

## Preserving Produce

I grow a lot of soft fruit and I've always made some jam  
To eat myself, but mostly to give friends, that's who I am

And so I thought I'd make a plan of how to do lots more  
To learn new skills and use more food from hedgerows and woodland floor

I decided to use SADIM for the overall design  
With lots of time evaluating each production line

I'll use an iterative cycle for my designs  
And try different ways of making things til it's all fine

I applied **all the 3 ethics**, **Earth Care's** using what I've got  
That I can grow and pick and gather and recycle a lot

**Fair Share's** giving away lots of produce that I've made  
And checking other purchases, using sugar that's Fairtrade

**People care** is much the same, I also thought I'd show  
The neighbours how to make jam to make use of what they grow

**Catch and store the energy, and then obtain a yield**  
**Produce no waste, respond to change, observe what's in the field**

**Be mindful of the feedback and use diversity a lot**  
**Use edges and the margins and slowly process what I have got**

**These are the principles I used from Holmgren in my plan**  
**There is no limit except imagination, from Mollison**

### *Survey*

So first I need to look around and see just what I've got  
A cellar which has lots of space for stuff so it doesn't rot

I also tend to keep my jars which can be used to store  
All sorts of jams and jellies, chutneys and so much more

We have a large deep freeze which makes us both just stress and shout  
we put things in and then forget to get the produce out!

I share a plot with a good friend and on it we can grow  
Rasps, strawbs, cherries, gooseberries, plums, blackberries and sloes  
(well currants, but that didn't rhyme)

I also like to learn things and try recipes that are new  
Cakes are my favourite product but I love to make jam too

To finish with the survey I looked at my cookbook range  
From Mrs Beeton onwards I have lots – that's not too strange

*Analysis*

So what do I need to do next to help my design? Just  
Sort out cellar storage and my deep freeze is a must

And maybe get more books of recipes old and new  
To try new things and see what works and what I need to do

And keep recording what I've done instead of making notes  
On scraps of paper and in books: a notebook got my vote

*Design*

My husband is a practical man, at DIY he's good  
And we found we had some racking made of metal, and some wood

And so we put the shelves up (which didn't take too long)  
With spaces for bottles and for jars it needed to be strong

And then I took the freezer and gave it a clean with zeal  
Discovered foods from years ago (and had some awesome meals!)

I used to hand-write labels and my writing's not too neat  
So I thought that I'd print some to explain the food we eat

It needs the date and contents and how many in the batch  
And a catchy name like Helen's Homemade (blank) so they all match

But that meant more computer work – I wasn't in the mood  
And so I got a stamp made out of rubber and of wood

*Design 1*

I had a glut of apples and with ginger made some jam  
I pushed it through a sieve but found it was rather thick ...

I didn't like the consistency and so I thought I might  
Make the second batch jelly by dripping it overnight

That worked out good and clear and had a colour that was pale  
But how much could we use of that? I hoped it wouldn't stale

I looked at lots of recipes for types of apple jam  
And thought of adding mint but then we don't often eat lamb

So I added chillies chopped with extra lemons too  
Then strained it through a jelly bag (and on the compost goes the goo)

But it was all a bit sweet so to my recipes I ran  
And added vinegar instead of water to my pan

I now make loads of chilli jelly which tastes great to eat  
And it works well with currants, red, and gives a lovely heat

It's excellent with cheese on toast or stirred into a sauce  
And goes well with types of meat and peanut butter of course

#### *Design 2*

On our allotment plot there is a rose bush that's gone huge  
It had a load of rosehips that I thought that I could use

I did some research both on line and reading lots of books  
They all said that the middle of the hips had loads of hooks

With irritating properties that made itching of the skin  
And if eaten unprocessed could cause stomach problems within

I had to be so careful to strain all of the juice twice  
And I'd added in some lemons which I thought would make it nice

The problem was the syrup was like treacle, hardly runny  
It's not really a syrup but more like a solid honey

I suppose that I could add more water to the jars I made  
And boil it up again, but then I haven't, I'm afraid

It gets carved out from time to time with great difficulty  
It tastes OK, the main thing is it's very good for me

I've made courgette jam with pineapple, and green tomato jam  
And fig and rhubarb conserve and marmalade with cardamom

#### *Evaluation*

And everything I make now is tested and reviewed  
And friends are asked to comment so my recipes improve

I have a book where I can write the things that I have tried  
And I look back and see results of recipes applied

I think that doing this design's made me more organised  
I've tried more jam experiments than otherwise I'd have tried

And writing it in verse was fun I didn't have to sit  
At a computer for too long, I wrote it bit by bit

Helen  
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