

Monys the mickle makes a muckle

This piece of Scottish dialect is as relevant today as it ever was. In plain Canadian it is saying “many small parts make a larger one”. The dialect is ancient, the message is timeless. The Scots are famous for home economics, economy, and economists such as David Hume, Adam Smith and Andrew Carnegie - all of whom recognised the wisdom of the saying.

In the context of YRFN today I am applying it to the *ridiculous notion of food waste*. When I was a child in Scotland, wasting food was tantamount to a crime. My parents were raised during WW2 when strict rationing was in place. After the war followed a long period of austerity and the shortages continued well into the 60s and my childhood. We learned how to use everything.

NO FOOD WAS EVER WASTED! All scraps were kept and repurposed, the most common use being soup. Today I make a lot of soup in the YRFN kitchen and it is surprisingly popular at our **drop-in breakfast** and other programs and events. Not a week goes by when I am not asked for the recipe for the soup. The answer is almost always the same, the soup was made from what was “lying around” + onions.

What is lying around is generally odd items; pieces of wilted

vegetables such as broccoli, turnip, tomato, carrot, celery. The method is simple and follows later.

An easy way to avoid waste is to save everything, then find a use for it. An example is one I use in our program *Cooking for the Self*; freezing tiny amounts of leftovers in large size ice cube trays or something similar. Don't think that anything is too small to save.



In this picture, the items have come from different meals, however when they are added together a new meal emerges. My favourite version of this economy I call “Incremental Curry”. For this I have special box, bigger than an ice tray, because this is a meal I have often. I save bits of other meals, even take-aways, and it is not long before there is enough for a **FREE MEAL!**

Not so much a recipe, but more a method of making soup is to

fry an onion, add leftover “scraps” of vegetables - either cooked or raw - adjust cooking time accordingly. Add one stock cube or similar for flavour, and some hot water. Blitz in blender for a satisfying puree. Bingo! There it is!`

Obviously, it is possible to have variations on this theme, but there you have the basics. It is like having a common and favourite foundation for almost any meal.

More examples of mini portions to freeze and save are grated cheese, pieces of cheese, tomato paste, vegetable juice, pieces of meat, gravy, sauces.

Think of the good you are doing:

1. Spend less money on groceries and take-aways.
2. Eradicating food waste cuts down transport costs to dump →cuts down emissions from trucks →cuts down methane from rotting vegetation in landfill →which reduces effect on climate
3. Reducing food packaging cuts down transport costs to dump →cuts down on plastic in the environment.
4. etc

I rest my case.

David Lightwood
Good Food Hub Coordinator

Meet our new Urban Agriculture Coordinator



We'd like to take a moment to introduce the newest member of our YRFN family: Jessica Tong. Jessica's pronouns are She, Her and Hers. She was born in Singapore, raised in Scarborough, ON, and has ancestral roots in Hong Kong/China.

Jessica comes from a lineage of people who love and care for each other through food! Although she has an educational background in Agriculture, it is through these family traditions that she draws her energy and direction from. Jessica is most passionate about food justice and its intersections with anti-oppressive frameworks. She navigates this work with the understanding that different communities have particular historical and contextual relationships with food and land.

With her partner, she operates a small organic vegetable farm that sells at a local farmers market and through a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) program. She came into this work with the intention of respecting the land, supporting liberation and healing practices, and nourishing her community in the ways that she feels most passionate and capable of - which is growing and

sharing food! These intentions are grounded by the past and present work already being done by amazing communities beyond her. She is committed to cultivating and continuously learning about these practices with integrity and joy.

Jessica has already met and talked with many of the gardeners since she started her position. She's loved sharing in the enthusiasm from everyone and getting to know the community. She's excited for a fantastic growing season!

The Value of Teaching Food Skills to Youth

York Region Food Network has been offering Youth Cooking Classes since January. Over the past few months youth have entered the kitchen dressed in aprons and kitchen hats eager to learn new recipes. Each class features different cooking fundamentals and techniques ranging from properly cooking eggs to making soup, preparing chicken and one pot meals. Through Chef lead demos, group discussions, and hands on learning participants develop knife skills, learn safe food handling, and tips for reducing food waste. The class features a variety of cooking themes, styles, and options; all the while integrating conversations of seasonality, food waste, cost, accessibility and broader conversations about the food system.

As a facilitator it's a great joy to witness youth who are excited, interested, and keen to get their hands moving in kitchen. It is clear to me these participants recognize the value of cooking. Youth identified cooking as "a life skill" which enables them to transform raw materials into meals. Youth described cooking as an enjoyable activity, a way to impress family and friends, a form of independence and potential pathway to employment.

One youth participant stated "YRFN provides me with exciting, interactive, yet educational courses and programs that teaches me valuable food-related skills for life! I met many new friends, learned how to be safe and have fun in the kitchen, and gained

priceless experiences". Another states, "I learned a lot and had tons of fun, this program was worth it!" Through YRFN cooking programs youth develop their confidence in the kitchen and make new friends, stretch their social circles and learn to be safe, effective in the kitchen. Learning food skills in a social, non-competitive, inclusive, and welcoming space provides youth with the opportunity to learn, try, and successfully develop new skills.

Sarah Epp, Youth Engagement Coordinator

Join us for our Annual General Meeting

Thursday, June 13, 2019

8:00-8:30 PM
350 Industrial Parkway S
Aurora, ON

RSVP to kima@yrfn.ca by June 10, 2019

Eat for the Season

Barley...more than a soup ingredient, it's a great way to add fiber and variety in salad making.

Toasting barley adds nutty flavor and this salad is so versatile. Choose vegetables you have on hand or what's in season, add celery instead of fennel, add goat cheese instead of feta or no cheese at all or add any protein to make it a meal. The possibilities are endless!

Chantal McCallum, Community Cooks Coordinator

Roasted Barley Salad with Lemon Dressing

Prep Time: 20 mins Total Time: 45 mins Serves: 6-8 as a side

Adapted from karalydon.com

Ingredients:

For the salad:

- 1 cup pearl barley
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 fennel bulb, shaved
- 1/2 cup red onion, finely diced
- 1 cup snap peas, thinly cut on the bias
- 1 cup carrot, grated
- 10 black olives, pitted and sliced
- 14 mint leaves, thinly sliced
- 1/3 cup feta cheese

For the dressing:

- 2 tbsp red onion, minced
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 teaspoons lemon zest (approx. from 1 lemon)
- 1 1/2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

Preparation:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. On a baking sheet, place barley in preheated oven until lightly toasted, about 8-10 minutes. Remove from oven and place in a medium saucepan with 3 cups of water and salt.
2. Bring water to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook for 45-60 minutes, or until tender and the water is absorbed.
3. Lightly sauté the snap peas and the fennel until just wilted, about 5-7 minutes. Set aside to cool. In a small bowl, add the dressing ingredients and whisk together. In a large bowl, combine cooked barley, fennel, red onion, snap peas, olives, mint, feta and grated carrot. Add dressing and toss to combine. Salt and pepper to taste.



Edible Plants Walk

Join York Region Food Network and Karen Stephenson from www.ediblewildfood.com for a nature walk to discover edible wild plants.

London & Main Community Garden

Wed, June 5th, 2019 @ 6:30pm – 8:30pm

Register at:

<https://newmarketediblewalks.eventbrite.ca>



Canada's New Food Guide!

In early 2019, the much anticipated revised Canada Food Guide was released. Unlike the previous Guide, which we had been with since 1992, this 2019 Guide throws away the concept of food groups and portion sizes. This Guide focuses what to eat, and perhaps even more importantly how to eat.

In its simplicity, this new Guide encourages Canadians, of all backgrounds and ages, to eat healthy by ensuring half their plate is fruits and vegetables, a quarter of their plate is whole grains, a quarter is protein (plant and/or animal-based), and water is the beverage of choice. This Guide parts from its predecessors by encouraging Canadians to prepare food from scratch, eat with others, and limit ultra-process foods.

Food touches everybody; in fact on a daily basis, a person will make 200 food decisions. The simple concepts of this new Food Guide should make it easy to follow. The reality though, is there are thousands and thousands of children, youth and adults in York Region will not be able to follow this Guide simply because they do not have enough money to purchase food. These people are the working poor – people who are working one, two, three jobs, but are not earning a liveable wage, it's people who are employed in short-term contracts or part-time work, so their employer can save a few dollars, and it's those who are physically unable to work.

Food is a fundamental human right. There's no reason why anyone in York Region should be going hungry, and there's no reason why we, as a community, shouldn't be addressing this issue correctly. The solution to hunger and food insecurity is simple – people need money in their pockets to buy food. York Region Food Network will continue to advocate at all levels of government for healthy food education and policies, and for income-responses to food insecurity (promoting a liveable minimum wage, basic income, increases in social assistance) – we hope that you will too.

Kate Greavette, Food Charter Coordinator

Food for Thought

As spring approaches ever so slowly, we are learning more about the dire impacts of the climate crisis that humans are creating. The UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report gives us just over a decade to turn trends around and Natural Resources Canada tells us that Canadians are among the highest per capita CO2 producers in the world.

It can be overwhelming to think about what we can do that will make a positive impact. The food system figures prominently as a climate culprit from intensive food production, monocropping and increasing worldwide

demand for meat protein. Our food choices have a large impact on our health and the health of the planet.

Fortunately, healthier personal choices, like cooking fresh local food from scratch, can also have a positive environmental impact – lower food miles, organic production and consuming more plant-based proteins. Beyond growing or purchasing food, we can also be mindful of food disposal. We can choose to compost and create a resource of soil amendments rather than sending food to landfills to become methane gas.

While managing our own choices, we need to ensure that decision makers in our communities know how important personal and planetary health is. We ignore the impending doom at our peril as we've already seen extreme flooding this spring and fires in the west are burning out of control.

At York Region Food Network we will continue to advocate and educate about the benefits of healthy food and a healthy food system to create positive changes that will help us all.

Joan Stonehocker
Executive Director

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Join York Region Food Network's Fundraising Campaign

I support YRFN's work to improve access to affordable, nutritious food for all people of York Region.

I have enclosed my donation of: \$50 \$100 \$250 Other

Please make cheques payable to York Region Food Network.

YRFN will issue a charitable tax receipt for all donations over \$25. Registration 87044 7315 RR0001

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