwintered if stored in the proper temperature and humidity. However, garlic is best planted about the time the kids go back to school to develop a good root system before winter sets in. They will then spring to life when the weather warms.

Garlic and potato volunteers always come up in my garden because some escape harvesting.

Hibernating

Overwinter tomatoes indoors

<https://www.oakhillhomestead.com/2012/10/perennialtomatoes.html#:~:text=Over%2Dwintering tomato plants indoors,of light the pl>

ant receives

<https://savvygardening.com/can-tomato-plants-survive-winter/>

hibernating/Overwintering peppers indoors

<https://peppergeek.com/overwintering-pepper-plants/>

<https://www.masterclass.com/articles/overwintering-peppers>

This year I will save hybrid pepper and hybrid tomato plants overwinter.
Also, two very productive tomatoes whose production excelled despite being grown in #1 pots.

=====

3 - Pollinator saving

Plant species necessary for the feeding and maintenance of pollinators to provide a necessary function for most of your garden plants; vegetables, fruits and flowers.

I purposely grow some plants specifically for the pollinators in my life. They contribute up to 30% of the edible foods in our diet. Let's help them out.

When most people think of bees, they think of honey bees. Lately, they have suffered a 30% loss or more each year due to mites, insecticides, etc. so others must be nurtured too. These include bumblebees, orchard mason bees, leafcutter bees, butterflies, moths, and many others too numerous to list.

Some of my favorite plants in my pollinator garden include:

Dandelion

Joe Pye Weed (gravel root or queen of the meadow)

Comfrey

Garlic chives

Monarda (Bee Balm)

Calamint

Asters

(Note: I have most of these available, if you want some in your garden.)

Some bloom early in the year and provide much needed nectar and pollen at that time, like Dandelions. Asters follow up at the end of the season to avoid a dearth at that time too.

Thank you for your service to your unit and stake.

Michael Goodwin

779-203-0451

=====

Oct 2023 No Newsletter

=====

November 2023 Newsletter self-reliant

This month we are going to look at the Self Reliance Initiative.

The Self-Reliance Initiative Is Priesthood-Leader Directed.

"The stakes of Zion are places of security that protect all who enter. The purpose of the stake is to be "a defense, and ... a refuge from the storm, and from wrath when it shall be poured out ... upon the whole earth" (D&C 115:6). Stakes are gathering places where Church members can serve and strengthen each other, become unified, and receive priesthood ordinances and gospel instructions (Handbook 1, introduction).

The Lord said to priesthood leaders, "I have given unto you ... the keys ... for the work of the ministry and the perfecting of my saints" (D&C 124:143). President Dieter F. Uchtdorf taught: "The Lord's way of self-reliance involves in a balanced way many facets of life, including education, health, employment, family finances, and spiritual strength. ... What this means is that, in large measure, you're going to have to figure it out for yourself. Every family, every congregation, every area of the world is different" ("Providing in the Lord's Way," Ensign or Liahona, Nov. 2011, 55).

The self-reliance initiative is a tool that stake presidents and bishops can use to help with their divinely appointed responsibility to care for the poor and those in need."

A committee is used to assess the needs of ward members. The committee should be someone from the Elders quorum, RS presidency and others that can help meet the needs of ward members.

The way that self-reliance can be taught to the members is participating in classes that will help them find ways to be more self-reliant. Most of you know that the church has classes that can help you teach members.

Self-Reliance Classes

Here is a list of classes that can be taught to adults and youth.

We would like to teach them in your own ward/branches. If you don't have enough, we can combine them with other units. We would like to do them face to face, but if we need to, we can do them over zoom.

My Foundation for Self-Reliance

Finding Strength in the Lord: Emotional Resilience

Personal Finances for Self-Reliance

Education for Better Work for Self-Reliance

Find a Better Job for Self-Reliance

Starting and Growing My Business for Self-Reliance

EnglishConnect (teaching English as a second language)

Each class has several topics, and they are 8-12 weeks long. A facilitator will lead the group in class decisions and keep the class on track.

If you have not taken a class, please consider it. It is a great way to help yourself and others you serve.

Education Goals

The church also has a place to help with Education goals.

President Russell M. Nelson said, "BYU-Pathway Worldwide brings an innovative approach to education — one unique to the Church Educational System and to the world."

What can BYU-Pathway do:

BYU-Pathway Worldwide provides access to spiritually based degrees completely online at an affordable price.

Each person is allowed to customize their learning and outcome. They can choose from certificates, associate, and bachelor's degrees programs.

All classes increase faith and incorporate teachings from scriptures as well as modern prophets and apostles, helping students increase faith in Jesus Christ.

The pathway is low cost, flexible and spiritual, students can start or finish degrees. It is a great way to get going.

Let your members know about these great programs provided by the church. They are there to help guide them to be self-reliant and be able to provide for themselves and their families.

We would like you to conder having classes at the end of January and first of February. See if you can find people who want to take the classes and those you feel would benefit from them. Have ministering brother and sister take the classes together. This will establish a bond between them and help them grow together.

I have a testimony of both the self-reliant classes and Pathway program. I have taken many of the self-reliance classes and have learned a great deal of information from each of them. Members of the classes helped to share ideas that I would not have thought about. Sharing with each other helps work though problems with each other. I also got my bachelor's degree though the Pathway program. I would not have been able to finish the degree with the help of this wonderful program. It gave me a step and a plan to get it done.

If you have any questions, you can contact your bishop or branch president.

=====

Elders Quorum Connection.

The purpose is to enlighten, educate, inform and inspire people to greatness.

(Note: the Relief Society usually already has such activities in place.)

As we gather together those with a need, those who can solve that need, those who want to learn, all participants will be edified, educated and the social interaction will be increased, not to mention the greater self-reliance capability of the quorum.

Pharaoh responds and says to Joseph, "Your father and your brothers are come unto thee: The land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle" (Genesis 47:5-6).

Let us all strive to be "men of activity."

What does your family preparedness plan look like?

Does it include elements of both spiritual and temporal preparedness?

Does it include the acquiring and enhancing of skills and talents?

Remember: Failing to plan is planning to fail.

Winter will be upon us soon.

Are you ready?

Has your furnace filter been changed?

Is your air conditioner covered?

Is your snowblower ready?

Have you changed the oil lately, if a 4-cycle engine.

Do you have stabilized fuel in the tank and have you started it?

Do you have a new spark plug on hand, if necessary?

Do you have freshly mixed oil and gas, if the engine is a 2-cycle?

Have you replaced the air filter recently?

Do you have extra shear pins/bolts on hand, just in case?

Do you have adequate shovels and ice melting compound?

What about traction devices for the vehicles: old rugs, oil dri, sand, salt, shovel, etc.

Extra windshield scrapers, -30F windshield washer solvent, shake-and-bake hand warmers?

Do you know of any hacks such as making a hose clamp from wire?

Do you have any skills, talents, tools, time, supplies, etc. that you can share with others in need?

Perhaps you can start your own Elders Quorum Connection.

If you have any preparation needs, including those listed above, contact your elders quorum leadership.

Michael Goodwin