



Hawke's Bay Bountiful



January in Hawke's Bay is a taste delight with the availability of summer fruit. Buying from road-side orchards means you can enjoy tree-ripened apricots, peaches, nectarines, plums and cherries.

Hawke's Bay summer fruit is widely available from the province's many gate-sale orchards.

Tips for bottling peaches

The following are tips for bottling peaches (no need to peel, no waste, safe).

- 1.— In a large saucepan of water put one heaped teaspoon of caustic soda (from the supermarket). Bring to a simmer.
- 2.— Using tongs, submerge peaches for no more than two to three minutes. The furry skin should turn brown quickly; if after three minutes this does not happen, add a little more caustic soda, ie, 1/2 teaspoon. About five peaches fit in a large pot.
- 3.— Remove with tongs and place in a bucket of cold water.
- 4.— Rub the skin off with your hands under a running tap.
- 5.— Slice off the stone and put into salted water until ready to cook to prevent browning. The peaches will be quite slippery, use an old cloth in one hand to grip the peach when slicing off the stone.
- 6.— Cook in a water-bath, over the element or microwave using syrup made with one part sugar to three parts water. One large jar takes about four minutes to cook in the microwave using full power.
- 7.— Suggestion: Skin a case, slice a case, cook a case at a time. A half-case (8kg), will fill about eight large jars.

Note: Peaches should be firm (but not green), showing good colour and be of good quality to preserve. Russet and other skin marks will not disappear in the caustic soda solution, and will need to be cut off.

Best peaches for bottling: Golden Queen (cling stone). Early March. Paragon (cling stone). Early February. Million Dollar (free stone). Early-mid February. Peachblow (cling stone, no need to peel). Mid-February. Blackboys (free stone). Late February.

HB shows its bountiful nature

It's the time of year again when Hawke's Bay proves its bountiful nature.

Fresh fruit and vegetables are at their peak, with prices allowing dinner tables to overflow and pantry shelves and freezers to be filled for use in the winter months.

The Herald-Tribune takes a look at the local fruit and produce markets, what goes on in the market places and how to make best use of what's so freely available.

We start with a beginner's guide to preserving fruit.

Food can be preserved by several different methods but the aim of each method is to control the enzymes and micro-organisms which spoil perishable foods. This can be done by heating, freezing or providing conditions which prevent the growth of organisms e.g., sugar in jam or vinegar in pickles.

Some terms used in preserving. Acid foods — includes all fruits except figs and some varieties of tomatoes.

Low acid foods — includes all vegetables, fish, seafood, meat, game, poultry and convenience foods containing pasta e.g., spaghetti and tomatoes.

Hot pack — the food is partially cooked before being packed into jars.

Raw pack — jars are filled with raw food and then processed.

Blanching — placing food (usually vegetables) in boiling water for three to five minutes before further processing e.g., deep freezing.

Head space — a small air space left at the top of a jar when jars are sealed before processing, to allow for the expansion of food. It also refers to the gap left in containers for the expansion of frozen foods.

Sealing — closing jars or packages to prevent air entering.

Preserving fruit. Because it is an acid food, fruit can be successfully preserved by the simple open-pan method, but only fruit should be preserved by this method.

Equipment needed for the open-pan method. Items such as bowls of various sizes, measuring cup or jug, saucepans, chopping board, clean cloths and a pot holder will be available in most kitchens.

- Stainless steel-bladed knife
- Large spoon and long-bladed knife

Open-pan method. The fruit is cooked in syrup before being put into jars and sealed. There is no further processing. Success depends on working quickly so the jar is filled and sealed while the contents are very hot.

1.— Wash jars in hot sudsy water, rinse and keep hot in the oven warming drawer or the oven set at 100C.

2.— Make a light syrup and keep it hot. (1c sugar:3c water).

3.— Prepare fruit as for stewing.

4.— Add sufficient prepared fruit to fill a jar to the hot syrup in a large saucepan, simmer until the fruit is tender.

5.— Sterilise metal inserts for five minutes in boiling water — leave in the boiling water until required.

water. Screw on a sterilised metal insert hand tight.

8.— Remove the screw band when the jar has sealed and is cold. (ie dome is depressed.) Store in a cool, dark cupboard.

Note: Light coloured fruit (e.g. pears) can be held in a solution of two teaspoons of salt and 1 litre of water, rinsed and then cooked. With a little experience it becomes easy to judge the amount of fruit to cook to fill each jar, any excess can be held in a bowl — reheated and added to the next jar.

Bottling takes a little time and care is needed, but it's rewarding to have a supply of bottled fruit on hand.

For more detailed information on the preserving methods of freezing, bottling and drying the University of Otago's publication *Preserving Food* (S7) will be helpful. Readers wishing to make preserves will find many recipes and practical information in *Jams, jellies, pickles and relishes* (S8) or the two books will be supplied for \$10.80 from the Focus Information Service, University of Otago, PO Box 56, Dunedin. All prices quoted include GST and postage.

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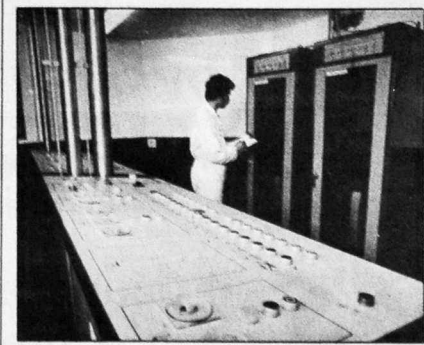
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Press Operator Ross Hantler checks the proper functioning of equipment in the Hastings Press Control Room. Ongoing research and development has resulted in the use of processing equipment which is among the most advanced in the world.

An Apple a Day ...

In Hawke's Bay apples don't just keep people healthy, they help put a rosy glow on the local economy as well.

About half of New Zealand's total apple and pear crop comes from this region.

Much of the Hawke's Bay crop is destined for the international marketplace. It is sold to overseas customers by the Fresh Fruit Export Group of the New Zealand Apple and Pear Marketing Board under the ENZA brand name.

Last year over six million cartons rolled off the local production line and on to ships — returning over \$60,000,000 to growers and through them to the local economy.

Outstanding quality is crucial to New Zealand's efforts to maintain the edge over competitors, even in a very depressed world market.

In Hawke's Bay, the Board employs 49 permanent staff and over 280 seasonal workers to help the region's 800 growers ensure the fresh fruit export crop meets the highest possible quality standards.

Colour, size, keeping qualities, packaging and labelling must all be rigorously controlled so as to meet the requirements of international customers.

Old-fashioned Kiwi ingenuity is another vital component to the success of New Zealand's pipfruit industry.

This involves ongoing development of new varieties, specifically designed to meet the different taste requirements of overseas markets.

Royal Gala and Braeburn are perhaps the best known of our "home-grown" varieties. In 1983 they made up less than one per cent of the Hawke's Bay export crop whereas last year they accounted for almost half.

New market development is also at the forefront of efforts to stay ahead of the pace in international pipfruit exporting.

Last year export opportunities opened up in Japan, Eastern Europe and Russia.

Leading up to the year 2000 there will be close examination of potential markets in Central and South America, Australia, India and Asian countries such as Laos, Vietnam and Korea.

ENZA Processors

ENZA Processors is a real partnership between Hawke's Bay pipfruit growers and the New Zealand Apple and Pear Marketing Board.

The processing arm of the Board, ENZA Processors has been squeezing juice from pipfruit in the Bay for more than 20 years.

New general manager Mike Konig says in the last season the business returned \$5.6-million to Hawke's Bay growers and juiced over 20,000 tonnes of fruit.

ENZA Processors manufactures apple juice concentrates at its Coventry Road plant in Hastings. It also has plants in Nelson and Christchurch.

The business employs 60 permanent and 20 seasonal staff in Hawke's Bay.

"We add value to fruit which is not suitable for the fresh export market at sales on the local market," Mr Konig says.

"And we get some value from the fruit rather than growers having to pay for its disposal."

"We also have the opportunity to provide some returns for growers whose fruit has been damaged by hail."

"However, our apple juice concentrates are a commodity item and returns are very much dependent on world market prices."

Sophisticated techniques and equipment mean ENZA Processors can tailor-make apple juice concentrate to meet very specific requirements.

"We can provide the customer with a product that is exactly the colour, acidity, sugar level and clarity he or she wants."

Most of the juice concentrates are exported to juice manufacturers in Australia, the US and Japan. The rest is sold to ENZA Products, the board-owned business that produces retail products like Just Juice and Fresh Up.

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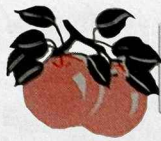
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Hawke's Bay Bounty

Flowers as well as fruit auctioned

For more than 30 years, Turners and Growers in Hastings and Napier (formerly C.H. Slater Ltd) have offered growers and retailers the opportunity to buy and sell fresh fruit and vegetables and more recently, flowers.

The climate in Hawke's Bay has enabled growers to harvest almost all varieties of produce on a year-round basis.

Local summer fruit, depending on the growing season, is readily available. With imported lines of fruit available during the winter months, retailers can offer consumers a wide choice of almost every fruit.

Flowers are now becoming an important part of the business and sales have risen dramatically from small beginnings in 1987.

Flowers are auctioned every Monday and Thursdays, in Hastings under the guidance of Silvia Love, Chris Lyndon and Sue White. Silvia has the distinction of being the only woman auctioneer in Hawke's Bay.

Fruit and vegetables are auctioned on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays of each week instead of the traditional Mondays and Thursdays.

This change has meant that produce remains fresher, especially for the weekend trade.



Turners and Growers auctioneer, Silvia Love, conducts an auction last week.

The total refrigeration package

Hawke's Bay Refrigeration Limited partners Neil Pulford and Shayne Murphy look after commercial refrigeration, air conditioning in both cars and buildings, refrigerated transport, marine refrigeration and they also design and build coolrooms and freezer rooms.

Shayne and Neil are happy to call on people to discuss their refrigeration requirements and then to design a coolroom or freezer room for their specific needs.

For the Hawke's Bay orchardists we build coolrooms that will cool the fruit very promptly and hold it at an even temperature, to keep the fruit in tip top condition.

In Hastings Hawke's Bay Refrigeration Limited operates a 24-hours a day seven days a week service to serve clients.

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Dawn Ohlson of NZ Snack Foods checks a table of apple crisps prior to packaging.

Amazing growth of apple crisp

New Zealand Snack Foods Limited is a relative newcomer to the Hawke's Bay business community. With the final commissioning and opening only in October last year, the development and growth of the Snacky Apple Crisp has been rapid.

New Zealand Snack Foods Limited has established distribution throughout New Zealand, covering supermarkets, dairies, garages, schools and other retail outlets. The sales in New Zealand have been meeting all expectations with people being thrilled at having an alternative to the conventional snack range.

Snacky Apple Crisps have met with positive consumer acceptance in export markets as well. Snacky Apple Crisps are now available in Australia, Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong with bulk product being shipped to Japan and Taiwan.

This year the focus will be to consolidate these established markets whilst developing the opportunities that exist in the United Kingdom, Central Europe and the United States of America.

One of the advantages that Snacky Apple Crisps has over competitive apple crisps is the quality of the finished product. This is a direct result of good manufacturing practices and the use of carefully selected fresh apples.

The Braeburn variety, in particular, gives a distinctly superior product, and, to the firm's knowledge, none of the international competitors use this variety in their products. While apple is the major product line, development work on the next Snacky variant is well under way. It will be different and once again it will be based on using high quality Hawke's Bay raw materials.

The directors and staff of New Zealand Snack Foods are confident of their success and wish to thank all those who have had a part in the successful development of their business.

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Hawke's Bay Bountty

Best year ever for Fruitpackers

Last year was the most successful, financially, in Fruitpackers (HB) Co-Operative's 21-year history.

Good management during the past 10 years, combined with logical development into associated business, has given the company additional sources of income.

For the first time, all packing was done in one shed, on four 4-lane electronic graders with trayfillers instead of the usual two sheds. This allowed better supervision, pack-outs, management focus and, finally, reduced cost.

The 60,000 carton coolstore force-draught cooled all early season crop, prior to packing, and provided winter/spring storage of domestic market fruit.

The company has built five controlled atmosphere rooms of 5000 cartons each, to complement normal coolstorage for future sales into the new deregulated New Zealand apple market.

The processing factory produced a record quantity of patented Fru Pak Apple and Pie mix and Sieved Apple, a total of more than 800 tonnes of finished product. Asparagus was canned in the factory following the apple season.

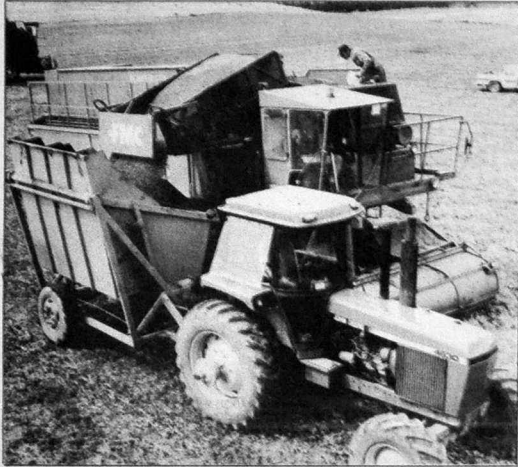
With the success of the past year, the directors propose a 53 cent per packed carton rebate to all supplier shareholders, to be approved at the forthcoming annual meeting.

This is particularly good news for more than 60 members in a year of much lower fruit returns for Hawke's Bay pipfruit growers in general.



More than 800 tonnes of sieved apple and apple pie mix were processed by Fruitpackers last year.

Biggest dehydrator in South Pacific



A new pea viner operated by Flavour Dry NZ Ltd.

Flavour Dry (NZ) Ltd, previously owned by Unilever New Zealand, is the largest fruit and vegetable dehydrator unit of its kind in the South Pacific region.

Flavour Dry processes a wide range of locally grown fruits and vegetables including apples, peas, carrot, beans, corn, tomatoes, berryfruit, pumpkin and asparagus.

Flavour Dry's speciality is dehydration. There are two different drying technologies, hot-air drying and freeze drying. With these two techniques, Flavour Dry is able to offer a diverse range of product types with cook times ranging from slow bake or casserole applications to instant rehydration soup ingredients.

This allows flexibility in the processing to meet specific customers' requirements. Products such as dried apple are sold to major cereal, muesli and apples pie manufacturers. Freeze dried products are sold to companies which produce convenience meals which are ready to serve within a few minutes.

The largest part of Flavour Dry's business is in export sales. Products are produced for customers in Europe, UK, Australia, USA, Japan, Canada in addition to the local New Zealand market.

In order to keep an edge within the export market Flavour Dry have given their customers a guarantee of consistent quality by obtaining ISO 9001.

This accreditation has assured existing and potential clients that they can rely on both the quality of the dried product and the consistency of manufacturing process.

Consequently Flavour Dry has a reputation throughout the world as a producer of the highest quality products in the dried food area.

The future for Flavour Dry (NZ) Ltd is in new technology with the emphasis on value added products. A vigorous research and development programme is under way to identify and develop new products and processes which will see the company maintain its position as one of New Zealand's premier food exporters.

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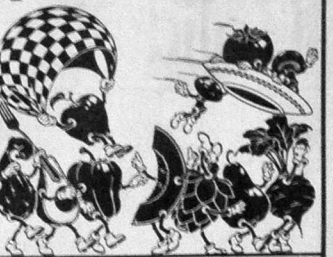
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