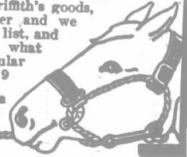


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Boiling Cider Sauce.

Editor "Farmer's Advocate."
The day set apart to boil cider apple sauce is a big day for the country boys and girls. It only comes once a year and like Christmas it is not an anniversary to pass over lightly. All the family help in the preparations.

The youngsters' snare in the preliminaries had been the picking up of the sweet apples. A large load of them was taken to the cider mill in the neighborhood, and the apples came back in the form of a delicious, sweet, amber-colored liquid, in barrels. Before the barrels could be unloaded the children had climbed up, mugs in hand, to "drink apples." Then the barrels were unloaded near the place where the huge kettle hung on its heavy pole and many a tip to get a sip of the health-giving decoction was made by the youngsters and grown-ups during the afternoon and evening. It was like drinking liquid honey to drink this rich, sweet cider—so sweet, so refreshing, so healthful. A real food. When you drink sweet cider fresh from the press you are drinking a solution of phosphorus, malic acid, gum, water, albumen, sugar, etc. It is a veritable nectar as well as amorsia and was highly esteemed by the Ancients for they believed in its efficacy in keeping off old age.

This particular time was Apple-Paring-Night. A nappy, merry lot of neighbors had been asked in to help the housewife pare, quarter and core the apples required for the morrow's sauce making. "Many hands make light work," is the old saying, and in a few hours bushels of apples had been prepared. The time speeds quickly when work is interspersed with joke and story, and midnight was announced as we finished. Then a light lunch followed and the neighbors dispersed to dream dreams about apples and apple paring. These old-fashioned "bees" are fast becoming a thing of the past but they have been a great factor in days gone by and where they yet obtain are a source of cheer and good fellowship.

The next morning the youngsters were up bright and early to see every detail connected with apple-sauce making. The great kettle was filled with cider and a fire of logs made under it. As the cider boiled down more was added and this was kept up till enough had boiled to make a start. Then the apples, previously prepared, were added, and, as the boiling proceeded, more cider and apples were added, from time to time. The boiling went on most of the day, and night coming on found our task still unfinished. Darkness comes early these short days and the night was dark. The moon was in hiding and it was cold so we donned coats and caps and thus muffled, "sat the kettle about." The bright fire under the huge pot lit up the surroundings and gave color to our faces. How the dry fagots cracked and snapped when fresh fuel was added to the fire and the dying embers returned to tongues of flame, great and small, hugging the large cauldron of brass! Now their great shadows danced when we moved to "stir the pot," till one could conjure up bears, wolves and ghosts near at hand in the clumps of bushes or in the dark corners, as story after story was told to the children! The grown up children entered into the play spirit and enjoyed it equally.

At last the task was finished. The dying embers no longer illuminated our work. The sauce was finished. Lanterns were secured and the rich, dark brown, smooth, sweet smelling sauce was dipped into earthen crocks; carried to a safe place till morning, when it would be set and cool. The crocks were then securely covered and put away in a good cellar to be used throughout the winter.

No farm home seems complete without its boiled apple sauce, and when well made with sweet apples and sweet cider it is no mean dish though it may be homely.

How often have I seen the youngsters just in from school, hic themselves to the cupboard and shortly appear with a huge slice of bread and butter topped with a generous supply of boiled apple sauce, the *piece de resistance* till supper.

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