

# UNICORN

## NEWS

AUTUMN 2021

FREE - HELP YOURSELF

# 25 YEARS!!

## OUR SHOP THROUGH THE AGES



2007: We install a living roof (it's open each year for Chorlton Open Gardens!)



We also build our entrance porch



1996: Unicorn opens. With a basic but functional fit-out, the shop is designed to minimise labour and feel fun and accessible



2003: Supported by our customers, we buy our building & expand to fill the whole ground floor, gaining a frontage on Manchester Rd



2011: A new wildlife-friendly garden, with seating for customers to stop, rest & chat

### WHAT'S NOT CHANGED

- Worker ownership & control, guided by a set of shared values
- Affordable, wholesome food with a focus on basic ingredients
- Clear, consistent ethics
- Prices (like for like) competitive with supermarkets



2014: Major building work on our first floor improves our office & rest spaces as well as the thermal efficiency of the building



2021: More space for veg, more space for you, more space for bikes. A bigger, brighter, greener us!





# LIFE AFTER UNICORN

## An update from one of Unicorn's founding members, a decade after moving on

Adam York provided much of the brains and brawn behind the birth of Unicorn; and he went on to spend 15 years here, during which time he also set up Glebelands Market Garden in Sale. This organic horticultural site continues to supply us to this day, but Adam left both businesses back in 2011. Moving to South Wales, he set up a second Glebelands in a very different setting. He tells us how it's been going...

"Glebelands Mk II is now a decade old, consisting of 10 acres of organic veg, a farmshop and 10 of us onsite. The project is popular locally and holding up well against a Tesco, an Aldi and various box schemes. Sales growth has led to a long awaited building expansion, after another gruelling planning battle around dodgy but well connected neighbours. The realities of gentrification surround us (we are inevitably woven into it) with housing increasingly beyond local young people & Welsh speaking slipping away.



Our original aim of earning a living in a low carbon/non-car dominated fashion has been achieved but testing a farmshop and market garden model is ongoing. So far we would say a scale slightly larger than 10 acres would work best, in collaboration with other specialist growers but sharing one decent retail/farmshop outlet.

The climate contrast between Glebelands I in Sale versus SW Wales is noticeable. We have earlier crops and less frost and are sheltered from the prevailing south-westerlies.

Turning heavier clay land into fertile soil has been expensive and is radically different to growing on the almost pure sand in Sale.

Despite a real rise in newer growers in the UK, most sadly cannot get past a YouTube/Instagram inspired existence producing salad on a very small scale. The biggest food production challenge for the UK, namely arable crops, is a sector showing some promising innovation in a very non-Instagrammable, Combine Harvester type way! Hodmedods remain a shining light for the UK.

Farming in one's late 50s is tiring, but seeing several younger people in the team is inspiring. We feel prospects for Wales look a little more promising than England with such a right wing regime at the helm there. Fingers crossed for us all.

Cofion Cynnes, Adam + Lesley "

[glebelandsmarketgarden.co.uk](http://glebelandsmarketgarden.co.uk)

## — UNICORN'S 4% FUND: SPOTLIGHT —

**Find Your Feet is a small development charity in the Chimanimani District of Zimbabwe that we've been working with for several years. They explain their community-based approach to mental health support...**

In the Global South, up to 85% of people don't receive the treatment they need for their mental health conditions, mostly due to chronic underfunding of these services. Just 0.4% of global development assistance for health is allocated specifically to mental health.

People displaced by conflict or climate-related disasters, struggling to afford healthcare or food for their families, in

insecure work, or facing discrimination are likely to be far more vulnerable to poor mental health. And in many low and middle income countries, even those where physical health care is provided by the state, mental health support is often only available at a cost.

At Find Your Feet, we advocate for a community-based approach to mental health challenges. This happens at multiple

levels - from collaborating with community health champions and traditional healers, to raising awareness and lessening stigma around mental illness across communities.

We support 300 people with mental health problems to participate in Farmer Action Learning Groups, where they have been trained in organic farming and soil conservation. We also work with healthcare professionals and traditional healers to better support people living with mental health issues by providing training on their screening skills, diagnosis, referral and treatment. These respected community members are often the first port of call for health issues.

Our efforts are paying off; the communities we work with are beginning to develop an interest in mental health, and those living with mental health problems are facing less stigma. People living with mental illness, and their families, are part of their communities again.

[find-your-feet.org](http://find-your-feet.org)







### We now stock Holy Grain Sourdough on Wednesdays - and it comes by bike!

We introduced Holy Grain's bread when we started opening on Mondays. Of course Mondays are now a thing of the past, but Holy Grain were far too good to lose!

Holy Grain is a small, Manchester bakery specialising in hand-crafted sourdough bread. Opening in December 2019 (great timing!), baker-owner Danny started off hand-mixing small batches of dough out of an old industrial warehouse unit in the mews area of the Great Northern Warehouse. Initially selling to a few local

cafes, business was growing when the pandemic hit. With many food businesses forced to close and people confined to their homes, Danny and his wife Erika started home delivering bread, initially to neighbours in their street, before expanding to in and around the Chorlton area. One thing led to another and in mid-2020 the bakery started supplying Unicorn with fresh bread when it began opening on Mondays.

Today Holy Grain is back supplying local businesses with fresh bread for their restaurants, delis and cafes and continues



to make home deliveries to Chorlton via courier bike every Friday. Having teamed up with Chorlton Bike Deliveries Co-operative, their bread is now delivered fresh out of the oven by bike to Unicorn every Wednesday morning!

All loaves are now mixed in an old French twin-armed mixer designed to mimic the gentle folding action of a baker's arms. The bakery takes extra care with its ingredients, using only organically grown produce and with an emphasis on stoneground flour. Every loaf is naturally leavened over a 36 hour process to maximise flavour and shelf-life. Enjoy!

## PRICE COMPARISON

**Green = ORGANIC, Orange = CONVENTIONAL**  
Prices taken: 15/9, \* except 13/9/21

PRODUCT	UNICORN	TESCO		SAINSBURY'S		WAITROSE		ASDA	MORRISON'S	LIDL
ORGANIC CHOPPED TOMATOES (400g)	0.79	0.80 (390g)		0.80		0.90		0.85	0.80	n/a
ORGANIC BAKED BEANS (400g)	0.95	0.65 Own brand	1.00 Heinz	0.65 Own brand	0.80 (Special offer) 1.00 (normal price) Heinz	0.70 Duchy	1.00 Heinz	n/a	1.00 Heinz	n/a
WHOLEWHEAT FUSILLI (500g)	0.99	1.00		n/a		1.50 (Penne)		n/a	n/a	n/a
NAKD BARS	0.75	0.75		0.75		0.50 (special offer) 0.75 (normal price)		1.00	1.00	n/a
ORGANIC PEANUT BUTER	2.89 Essential (350g)	3.00 Whole Earth (340g)		3.30 Whole Earth (340g)		2.10 Duchy (340g)		2.50 Whole Earth (340g)	2.50 (special offer) 3.20 (normal price) Whole Earth (340g)	n/a
CAFE DIRECT MACHU PICCHU COFFEE (270g)	3.49	3.75		3.00 (special offer) 3.75 (normal price)		2.53 (special offer) 3.80 (normal price)		n/a	3.85	n/a
ORGANIC OATLY (1L)	1.39	1.70		1.20 (special offer) 1.50 (normal price)		1.75		1.70	1.20 (special offer) 1.70 (normal price)	n/a
ORGANIC PORRIDGE (£/KG)*	1.85	2.13		2.13		2.30		2.40	2.50	n/a
DRIED CHICKPEAS (£/KG)*	1.99	2.25		2.30		2.40		2.40	2.40	n/a
BRAZIL NUTS (£/100G)*	1.04	1.25		1.50		1.58		1.00	1.38	0.90
PAPRIKA (£/100G)*	0.79	1.15		1.20		4.58		0.69	0.65	1.18



# CHEAP FOOD, EXPENSIVE HOMES?

On average, people in Britain spend 8.2% of their income on food consumed at home. This is the lowest proportion in Europe, and the 3rd lowest worldwide, after the USA and Singapore. Of course, the situation is very different depending on household income, with richer households spending a smaller proportion and poorer ones significantly more. Over the last century, food prices have fluctuated but overall declined: the real price of most foods are less than a third what they were a century ago. But despite this, millions of people in the UK are 'food insecure', lacking financial or other resources to be able to have a healthy diet.

Locally and around the world, farmers, farm workers and food manufacturing workers have their livelihoods squeezed by the cheapness of food. The recent flop of the government's 'Pick For Britain' scheme has highlighted the low wages and poor conditions of agricultural work in the UK. Millions also work in low-paid, insecure and unsociable jobs in food manufacturing, logistics and retail, whether as zero-hours food factory workers or picking online orders in 'dark supermarkets'.



So who benefits from the cheap food? It would be disastrous for many if food prices increased, but without that, how do we pay our food producers properly, or care for the land that sustains it?

Stepping back a bit, it is worth looking at housing, which is a far bigger expenditure than food. As food prices have fallen, the cost of housing has shot up around 700% over the last 100 years, more than making up for the cheaper food, with the average private renter now spending 44%



of their income on their home. Past and current government policies keep property prices increasing, through the sale of social housing, allowing landbanking by large house building companies and encouraging the use of property as a speculative asset by foreign and domestic investors.

Would things be so bad if the situation was reversed, with people spending more on food than housing? Rent control, secure tenancies

and more social and co-operative housing might cause landlords, banks and property speculators to lose out by making housing more affordable, but farmers, food workers and importantly everyone who eats would benefit from everyone having more money to spend on good food.

Organisations like GM Tenants Union, ACORN Manchester and GM Housing Action are campaigning for a better housing future, and therefore a better food future too.

## FOODSTUFF: FOOD DELIVERY THAT PAYS

Foodstuff - a new ordering platform and bike delivery service for local, independent restaurants - is now operating in Chorlton. Why are we plugging them? Because unlike Deliveroo & UberEats, FoodStuff treats delivery riders as Front of House staff, rather than gig workers; paying them the National Living Wage (plus holiday) and other benefits. Makes a nice change, and made us smile! The fees seem a lot lower for the food businesses involved as well.

Look out for Foodstuff riders tearing it around with their bright pink bags.

[wearefoodstuff.co.uk](http://wearefoodstuff.co.uk)

## SOLIDARITEE

Our 25th birthday party saw 250 customers win organic t-shirts in the 'how well do you know Unicorn?' birthday quiz, and even better, contribute to international refugee support. We purchased the shirts from SolidariTee, a brilliant entirely student-run charity who finance NGOs providing legal aid to forcibly displaced people, primarily in Greece. The t-shirt we chose features the outlines of a group of refugees, traced by each other as part of a collaborative art project at a community centre in Thessaloniki.

SolidariTee make their case very clear: "We reject the notion that there is anything negotiable about coming together to support those who have lost their homes, livelihood, and often, family members." Jess Molyneux, a SolidariTee Director who joined us for the celebrations, said "it was wonderful to see customers enjoying their new tees amidst the lively storefront atmosphere, and I enjoyed the conversations

## PARENTS: GET HELP TO BUY FOOD

If you're pregnant or have children under the age of four, you can get free vouchers or payments from the government every four weeks to spend on healthy food.

We can accept HS vouchers for fruit, veg and pulses.

You are usually eligible for the vouchers if you are receiving certain benefits, including Child Tax Credit, Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or Universal Credit (this depends on take-home pay).





I had with some visitors about the design of the 2020/1  
tees and the political injustices which are inseparable  
from the art. Thank you Unicorn for a fantastic party and  
for supporting our NGOs!”

[solidaritee.org.uk](https://solidaritee.org.uk)



Find out more at [healthystart.nhs.uk](https://healthystart.nhs.uk)



# MEERA SODHA'S PEAR, CHOCOLATE & ALMOND GALETTE

(Adapted from The Guardian)

A decadent cake for Christmas or any other occasion. Add some spices into the almond mixture, if you like. Some ground cardamom would be delicious, as would ginger and/or cinnamon. It is equally good with other fruit - try plums, cherries or whatever is in season! You can make this ahead and warm it up in the oven just before serving.

## For the pastry

260g plain flour, plus 1 tbsp extra  
130g sunflower spread– I like Biona's  
40g caster sugar  
Salt

## For the chocolate frangipane

100g sunflower spread  
75g caster sugar, plus ½ tbsp extra  
120g ground almonds  
1 tbsp plain flour  
1 pinch salt  
1½ tsp vanilla extract – I use Neilsen Massey  
75g dark chocolate, broken into pieces  
4 Conference pears, washed  
Icing sugar, to decorate  
Dairy-free creme fraiche, to serve – I like Oatly

## Method

- Heat the oven to 190C (180C fan)/390F/gas 6 and get ready a large, flat baking tray on which to put your galette.
- For the pastry, put the flour, sunflower spread, sugar and a pinch of salt in a bowl, and mix with your fingertips until it's the consistency of breadcrumbs.
- Add two tablespoons of cold water, then rub the spread into the flour with the back of the spoon, until it comes together into a dough. Bring into a ball with your hands, wrap in clingfilm and refrigerate for 30 minutes.
- Now for the frangipane: cream the sunflower spread and 75g sugar, then mix in the almonds, flour, salt and vanilla.
- Melt the chocolate in a heatproof bowl over a pan of hot water (make sure the base of the bowl does not touch the water), then tip into the almond mixture and stir to combine.
- Cut the pears in half, then each half into 1cm slices lengthways.
- Working quickly, line a work surface with greaseproof paper, roll out the pastry into a 26-28cm round, then spread the frangipane on top, leaving a 4cm border around the edge.
- Lay the pear slices on top in overlapping concentric circles, moving from the outside of the pastry to the inside, then fold the sides of the pastry up and over the fruit.
- Sprinkle with the remaining half-tablespoon of sugar, then slide the galette on to the baking tray and bake for 40 minutes, turning around halfway, until the crust is a deep golden brown.
- Dust with icing sugar just before serving, and serve each portion with a generous dollop of creme fraiche.





# AUTUMN



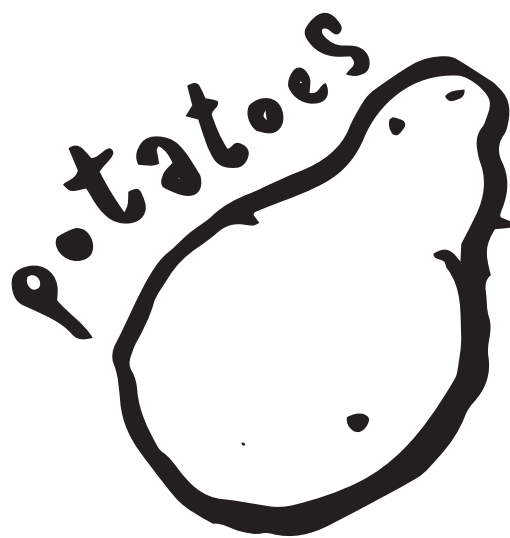
butternut  
squash



jerusalem  
artichoke



red cabbage



potatoes



pump



# MAN VEG

...COLOUR US IN!



celery



leeks



Kin

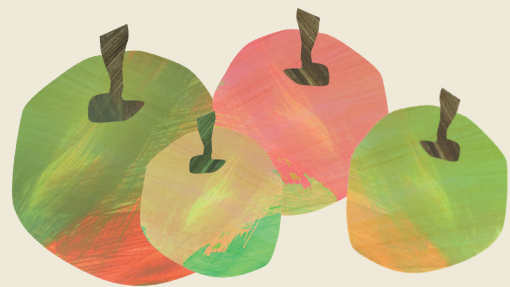


kale

UNICORN



# APPLE CALENDAR



The beauty of English apples is the diversity of colours, tastes and textures.

From early season “Discovery” through to late keeping “Red Pippin”, from crisp and sharp “Cox’s Orange Pippin” to soft and sweet “Red Devil” – English apples provide us with a real fruit feast.

This Apple Calendar indicates the seasons for different varieties – but use it as a guide only, as seasons will vary according to weather and other factors.

APPLE	DESCRIPTION	GROWER
DISCOVERY	Crisp and juicy (Aug)	Windmill • Oakwood
GEORGE CAVE	Strong, sweet-sharp taste (Aug)	Oakwood
SCRUMPTIOUS	Sweet, fresh strawberry flavour (Aug-Sep)	Pardoe • Oakwood
LORD LAMBOURNE	Sweet, juicy & crisp (Sep-Oct)	Windmill • Carey
JAMES GRIEVE	Tart early season, sweeter later on (Sep-Oct)	Carey
ELLISON’S ORANGE	Distinct aniseed flavour (Sep-Oct)	Carey
WORCESTER PEARMAIN	Older, parent variety to scrumptious, it too boasts a strawberry-like flavour (Sep-Oct)	Ward
EGREMONT RUSSET	Nutty, firm - distinctive! (Sep-Nov)	Carey • Pardoe
BRAMLEY’S SEEDLING	Strong, very tart cooking apple (Sep-Jan)	Carey • Oakwood • Glebelands
KIDD’S ORANGE RED	Rich, balanced & aromatic (Sep-Jan)	Pardoe
ASHMEAD’S KERNEL	Strong, sweet-sharp, intense & firm (Oct-Nov)	Windmill • Carey • Oakwood
TOPAZ	Fairly sharp flavour (Oct-Dec)	Pardoe • Carey
ORLEANS REINETTE	Nutty, tart & crunchy with a dry flesh (Oct-Dec)	Carey
RED DEVIL	Notable for its distinctive red flesh (Oct-Dec)	Carey
BLenheim ORANGE	Quite sweet, crumbly, cooks well (Oct-Dec)	Carey • Pardoe
JONAGOLD	Crisp, juicy, sweet....in a good year (Oct-Dec)	Oakwood • Pardoe
SPARTAN	White fleshed with a sweet flavour (Oct-Dec)	Glebelands • Ward
EVITA	Clean, crisp bite & sweet, full flavour (Oct-Dec)	Ward
PITMASTON PINEAPPLE	Russet with a pineapple-like flavour (Oct-Dec)	Carey
TINSLEY QUINCE	Sharp yet sweet with soft, yellow flesh & quince-like flavour (Oct-Dec)	Oakwood
RED FALSTAFF	Well balanced, crisp & juicy (Oct-Jan)	Carey • Pardoe • Ward
ADAM’S PEARMAIN	Classic, Victorian “Pearmain” shape with a nutty, sweet flavour (Oct-Jan)	Oakwood • Pardoe
LAXTON’S SUPERB	The definitive late Victorian dessert apple, firm, Cox-style but sweeter (Oct-Feb)	Carey • Oakwood
WINSTON	Rich and sharp (Oct-Mar)	Carey
RED PIPPIN (FIESTA)	Rich, aromatic, sweet, crisp & juicy (Oct-Mar)	Oakwood • Pardoe
COX’S ORANGE PIPPIN	Sharply sweet & richly complex (Nov-Jan)	Oakwood • Ward
BRAEBURN	Creamy, sweet, nutty with a crumbly flesh (Nov-Mar)	Ward
IDARED	Crisp and sprightly, can be chewy (Nov-Mar)	Pardoe



# VEG NEWS

With the equinox marking the end of summer and shorter daylight hours, fruit and veg still in the field are soaking up the fading sunshine, ripening and sweetening in time for the autumnal harvest. It's a good season for UK produce and our new, extended fruit and veg display is radiating with glorious colour and textures to tempt our bellies, promising warmth and comforting meals in preparation for colder days.

It's a welcome transition from a very challenging summertime; in-house we dealt with covid restrictions in a vastly reduced space and in the field farmers had to navigate many problems due to the national shortage of farm workers, inflated costs and tricky growing conditions. Despite these issues our growers have never let us down, going above and beyond to fulfil our orders. Key suppliers Pam and her sons at Strawberry Fields in Lincolnshire, John and his team at Newfields Organics in North Yorkshire and Duncan Gielty at Lyncroft Farm in Lancashire have worked their socks off this summer and we are incredibly grateful for their loyalty, hard graft and dedication. Pam's beautiful lettuces have been wonderfully consistent, John's cauliflowers and broccoli are outstanding and we are proud to have Duncan's impressive cabbages, leeks

and carrots making up the core of our staple offer.

More locally, our market gardens have proved their resilience once again, benefiting from their small scale production and the closed loop systems we have in place with them. As usual their produce has been of outstanding quality; highlights include FarmStart's loose kale and 'karmazyn pink blush' broad beans, Glebeland's rainbow chard and radishes, and Libby Flintoff's amazing supply of aubergines and spinach. Looking ahead we are very excited about FarmStart's unusual squash varieties - look out for their 'black futsu', 'north Georgia candy roaster', 'blue kuri', 'blue banana', and 'queensland blue' amongst our wonderful array of gourds. Also on the horizon is their experimental late season celery crop, extending our UK supply into November. If you'd like to visit Woodbank Community Food Hub in Stockport, where The Kindling Trust's FarmStart scheme is based, there is a family-friendly harvest celebration on Sunday 24th October - register at [kindling.org.uk](https://www.kindling.org.uk).

The much-anticipated British apple season has begun, however top fruit growers were impacted by the late frosts and heavy rains



of spring. They are expecting a 50% drop in volumes, a devastating repercussion which could prove disastrous for some smaller growers. We will do what we can to support our apple growers but it seems inevitable it will be a very short apple season indeed.

On a more positive note, we are currently working on securing a supply of organic strawberries for summer 2022 and are looking to expand our mushroom range to include more speciality varieties: keep an eye out for the delicious king oysters from Dart Valley Organics based in Devon.

## VEG PRICE COMPARISON

green = organic, orange = conventional  
Prices taken 9/21

PRODUCT (£/KG)	UNICORN	TESCO	SAINSBURY'S	WAITROSE	ASDA	MORRISON'S	LIDL
ONIONS	1.29	1.67	1.67	1.87	1.40	1.80	
CARROTS	1.19	1.43	1.60	1.65	1.30	1.50	1.29
LEEKs	2.89	2.00	3.75	5.72	4.00	1.98	1.90
BEETROOT	1.49	4.00	3.60	4.29	n/a	n/a	1.38
BROCCOLI	3.29	3.34	4.00	3.72	3.33	4.14	3.23
KALE	4.49	7.57	5.00	9.45	3.33	5.00	3.15
CAULIFLOWER	1.59	1.75	2.00	2.25	1.74	1.75	



# DIY FERMENTED FOODS

## NOURISHING, AFFORDABLE AND ACTUALLY PRETTY SIMPLE

Although fermented foods sound fancy, the practice of fermentation is both easy and affordable. It only needs a handful of basic ingredients and when done at home, can save a lot of money. Fermented foods, most importantly, are really, really tasty!

### It's as old as time

The earliest record of fermentation dates back as far as 6000 BC in the Fertile Crescent - and nearly every civilization since has included at least one fermented food in its culinary tradition. Links between fermented foods and health can be traced as far back as ancient Rome and China.

Chances are you've been eating fermented foods your whole life. Lots of everyday things - like wine, tea, bread and chocolate - are made using different fermentation processes.



### What are fermented foods?

Fermentation promotes the growth and life cycle of good bacteria to transform the flavour and shelf life of ingredients. Most foods can be fermented; vegetables, fruits, cereals, legumes, nuts and seeds. While these foods are nutritious in their original form, through fermentation they have the potential to carry extra benefits; including reduced risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity and inflammation. They have also been linked to better weight management, better mood and brain activity. Remember though - these are nutritious foods, but there is no single food that improves our health - only overall diet and lifestyle.

### Fermenting veg at home

Vegetables such as cabbage, beetroot, radish, turnip and carrots are some of the easiest foods to ferment, as the bacteria living on the surface does the fermenting for you.

All vegetables are covered in the good bacteria "lactobacillus", and when you slice up or grate and squeeze them with salt, they release their juice, which mingles with the salt to create a brine. Once contained within this briny environment, lactobacillus multiplies and begins to break down the ingredient, digesting the natural sugars and transforming them into lactic acid, which creates the tangy flavour and a sour environment that keeps the growth of bad bacteria at bay (science bit courtesy of BBC Good Food).

### Some favourite fermenting recipes & tips from Unicorn member Ako...

Do you have left over root vegetables? If so, you can make some tasty pickles or fermented veg. You don't need to have any special ingredients to make these, and they will taste good and keep for a long time in the fridge.

I love pickles and where I grew up I always had a little on the side. More recently, I have been experimenting with making many different types of pickles.

### Experiment...

I often use root vegetables like turnip, carrot, radish, mooli and beetroot as well as the leafy veg like cabbage, cavolo nero, chinese leaves. If you add apples and pears with these vegetables, and leave them out of the fridge they will start to ferment and will be like a sauerkraut or kimuchi! You can add some spices like cumin, turmeric, to jazz it up!!



Here are my two favourite recipes:

### PICKLED GINGER

#### Pickled Ginger:

- Ginger 200g
- salt ½ tsp
- White wine vinegar 1 tbsp

#### Dressing:

- white wine vinegar 100ml
- sugar 25g
- salt 1 tsp

1. Put all the dressing ingredients in a pan and bring to the boil. Once all the sugar and salt has dissolved into the vinegar, turn off the heat and leave to cool.
2. Peel the ginger and slice into 1.5mm thick slices
3. Cover with water, add the ½ tsp of salt to the ginger and leave 5 mins, and boil 2mins
4. Cool the ginger down, squeeze all the water out and then add the 1 tbsp vinegar.
5. Put ginger in dressing and leave 2~3 hours.
6. Put in a sterilised jar and keep in fridge.

\*\*You can add radishes or beetroots if you want and will turn it into pinky ginger.\*\*

### STERILISE YOUR JARS

You can buy preserving jars from Unicorn, but most of us have empty glass jars knocking around. You'll need wide-mouth jars to pack in all the ingredients, and it's really important to sterilise your jars to avoid the growth of the wrong sort of bacteria, which can make us ill.

Heat oven to 180C/gas 4.

Wash the jars and lids thoroughly in warm soapy water, then leave to dry on the draining rack, drying the lids with a clean tea towel.

Put your jars on a shelf in the oven for 15 mins, then remove with oven gloves.

Once cool, they are ready to use.



# BOOCH IT YOURSELF EASY DIY KOMBUCHA FROM UNICORN MEMBER SAM

This handy, easy-to-follow brewing guide will hopefully dispel any myths you may have heard that making your own kombucha is difficult or time consuming. All you need is a vessel (a demi-john or mason jar will work perfectly), some tea, sweetener and a SCOBY culture.

These can be purchased online or from health food shops, although the easiest way to get one is usually by asking anyone you know who also brews. Odds are that their SCOBY is quickly growing well past the size of their brewing vessel and by taking part of it off their hands you'd be doing them a favour!

1. Clean everything, and I mean everything! In the early stages of fermentation your brew will be very sensitive to contaminants and can easily spoil. BioD home and garden sanitiser works perfectly and is food safe. You can also use boiling water. Let the brewing vessel air dry before moving onto the next step.

2. Brew the tea. I would recommend using one tea bag per 250ml of water. Brew it in a separate container to your brewing vessel



and allow it to cool to room temperature before moving onto step three.

3. Add the tea and SCOBY to your brewing vessel and then add your desired amount of sweetener. I would recommend one tablespoon for each tea bag. White table sugar will result in a more well-fermented kombucha as the sugars are more easily consumed by the yeast. Unrefined sugar and syrups contain unfermentable sugars which will stay behind in the finished kombucha and produce a sweeter drink with more depth of flavour.

4. Leave to ferment for up to two weeks, depending on temperature and amount of sweetener added. Ideal fermentation temperature is 20-25 degrees celsius. If using a demi-john, plug up the top with an air lock. If using a mason jar or similar, cover the top with a clean tea towel and don't fix the lid. This will allow the carbon dioxide created by the yeast to escape the vessel, otherwise you may have a mess on your hands when the pressure builds and pops the top off!

5. Decant your finished kombucha through a strainer into a bottle or another jar and store it in the fridge for up to four weeks. If you plan to brew again, keep a small amount of this batch in your sealed vessel to aid in future fermentation. The SCOBY will live on in this.

Play around with different combinations of tea and sweetener. Earl Grey and brown sugar is my personal favorite. Green tea and agave can be lovely and fresh with a pleasingly sweet finish. Don't be alarmed if your SCOBY continues to grow and resemble something from a 1950s B movie, that just means it's time to put the call out to your friends and pass on the wonders of homebrewing to them!

## AUTHENTIC SPICY ASIAN KIMCHI

### Ingredients:

- Chinese leaf (around 3kg) - or you can use any other leaves
- salt 100g
- spring onion x3
- apple ½
- ginger 40g
- garlic ½ clove
- chopped seaweed 40g (Kombu or any variety)
- chilli powder 3 tbs
- chilli flakes (1-3 tbs)
- sesame 1 tbs

1. Roughly chop the Chinese leaf and rub with salt. Keep the stalky "bottom" to use later.

2. Leave for 30 minutes to let the salt draw the water out of the leaves, then squeeze the leaves and keep the salty water in a bowl or jug.

3. Whizz up the spring onion, apple, ginger and garlic in an electric chopper to make a paste.

4. Mix the seaweed, chilli powder and flakes

and the sesame into this paste.

5. Mix the leaves and the paste together (it's easiest to do this with your hands - wear latex gloves if you have them?)

6. Put the mixture into sterilised jars (see left), leaving about 5cm space at the top of each jar. Add enough of the salty water to cover the chopped leaves. Put the bottom of the chinese leaf over the top and press down. Put a lid on.

7. Place in a bowl (to collect any overflow) and set somewhere cool and dark for 3-5 days. Every few days, open the lid to let the air out (to avoid explosions!)

8. Taste it! Once it tastes as sour and tangy as you want, you can put it in the fridge. If not, leave it a few more days. Once in the fridge it will continue to ferment but at a much slower rate.

This will keep for months on end in the fridge, as long as the Kimuchi is submerged below the brine....getting more flavourful with time!



# SOLIDARITY IN CO-OPERATION

Solidarity between co-ops is a core principle, and we often visit other worker co-ops to learn from them, and vice versa. Of course, we've not been able to do that for a good while. So, here's a super inspiring co-op that one of us visited a few years ago, when travel to far off lands was an actual thing (a bit farther afield than most of our visits!)

## FEATURED CO-OPERATIVE: MANDELA GROCERY, WEST OAKLAND, CA

Debbie timed her trip to Mandela to coincide with a visit from economist Jessica Gordon Nembhard, on a tour launching her book on the history of African American Cooperatives, in which she poses the question;

*“Can there be an effective and efficient business that is also a social endeavor run on the principles of democracy & equality?”*

From- *Collective Courage: A History of African American Cooperative Economic Thought and Practice*

Mandela Grocery Cooperative is one of many proving her point that there can. The store has a clear mission - to strengthen and diversify its local economy; improving access to healthy food, creating dignified work and building up its community. Here they explain their origins and their vision...

“The history of West Oakland is rich in African American history. In the late 1800s, railroad car workers settled here with their families. Facing on-the-job racism, in the 1920's they organized together and created the first all African American union called Brotherhood of the Sleeping Car Porters.

In the 1960's the Black Panther Party organized to resist “urban renewal” projects in its headquarters in West Oakland. During that time, 7th street, the main business



strip, flourished with a number of vibrant black-owned businesses.

In the meantime, racist lending practices from banks, the compulsory purchasing of homes & businesses, and the construction of the Cypress Freeway (severing W.Oakland from the rest of the city and burdening it with high pollution levels) badly disrupted the local economy and community.

In the late 1990s, residents identified strategies to address the severe lack of healthy foods, thriving local businesses, and underemployment. One of these strategies led to neighbors coming together to incorporate and launch a community worker-cooperative grocery business; Mandela Grocery Cooperative. Prior to Mandela opening in 2009, there had not been a grocery on 7th street since the 1960's.

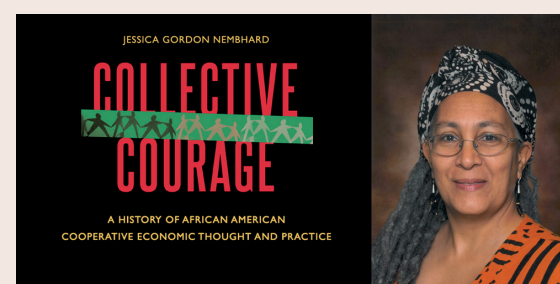
Unlike conventional supermarkets and grocery stores, Mandela is operated, governed, and democratically controlled by our worker-owners. Our structure and operations are guided by cooperative principles and a strong community centered mission.

The Worker Co-op model is an effective tool for creating long-term, dignified jobs, particularly in urban low-income communities. The workers are the owners. Worker-owners invest time, energy and dollars into our neighborhood businesses

and build up blighted areas. While working collaboratively to achieve our business goals, we build our skills, community assets and wealth. Our business model empowers us to build up our own communities. We come together. We learn. We build. And over time we change ourselves and our environments.

The store sources from local entrepreneurs and farmers in California with a focus on black and brown farmers and food makers. Why? Local sourcing keeps money circulating within the local economy longer, providing more jobs to people who live in the area. And we intentionally support businesses run by people of color because they are deeply committed to creating opportunity for interdependence in the food space, where POC entrepreneurs generate livable incomes that support their families.”

More on Mandela at [mandelagrocery.coop](http://mandelagrocery.coop)



**Collective Courage** is available to buy online from Blackwell's bookshop.