

Points East

By:
Ike Adams

I guess the only reason that I don't like this time of year better than Spring has something to do with the fact that these cool mornings are harbingers of frost. Frost means that everything in the garden gets wiped out except for the greens. Frost also means frozen ground and getting into a routine of scraping the windshield every morning and all the other aggravation that comes with cold weather.

Of course, the pollen pretty much disappears after a frost or two so there is something positive to be said about cold weather. I could tolerate the sneezing and runny eyes and Rudolph nose and the ringing in my ears in exchange for warm weather year round, but relief from the sinus pain I go through this time of year makes me grudgingly appreciate nippy weather.

For the record, we had our first icy windshields here last Saturday morning. I was in such a hurry to get out among the yard sales that I had to run back into the house and run a couple of quarts of hot water to splash on the glass before the wipers could even work. I've been told the snowing and rainy eyes and Rudolph nose and the ringing in my ears in exchange for warm weather year round, but relief from the sinus pain I go through this time of year makes me grudgingly appreciate nippy weather.

I have to do something because the only way my truck will heat up enough to make the defroster work is when I let it sit and idle with the air conditioner on for awhile. The compressor puts enough strain on the engine to make her warm up a little, otherwise I might as well not have a heater. Please don't send me any advice about thermostats either. I've tried everything that will fit in the water pipes and none of them do any good. I've just got a cool running truck and that's a handy thing to have for most of the year anyway.

Speaking of things in the garden, I need to thank Beulah Ashley of Vico, Kentucky and Mrs. Mary Ann Conn from Cartersville for the winter onion sets. I start crying just writing

ing about them, they are so strong, but there is no doubt about the fact that they are onions.

Also, Marion Blair from Maffie, Kentucky, and I'm ashamed to admit I'm not sure where Maffie is, sent me some yellow onion sets that are as sweet as sugar. Maybe they just taste so sweet because I'm eating them with the winter onions but they sure go good with all the mustard, ketchup and greens that I'm fixing out of the garden.

A big plate of greens, onions seasoned with some fat back, half a dozen green onions, and about half a pound of cornbread is all I need for supper every other day between now and Thanksgiving. On the other days I pretty much switch fall beans for greens. We won't talk about gas here except to say that the cat won't even sleep with me.

That brings up another reason I like these late summer days when fall is in the air. I like to open all the windows turn off the air conditioner and throw an extra blanket on the bed. Get a little breeze going and it doesn't matter if you pass gas. But the neat thing is to be able to go to sleep listening to screech owls, katydids, crickets and even the occasional great horned owl. Wahhh-HOOing on the ridge in front of my house.

It's nice to get up at dawn to wake the crocks and try to sneak within casting distance of a big small mouth bass when the water is 15 degrees warmer than the atmosphere. Fish, especially smallmouth, seem to fight harder and jump higher this time of year than in the spring or summer. Flowers and yellowing leaves seem to have much brighter colors because the haze is gone. It's a good time to be out and about and I believe the mind works better because everything seems rested and relaxed.

But don't hold your breath too long. The National Association of Woolly Worm Winter Weather Watchers (N4W3) annual forecast is coming next week.

aside for different kind of produce. So, I found out which day was for fruit and Judy and I took several bushel already cut and ready to can and came home that night with a year's supply of applesauce ready to store in the basement. Any size can needed and all equipment, including volunteer help if needed, was furnished by the program managers. It was a wonderful program to help people help themselves and I have often wondered what happened to it. I have always been a believer in helping

those who are willing to help themselves and if something is working don't throw it away. I would

much rather put a broom in the hand of a woman or a hammer in the hand of a man than a new rug to hide the dirt or a bird house already built. By the way, I had to try every tree in the orchard before I found one suitable for the apple butter and applesauce, and haven't come up with one yet that can compare with the two trees in my front yard.



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Mount Vernon Signal

Publication Number 366-000
Periodical Postage Paid in Mt. Vernon, Ky. 40456
606-256-2244

Published every Thursday since November, 1887. Offices in the Mt. Vernon Signal Building on Main Street in Mt. Vernon, Ky. 40456. Postmaster, send address changes to P.O. Box 185, Mt. Vernon, Kentucky 40456.

Jama Anderson, Jr., Publisher Emeritus - Richard F. Anderson - Editor
Perrine M. Anderson - Managing Editor
SUBSCRIPTION RATES
In County - \$16.75 Yr. Out-of-County In State \$21.75 Yr.
Out-of-State \$30.00 Yr.
e-mail address - mvsignal@sun-spot.com

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St 'reet and Sour

By Zi Graves



Apples - Part 2

So, you want to know more about apple butter, huh? Well, you see it's like this. There are tricks to all trades and since using the bountiful supply of nature's most versatile fruit by turning it into apple butter, applesauce, cobbler with crisp double crusts or pan pies bubbling up through the sits cut in the crust, just sprinkled with sugar, fruit and broiled till the top was evenly browned and served with or without whipped cream. I could call it my trade. It didn't take trickery for me to turn a big pan of apples into something pleasing to the pallet. What it did take was choosing the apples that produced the flavor and texture for what I chose to make. Those two big apple trees in my front yard, were the secret. The one with red striped apples was used for apple butter. When it was fully ripe the deep red skin would burst open revealing the meaty inside dripping with tart juice that gave the apple butter its exceptional flavor and texture. After washing them in water from the spring, a sharp paring knife would remove the blemishes and core but leave no skin on so none of the flavor was lost. Very little water was used to cook them for their own juice was sufficient. And very little pressure had to be used to get them through the colander used to remove the residue from the peeling.

Now came the finishing touches, seasoning them with sugar and my favorite spices. That was the tricky part. I didn't measure anything. I just open a bag of sugar, pour it in, I guessed would be the right amount, knowing if it wasn't I could always add more and did the same thing with the spices I had lined out on the counter. I would begin with big spoonful of cinnamon, a heavy dash of allspice, couple dashes of nutmeg, dash of ginger, one of cloves then stir thoroughly, taste, add a bit more of this or that, smell the aroma, taste again, hmmm, just right, or will be

when it is cooked for an hour or so. Before I learned about the oven method of making apple butter I would have told you to "put it in a big open kettle and cook on a medium slow fire stirring constantly to keep from sticking and spitting." It would spatter anyway, and blisters would pop up on hands and arms where ever it landed. But since those days of olden times when everything was done the hard way I had learned things could be done differently. So now I put the mixture in my big oven heated roaster, and pop it in the oven. Check and stir it every fifteen minutes or so, and when it reaches the thickness I want for a spread, it is ready for canning. And since I made it hit or miss to suit my own taste, it is good and the kind I like.

The second tree, the one closer to the house was what I called "the applesauce tree." The pale green peeling with maybe just a hint of yellow when they ripened, contained the white, crisp meat inside that crackled when bitten into and tart, not sour, juice dribbled from each bite taken. They were different from the other one in color and size but the quality of texture and flavor and the finished products, applesauce and apple butter, could never be questioned.

Applesauce made from these apples was white and it took very little heat to turn them into sauce with nary a lump to be found. Sugar was not necessary but enhanced the flavor if one wanted it. Mother Graves wanted hers without it. After hearing her say, "That is the best applesauce I ever ate." I was sure she got a dozen pint jars every year.

When I learned there was a community canning project in Shopville the government furnished for the convenience of the local residents and saw women with bags of farm produce to can taking advantage of it I decided that was the way to take care of my apple supply of apples. Certain days of the week were set