

The GROWER

December 2017

www.cheshamallotments.org.uk

Email your articles, ideas or news to thegrowernewsletter@gmail.com

SEASONS



GREETINGS!

Wishing all allotment holders A Merry Christmas and A Happy and Prosperous New Year

SEVILLE ORANGE MARMALADE

(Grandma Derby's recipe)

The 'grandma Derby' of this recipe was my mother, who after our children were born became known by this name to differentiate her from 'grandma Devon', for obvious reasons.

This recipe produces marmalade with a really bright orange colour and a true zing of orangey taste because every bit of the fruit, and especially its peel, goes into the mix. On the other hand, the peel is chopped rather than sliced into strips, so purists might frown a bit. I make around 60 to 70 pounds every year for family use, and to give to friends, many of whom return the empty jars with a hopeful gleam in their eye. I still have my mother's hand-written copy of this recipe, written in pre-decimalisation days, but modified after the invention of the food processor.

Ingredients

3lb (1.4 kg) Seville oranges

2 lemons

4 pts (2.275 ltr) water

7lbs (3.2 kg) sugar

Makes about 11lbs (5kg) marmalade

Wash the fruit. At the stalk end, with a small sharp knife remove the place where the stalk joins the fruit and make a small hole.

Put the fruit and water into a preserving pan and cover with foil. Boil gently until the fruit softens – about 1³/₄ hours. (Test with skewer or sharp knife.) Using a slotted spoon, take the fruit out and reserve in a large bowl leaving the juice in the pan.



SEVILLE ORANGE MARMALADE cont'd

At this point put enough freshly cleaned jam jars in the oven at about 100°C or a little over. If you have a second oven, put the sugar in to warm so that it will dissolve more easily (50 to 60°C is enough and is easier to handle than if it is hotter*); if not put it in an airing cupboard or other warm place. This is a good time also to put three or four saucers in the freezer to use for testing for set.

This should allow the fruit to cool enough for handling, although some hand protection may be helpful. (I put on some silicone gloves to speed up the process.) Cut the fruit into quarters and remove the pips, but only the pips, and put them in a small muslin bag over another basin.

Traditionalists would now slice the peel into thin strips. Following my mother's practice, I put everything else – pith, peel, etc. – into a food processor and blitz for a few seconds. This takes real care. Blitz for too long and you end up with a mush; too little and you have 1 inch square pieces of peel in your marmalade. Do it in batches of 5 or six fruits so that you can see what is happening; 3 or 4 quick pulses is a good starting point. If you end up with a few pieces of peel that are too big you can always snip them with a pair of scissors as they float in the boiling mix later.

Add the cut peel and pulp to the juice in the pan as you go, add the liquid that had dripped into the basins and squeeze the muslin containing the pips really hard to extract all pectin and add it to the pan.

Bring the liquid and pulp close to boiling point. Add the sugar gradually (make sure it has dissolved before adding more) about 1lb at a time keeping heat low until all has been dissolved. Increase the heat and boil hard until it sets, which normally takes about 20 minutes or a little longer. Once you have a good rolling boil going in the pan, add a knob or two of unsalted butter: it reduces scum to nothing if you keep stirring and gives the marmalade a nice sheen.

To test for set put a drop of marmalade onto one of the cold saucers and leave for a minute or a bit less. If it is ready it will wrinkle as you push it with your finger. Stir the mix for a few minutes as it cools to keep the peel evenly distributed and then put into the warm, sterilised jars and cover with jam covers.

If you make marmalade on an industrial scale as I do, you can increase the amounts in the recipe in proportion to each other to make the batches bigger, but I suggest you only do this once you are experienced. 15 pounds of scolding hot sugary liquid boiling over the top of your pan onto your hob is not much fun.

In my standard-sized (9 litre) preserving pan, from a few hairy experiences, I have found that the maximum possible is:

1.9kg oranges

3 lemons

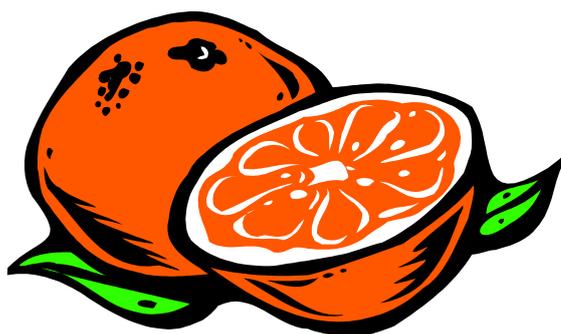
3ltr water

4.25kg sugar

Makes about 15lb (7kg) marmalade

*When I was a lab rat, the rule of thumb was that if you could just hold a hot beaker in your hand comfortably its temperature was about 50°C and if it was just too hot to hold it was at about 60°C.

By *Tim Andrew*



CHESHAM ALLOTMENTS GROUP CALENDAR

EVENT	DATE & TIME	LOCATION
Coffee mornings	Saturday 10am –12pm They will resume in 2018 for the Chesham Horticultural Society Potato days 17th & 24th Feb and 3rd March	Focal Point Hut, Cameron Road

CHESHAM HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY DATES

EVENT	DATE & TIME	LOCATION
Potato Sales	Saturday mornings 17th & 24th Feb and 3rd March 2016	Sales Hut (1st gate Cameron Road)

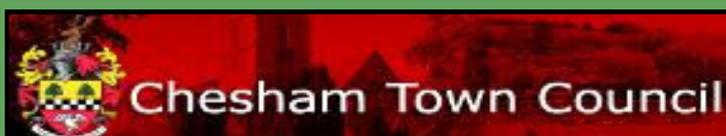
Not So Merry News

Unfortunately there has been a spate of break-ins at the Cameron Road site. Thieves have rather unsophisticatedly pulled apart locked sheds doors and taken a number of items including strimmers and lawn-mowers. Please consider the risks before leaving expensive equipment at the allotments. If you have nothing you particularly wish to protect, you may wish to consider whether it is worth not locking your shed or installing a window so potential thieves can see it is not worth breaking into.

Please report any thefts to the police and the Town Council.

Why does Father Christmas want to work at his allotment?

Because he likes to hoe, hoe, hoe!



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CHESHAM ALLOTMENTS GROUP REPRESENTATIVES

MARSHALL HALL (Chairman) Plot 47A/47B CR	TIM ANDREW (Vice Chair) Plot 48A CR	RAY WILLIAMS (Treasurer) Plots 215/216 CR	BEVERLY MACKAY (Coffee Morning Organiser) Plot 3B AR
ANDREW SINCLAIR (Community Liaison) Plot 45B CR	JIM ABBOTT (Historian & Archivist) Plot 31/32 CR	DAVE HALL (Maintenance and Facilities) Plot 12 CR	TONY MUIR (Website) Plot 28 AR
CLAIRE MALAN (Secretary)	KATE HUTCHINSON (Editor—The Grower) Plot 58D/80A CR	COLIN WILSON (Events Co-ordinator) Plot 220B CR	CHRIS MACKAY (Database Manager)
CHRIS SPRUYTENBURG (Education and Orientation)	JANE MACBEAN Town Council Representative	CR = CAMERON ROAD AR = ASHERIDGE ROAD	Email: cheshamallotments@gmail.com

