

A PEAVEY INDUSTRIES PUBLICATION | FALL 2021

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GREETINGS

A MESSAGE FROM PEAVEY INDUSTRIES LP PRESIDENT AND CEO, DOUG ANDERSON

Welcome to the Fall 2021 issue of *Connected to the Land*. As our country and all Canadians continue to strive toward normalcy and the ultimate end of the COVID-19 Pandemic, Canadian retailers have also continued to pivot. Some days it feels like ‘two steps forward, one step back’ – but that is still one step in the right direction! As a retailer carrying products essential to our customers’ lives and livelihoods, it is vital for us to be there for you when you need us. Our stores span many regions across Canada, most of which have experienced numerous peaks and valleys in protocol and regulatory changes over the last year and a half. Through it all, our first concern has always been the health, safety and comfort of our staff and customers, and this continues to be top of mind in all we do.

Once again, this issue of *Connected to the Land* offers a variety of articles and topics of interest to our valued customers and readers. There is something for everyone, from mushroom farming to canning tips and tricks. You will also find in these pages, a truly interesting and timely article reviewing the pandemic’s effect on Canadian industry. When we all had to change how we lived, relaxed and worked, some industries faltered, some grew, some developed and grew wings, making major strides toward augmenting Canada’s economy.

I hope you enjoy the Fall 2021 issue as much as the last, and if this is your first, welcome to *Connected to the Land*. Please share any comments or suggestions by email to feedback@peaveyindustries.com. We look forward to hearing from you.

Last year we developed a website to supplement this magazine and further grow our connection with you, the land and our communities. Please visit connectedtotheland.info – where we have vlogs, blogs and more for you to enjoy! 🍁

Doug Anderson

Photo by Drew Kenworthy.

DON'T MISS AN ISSUE!

Our most recent magazines are online at
connectedtotheland.info



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Peavey Industries is proud to support these five new projects.

LATEST INITIATIVES

The Rooted in Communities Endowment Program and our Heat the Feet annual Campaign.

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Peavey Industries Community Agricultural Grant – 2021 Recipients

Location: La Crete, Alberta **1**
Organization: La Crete Agriculture Society
Project Name: Northern Experimental Orchard

Peavey Industries is proud to support the development of an experimental orchard in La Crete, Northern Alberta. There is strong community support, ample land and a want to share what is learned with other Northern communities. This project will encourage the growing of orchards in non-traditional spaces to help in addressing food insecurity and rising produce costs, felt especially in Northern communities.

Location: Sudbury, Ontario **2**
Organization: Sudbury Shared Harvest
Project Name: Solar Greenhouse Project

Involving youth in year-round food production while delivering related educational programming is the direction and inspiration for this project. Grant funds will go toward lesson planning, experiential learning and the establishment of a solar greenhouse in collaboration with the Sudbury Shared Harvest and La Salle Secondary School. This project will provide fresh produce to families that need it, while educating and examining our relationship with food and traditional growing methods.

Location: Nokomis, Saskatchewan **3**
Organization: Nokomis School
Project Name: Nokomis School Outdoor Learning Commons

Nokomis School has undergone numerous changes in the last number of years, none more significant than the reduction of learning areas for students. The Nokomis School staff, students, and community are committed to developing an outdoor learning space for all students to engage in authentic learning opportunities; Peavey Industries is pleased to be a funding resource for this extraordinary concept – and is looking forward to being active in the school's project journey.



Community Agricultural Grant



Location: Guelph, Ontario ④
Organization: Guelph Tool Library
Project Name: Guelph Urban Food Initiative

The Guelph Urban Food Initiative Program will promote and encourage members of the community to grow and produce their own food. The program's goals will be achieved by supporting community members through their Tool Library, training sessions, spaces to grow food, and events. We are happy to provide Peavey Industries Community Agricultural Grant funding to be utilized in support of the Initiative however and wherever it is needed most.

Location: Winnipeg, Manitoba ⑤
Organization: Pembina Fibreshed
Project Name: Pembina Fibreshed - Flax to Linen

Through the pandemic, certain issues began to emerge that were not Covid-19 specific. Critical supply chain issues became apparent across many different markets, and the textile industry was no different. This project works to demonstrate the viability of linen fabric production on the Canadian prairies – familiarizing themselves and others on the process: from seeding, to flax, to fabric, to sewing or otherwise completing a fabric item. Agriculture Grant funding will help the Pembina Fibreshed to raise awareness of the potential for locally produced textiles and research small scale processing options.

CONNECTING TO THE LAND TOGETHER

“Connected to the Land” embodies Peavey Industries and our retail brands – and has essentially become a brand of its own. The concept began with our original magazine and now includes a dedicated website showcasing e-versions of the magazine.

FEATURING

PODCASTS • BLOGS • RECIPES



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Peavey Industries LP **Rooted in Communities Endowment Program**

Strong roots = enduring communities. At Peavey Industries we are family and at our core we strive to always provide the highest level of service and care to our valued customers and their families' needs in our stores. It is also important to us that we serve the needs of the communities and regions in which we all live, work and raise our families. It is for this reason that we developed and implemented the Peavey Industries 'Rooted in Communities Endowment Program' - to give back to our communities and support initiatives that will sustain them. It's in our FABRIC, and while we can not be all things for everyone, we want to do what's right for our customers whenever we can, and however we can.

This is a smaller scope funding program to help big ideas take root. If your community group is looking at local or regional initiatives, please access further information on the goals and parameters of this program, and the application form for funding assistance at <https://www.research.net/r/RootedInCommunities>



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HOMESTEADING

LET IT SLOW YOU DOWN

Story and photos by Doreen Pendgracs.

Rising costs in raising a family, the uncertainties of the world, and disrupted access to the supply chain and our perceived list of necessities have seen an increasing number of families looking to get themselves off the grid and engage in the art of homesteading.

Homesteading is not defined by the place you live. It is defined by the lifestyle choices you make. By definition, homesteading is the art of living a lifestyle that is self-sufficient. That means growing as much of your own food as possible, managing a small amount of livestock to fill your nutritional needs, making your own furnishings and clothing when possible, staying home a lot more, and living a simpler—more authentic—lifestyle that connects you to the land and the environment in which you live.

The homesteading lifestyle is ideal for families with a piece of land they can convert to a hobby farm environment where a small number of animals and fowl can be housed to provide food and sustenance alongside an ample garden. Access to wood for heat, fuel, and other practical needs is a big plus.

Jared Lawrence and his partner Shari have a blended family of five children they are raising on an eight-acre hobby farm located about 35 minutes northwest of Winnipeg. Jared and

Shari both knew as children that they wanted to live a simpler, more authentic lifestyle, and it was only when they combined their knowledge, resources, and families that they were able to make their homesteading dreams a reality.

“For me the idea of homesteading originally came from reading *Little House in the Big Woods* by Laura Ingalls Wilder when I was a lad,” says Jared. “I absolutely fell in love with the book and the lifestyle written within. I must have read that book seven or eight times and always felt that there was a certain



romance to that era and lifestyle.” The book is an autobiographical children’s novel set in late 19th century Wisconsin and was the premise to the author’s highly popular Little House books and the *Little House on the Prairie* television series based on the books that ran for nine seasons (from 1974-1983.)

“The prime motivator for an honest and wholesome lifestyle was in me since grade school, and in 2012, I had the opportunity to purchase a modest size hobby farm and I took it,” says Jared, who says that some of his children embrace the homesteading lifestyle more than others. “None of our children hate it, but some put a little more time into it than others. Two of the kids help out by watching their one-year-old brother which helps us immensely.”

Jared says he still needs to have a fulltime job to make ends meet, and with the amount of school work the educational system puts on the children, they don’t have a lot of time to participate in the homesteading chores as much as they’d like. “We all rely upon Shari heavily and none of what we’re trying to accomplish would be possible without the tireless hours she puts into our home and family.”

Chores are not assigned to any specific family member. Everyone pitches in when and how they can. “Nearing the evening hours, we just look at what needs to be done before slumber and attack the situation with as many troops as we think we need to accomplish what needs to be done. And at the end of the day, you can wipe the sweat from your brow, knowing that you’ve put in a wholesome and honest day, you know where your food comes from, and you’ve been as self-sufficient as possible ... you are in fact learning to swim,” remarks Jared.

Jared’s partner Shari learned much about the simple lifestyle from her mother and grandmother. “Growing up, my mom was very crafty. She sewed a lot and often had a hot glue gun in her hand. We always had a huge garden that was plentiful. We were always outside. Dad would be tilling, and we three children were weeding. If grandma was over, we all pulled weeds together,” recalls Shari, who cherishes those early memories that led her to the lifestyle her own children are now living.

“We were lucky to have Grandma live with us for summer months when school was out. That’s where I saw homemade bread, pies, cookies, loaves, roasts, outdoor laundry and where I really learned to love quilts and quilting,” says Shari. “The stories we heard were of Grandma’s past—raising five kids with no husband and of *Anne of Green Gables* or whichever other novel she had on the go that wasn’t originally intended to share with grandkids. I graduated in 2002 and shortly after that, started missing being able to slow down for bread to rise. I vowed to my daughter then, that we would live in the country no matter how long it would take or which paths we found to get there, even for just a garden.”





Both Jared and Shari say that an appreciation for nostalgia is important to embracing the homesteader lifestyle. "Some of our dishes match, some don't. I believe the kids accept that and understand what we're working for, and how important it is in just being home," says Shari.

Shari sees the biggest benefit to homesteading as being the connection to home. "I love when we can look at a piece of furniture and acknowledge all of the materials are from our property. Even better yet is eating something that all seven of us are enjoying while I'm listing ingredients that were not purchased from a store but instead, brought in from our own yard."

HOMESTEADING TIPS

The biggest obstacle is time. Fitting everything in as best you can provide challenges, so let your passion for the lifestyle fuel you. Let it all slow you down. Take one step at a time to enjoy the process, not become overwhelmed, and to appreciate one another and each other's efforts. Homesteading is definitely a team effort!

The transition to homesteading is not for the faint of heart. Seek guidance by accessing all the documented and undocumented experiences from others that you can. Learn from others and be willing to share your own experiences to those who are seeking advice. 🍁

Doreen Pendgracs is a Manitoba-based freelance writer and award-winning author who specializes in writing about chocolate travel at chocolatour.net. She currently serves as President of the Professional Writers Association of Canada and Co-Chair of the Canadian Freelance Guild.

*Do you want to share your agricultural family's story? If so, we'd certainly be interested in considering you for the next issue's **Rural Spotlight**. Please contact Marketing@PeaveyIndustries.com with your information.*

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A POST-PANDEMIC FUTURE

UNCERTAINTY BREEDS OPPORTUNITY

Story by Pat Kerr.

It is not a secret: Canada's economy and the economy of the world were rocked by the events of 2020. Economists and everyone with a crystal ball are guessing what the future holds. Looking back, some but not all the numbers are surprising – some good and some not so good.

If you had to move for work purposes and were forced to sell, you'll be the first to know that our top gross domestic product this year was real estate. Remote work tempered the outlook for office space. Retail business struggles are perennial but this season added significant stress to retail. However, in the private home market buyers were looking to increase floor space to accommodate working from home. Those buyers would also be aware of the in-home modification boom affecting all building avenues from municipal permits to construction products. The mood going forward in the real estate industry is uncertainty. Those who embrace these new opportunities could do well.

Manufacturing, mining, oil, gas and finance (in that order) were also top for our gross domestic products over the last year. Hot

topics are agriculture and forestry (those trees not burning) which took 14th place, bringing in \$48,264 million keeping Canada's economy growing.

Agriculture and forestry saw growth at 0.0009 compared to mining and oil at 0.072 and the public sector at 0.064. Of course, as we are going through a bad economical dilemma our national debt bulged and so did hiring in the public service. The federal debt-to-GDP ratio rose from 31.2% in 2019-20 to 50.7% in 2020-21. You don't need much of a calculator to conclude that this means the growth in the stock of debt has been outpacing growth of the economy. It is putting upward pressure on interest charges and leaving a grim future.

With the lowering of precautions on the general public, the industries expected to see the fastest growth going forward are: Scheduled Air Transportation, 161.2%. This number is confusing as scheduled passenger service was down 87%. 2020 was listed as the worst year on record but goods were on the move throughout the pandemic and the expectation is bright for rebound.

As families were almost forced together, family-oriented activities were on a rampage of growth. Campgrounds & Recreational Vehicle Parks, 129.6%; Travel Agencies and Tour Operators in Canada, 66.9%; Foreign Currency Exchange Services, 62.0%; SUV & Light Truck Manufacturing, 47.2%; Taxi & Limousine Services, 45.4%; Hotels & Motels, 32.3%; Truck & Bus Manufacturing, 29.3%; Natural Gas Distribution, 24.7%... are all were on the rise or expecting dramatic recoveries.

A percentage of families looking for family-oriented activities chose camping, and as a result the campground bookings were startling, with 500% growth for July and Aug 2021. An unseen new trend was a part of this increase being with farm and rural landowners seizing the opportunity for increased revenue, with socially-distant RV camping. Campgrounds reported that families are staying longer and they are seeing a huge increase in first-time campers.

When we look at the industries that thrived in the pandemic, the situation changes. As in past hardships of this country, number one was Agriculture. The energy sector was

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number two, followed by technology. While the world soared out of control, agriculture in Canada maintained steady, sustainable growth. As one farmer said, “Everyone needs to eat. The crops go in the ground; we harvest.”

While agriculture kept working, our eating habits fared badly over the last year. 58% of Canadians report undesirable weight changes. However, going forward, people are reporting that they are recognizing the need to eat well, to live well and this is creating opportunities for growers.

The commercial food service industry was hard hit as a result of the social distancing, dropping 28.7%, but is expecting to rebound with quick service restaurants leading the

way. The 2020 recession was listed as the most devastating of any depression, with the permanent closure of 10,000 food service facilities.

Gazing at small business, it is no surprise that residential remodelling took first place. It seemed everyone in the nation was making home into their castle. Personally, I saw the growth and continued need for home health care in second place. As we were inundated with information about one disease, our population continues to age, and home is still the best place to get well. Elder care is another investment opportunity for the future for both large and small businesses, including homeowners with extra space for a renter or boarder providing a second income and tax deductions.

No one should be flabbergasted that third and fourth places were digital fitness and tutoring, with fifth place being food delivery, as our castles become places to be and do.

Number six for small business was understandable, as online plant nurseries found 2020 and 2021 to be good years of opportunity. By the end of 2021, this industry is expected to increase 5.3%. The greenhouse industry as a whole bloomed. Sales rose at their fastest pace since 2012, up 9.0% to \$4.4 billion in 2020. Over half of the sales in 2020 were in Ontario (54.7%), with one-third in British Columbia (22.1%) and Quebec (12.3%). Greenhouse sales rose 9.4% from a year earlier to \$3.5 billion, largely attributable to a 12.3% increase in fruit and vegetable plant sales.

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Nothing to gobble about, chicken and turkey are riding high, viewed at the moment as “healthy alternatives” but they lost out in export markets and found declining revenues and increased competition here at home. The expectation is that we will see larger poultry farms but prices will fluctuate with the volatility in feed markets. They are currently a \$3B market, with 12,929 employees in Canada.

Fruit and nut producers saw a fragmentation of revenue streams. Demand was unchanged; these are staples in Canada. Revenue did decline in 2020 due to economic uncertainty, but the forecast expects a rebound for 2021. This \$2B industry is in expansion and this trend is expected to continue.

Prices are rising for both fresh and processed vegetables in Canada but profits have stagnated. As always, performance is weather dependant but improvements in technology and greenhouses are making an impact in this \$4B industry. With the increase in health awareness, prices are rising, export markets are increasing and there is increased product diversification. This industry has 32,518 employees in Canada.

The big losers for the year are wired telecommunication down 18.1%, loans 8.4%, office stationary fell 4.3% and DVD game and video rentals dropped 3.8%.



Both low interest rates, and debt to income falling 179% are contributing to Canada's rebound. The debt-to-income rate is still staggering and a problem but household savings are up. 🍁

Pat Kerr is a Master Gardener and author of 2 books promoting native diversity. My Tree, My Forest encourages gardeners to support their yard trees to be part of a thriving eco-system. We are Planting a Forest is a short children's pamphlet on growing native trees from seed.

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“ Boil some water! ”

This was a common cry in fifties western movies because either someone had been accidentally shot and a bullet was to be pulled out or... the lady of the household was having a baby..

SAFETY



Either way, when preserving or “canning” food, the same need for sterilization holds true. What is bad for the baby is bad for the bean: bacteria. Safe food handling of fresh produce is the hallmark of home preserving.

Why bother with all the fuss? There is a great deal of satisfaction to be had after you finish preserving food. The glittering jars are beautiful to behold and carry the promise of adding an incredible flavour shot with future meals and you want to feel confident serving up these creations. Chutneys, jams, jellies, tomato sauce, pickles that you have custom made for your meals can take a ho hum curry or stew into the realm of plate licking! Learning about food safety gives you an appreciation for produce well grown and gently handled. It will guide you in your own garden and take you to exciting Farmers

Markets and small producers in your area that grow fabulously fresh and ripe produce. These farmers have a passion for food that locks in tight with the upswell of interest in cooking during the past two years. It is a natural progression to feeling love and gratitude for the mother Earth and all her bounty, a far cry from the cellophane, clamshell, water-soaked offerings in grocery stores.

The days of canning bushels of produce are mostly gone, for the modern foodie wants variety with a less strenuous production. Small batch preserving is how I prefer to put food away, you can use smaller jars and a smaller canner to process them in. Not everyone has extra space or time or desire to do up a case of cherries, say. It also opens the door to variety... the spice of life. The most important thing here is using fresh and unblemished

produce. The sooner you preserve, the higher the quality and safety. It is also critical to find a tested recipe and follow all instructions – I list four excellent books at the end of this article.

The canning processes require an attention and adherence to safe food handling. “What’s the problem?” you say, “These are mere fruits and vegetables we are talking about here, not like handling meat!” Bacteria lives everywhere, including our own digestive tract, and there are loads of beneficial bacteria and enzymes – but there also are unsavoury types that cause botulism, salmonella and other nasty health risks.

So you get that haul of fantastic produce to the kitchen... now what? They are likely room temperature and have been handled by others, cut or damaged in transit. Fill your sink and

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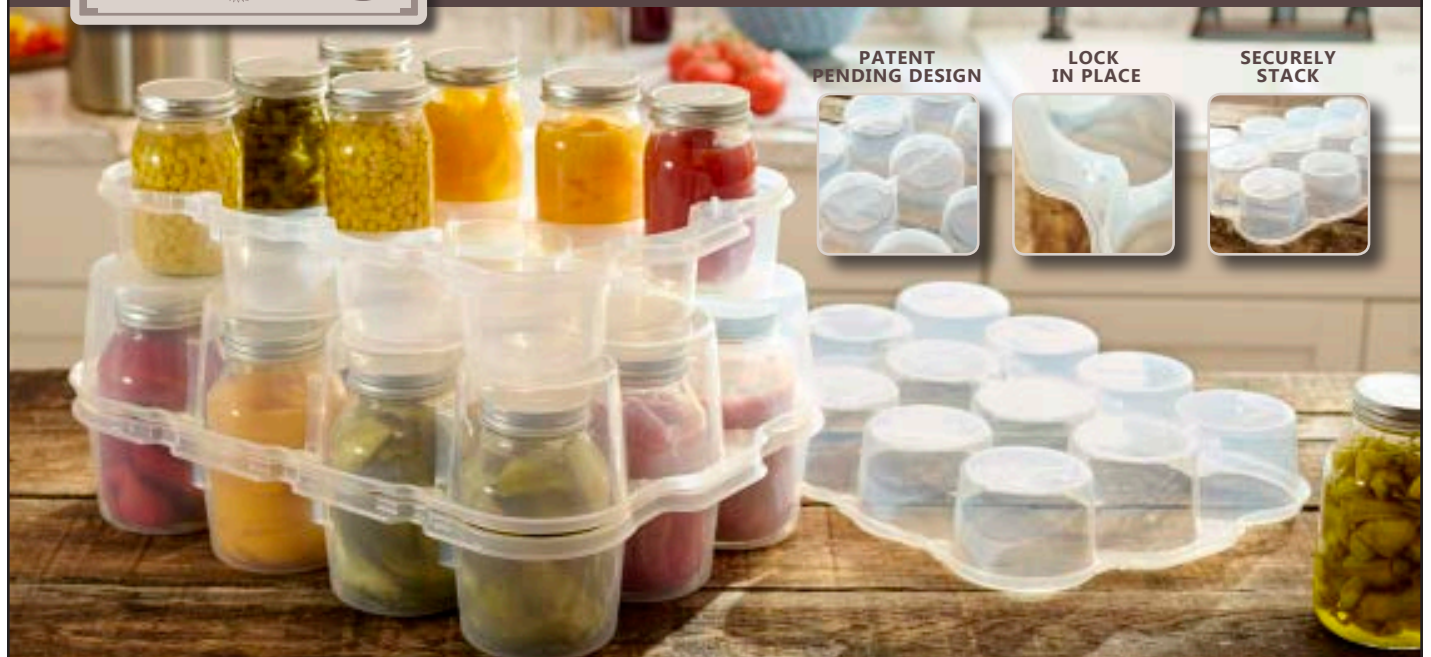
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use a food safe soap to wash everything. Cut away damage or harvesting cuts, thoroughly dry everything gently and if you are not moving directly into the preserving process, get it into the refrigerator, since spoilage micro-organisms are inactive in the cold but quickly flourish in the warmth. Tomatoes and some fruit will be able to stay at room temperature. COVID-19 should have taught us a great deal about food safety and I will never put unwashed bought produce in my fridge again, for many reasons. Even organic food needs a really good cleaning to remove bacteria from growing practices that are nutritious for the plant but not so good in the gut.

If you are using rain barrel water on your plants in your garden, at least rinse and pat the produce dry gently as there is bacteria in the warm rain barrel water. Here, what's good for the bean is not good for the baby!

Easy rule: strong acid foods like plums and apples can safely be processed in a boiling hot water bath that is kept at 212°F. Low or non-acid foods like corn and lima beans must be processed in a Pressure Canner at 10 pounds pressure to achieve 240°F. Make pickles of those low/ non acid foods and you have resolved the pH.

Times for processing vary with what you are preserving and where you live. You must add processing time for every 1,000 feet or 305 metres in altitude you live above sea level. For example, if you live between sea level and 1000 feet or 305 metres, you will find that water boils at 212°F or 100°C. Not simmer, boil. What ever recipe you use, you must be clear on how many minutes your canner or pressure cooker needs to boil or, process in order to ensure the jars are sealed tight. Your recipe book will have the correct times.

In addition to adding processing time for altitude, you need to address the pH or acidity, low acidity, non-acidity of the food being preserved. A broad rule says with high acid foods it is safe to use a boiling hot water canner for the correct

length of time to seal the jars, but low acid or non acidic foods will require a pressure canner at 10 pounds pressure for the correct length of time for your altitude. A chart of pH values will be helpful and you will see that Lemons fall on one end of the chart and Corn on the other. Your recipe will tell you how to make it all good.

There are enough technicalities to justify acquiring a time-tested book(s) on preserving or canning food.

There are several great books to choose from like:

- *Putting Food By*, by R. Hertzberg, B. Vaughan and J. Greene, first published in 1973;
- *Home Preserving made Easy*, by V. Gewanter and D. Parker, published in 1975 (It also covers smoking, cheese and sausage making).

Two more current books I also refer to are:

- *Preserving. The Canning and Freezing Guide for all Seasons*, by Pat Crocker published in 2011 and very useful;
- *Preserving by the Pint. Quick Seasonal Canning for Small Spaces*, by Marissa McClellan published in 2014. 🍁

Karen Christensen has been gardening since childhood, her parents found her tiny fingers excellent for planting small seeds, and along the way she learned from them time honoured permaculture techniques that she still uses. Karen lives and gardens in the Alberta foothills, a very challenging climate but nevertheless produces enough produce to get her and her husband through the to the next harvest.

DISCOVER THE WRITINGS OF HANK PALLISTER WITH JOYCE PALLISTER

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Hank Pallister was raised on his father's ranch, at Turner Valley, Alberta, the son of a recognized pioneer family. He lived his early life surrounded by the old-time cowmen and a world of fascinating stories. Hank passed away in 2005 at the age of 79. From Pallister Publications.

SMOKE FROM THE BRANDING FIRE:

Early Ranch History of Western Canada

As Coordinator of Brand Inspection for Alberta, Hank Pallister came to know many of the personalities that gave so much to the aura of cowboy life in the Canadian west. His experiences and knowledge of Alberta's cattle brand registrations and ranching history, its lore and memorable characters are recorded here in rich detail.

LINGO & LINES:

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This collection of cowboy poetry celebrates the Western way of life from two viewpoints: the cowboy and the unsung hero, his good wife. Classic rhyme schemes echo idylls of the range, work, home and family. Illustrated by western artist Don Brestler.

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Hank Pallister's second book captures the characters and the cowmen that played an important part in the marketing of livestock. It includes information on Alberta's cattle ranching industry, as well as stories from other brand inspectors throughout the province. He recounts the life of the cowboy, ranging from the dangerous aspects of their job to the humorous incidents that were everyday happenings for brand inspectors around the stockyards and auction markets. Illustrated by western artist Don Brestler.

Available at:



joyce.pallister@gmail.com



FUNGUS AMONG US

NUTRITIOUS FOR CANADIANS AND A BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWERS

Story by Dick Nichols.

Did you know that Canadians eat an average of 1.6 kilos (3.5 pounds) of fungi every year? Of course, we don't call them "fungi," we call them mushrooms, and we bake them in pizzas, sauté them to eat on hamburgers or with fine steak, slice them up in salads, and even boil them down to make creamy soups.

Mushrooms are good for you. They are low in fats and carbohydrates, have no cholesterol, and are a terrific source of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants.

Canada is home to more than 100 mushroom farms, the vast majority located in Ontario and British Columbia. They produce close to 100,000 tonnes (110,000 tons) of mushrooms annually and export about 36,000 tonnes (39,600 tons) to the USA. Overall, mushroom producers annually contribute roughly a billion dollars to the Canadian economy, and an experienced worker on a mushroom farm can earn more than \$50,000 a year.

Mushroom farming is a year-round business. The most popular type is the White Button mushroom, followed by Brown mushrooms and Portabellas. On a large farm like Whitecrest Mushrooms Limited, owned by Murray and Chantel Goode of Putnam Ontario, the growing cycle is six weeks.

The first step is to grow the root part of the fungus – called the mycelium – in a warm, environmentally-controlled growing room. (Bread mould is an example of a mycelium. The blue/grey colour of bread mould is the colour of the spores that make it up).

Each mycelium is grown in about 22 centimetres (eight inches) of pasteurized substrate consisting of straw that has been partially composted and purified, with a peat moss layer on top. After three weeks, the temperature in the growing room is reduced to 20° C (68° F), and the full-bodied mushroom develops.

The final three weeks are spent picking the mushrooms in three stages (or flushes). The first flush represents roughly about 60 percent of the total yield. The second flush is roughly 30 percent of the yield. And the third flush is 10 percent.

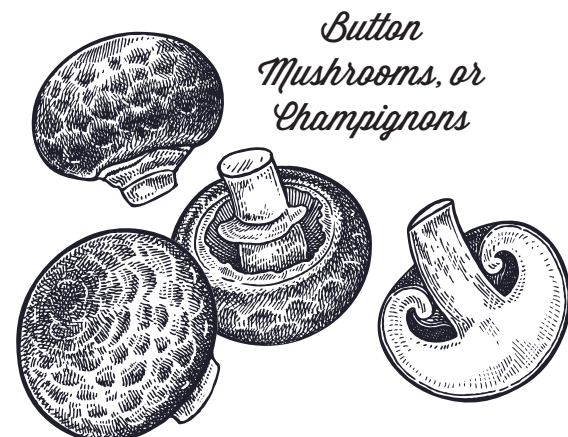
Specialty mushrooms such as Shiitake, Oyster, King Oyster, and Enoki are gaining in popularity. These specialty mushrooms are usually grown in bottles, on wood logs, and in sawdust-filled containers.

Greg Gilbert has been running the produce department at the Sobeys' supermarket in Okotoks, Alberta, for longer than he cares

to remember. He says the secret to selling mushrooms is no different from that of selling any other vegetable.

"Everything in produce is about appearance," Greg said. "White mushrooms have to be white and brown mushrooms have to be brown. And they've all got to be firm."

Greg has a simple way of telling whether the mushrooms he's looking at are of good quality. "If you flip them over, the stem can't be separated too much from the round top. That's how you tell they're fresh," he said. "When the





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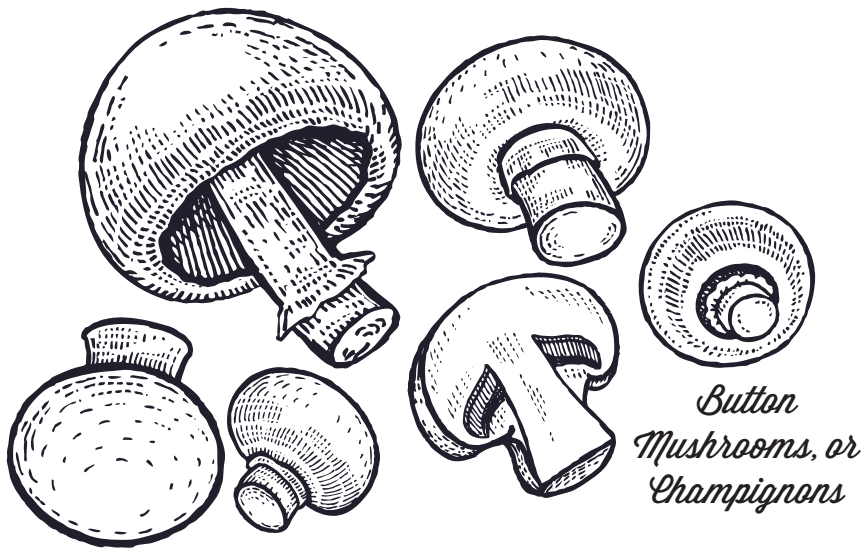
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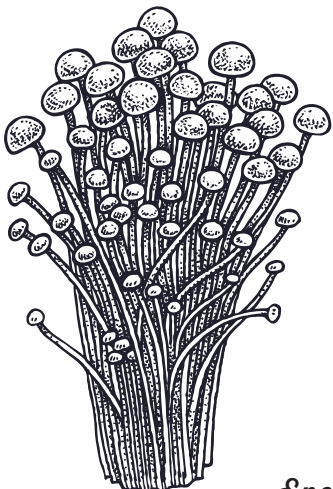
stems and tops are nice and close together, those are the ones to buy.”

Wild mushrooms are found almost everywhere in Canada, but you shouldn't go indiscriminately picking them to cook for dinner. There are thousands of species but only a few are edible.

Mushrooms grow from spores, rather than seeds. Seeds contain reserve food for the growing embryo, and are mostly spread by animals. Spores on the other hand, depend on a host such as wood or soil to feed their growth, and are mostly spread by air and water. Mushroom spores germinate into very fine filaments which combine to form the mycelium.

The edible part of the mushroom is like the flower of other plants. Mushrooms reproduce by releasing spores from gills under the caps. Because mushrooms enlarge rapidly when watered, warm, damp weather triggers their appearance. That's why wild mushrooms tend to pop up overnight after a summer rain.

And here's an interesting fact: Japanese farming folklore has it that lightning makes mushrooms multiply, and new research supports the idea. Studies carried out in northern Japan determined that, for eight of 10 mushroom species examined, a bolt of



Enoki



*Oyster
Mushrooms*

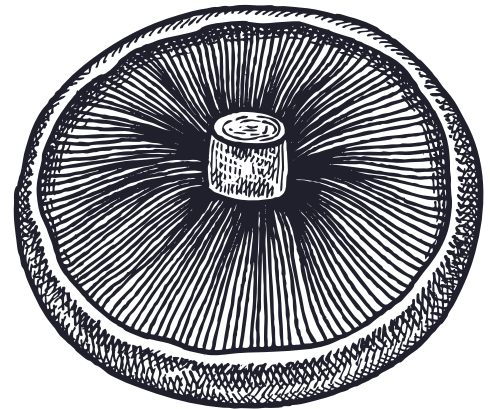
lightning-strength electricity could double the crop yield.

According to Farmgrants.ca, mushrooms are an attractive second crop for Canadian growers because they are grown indoors and produce a high return. Oyster mushrooms can yield up to 25 pounds per square foot annually and fetch an average price of \$15 a kilo (\$7 a pound), so a 10 x 10-foot space can generate more than \$17,000 a year. What's more, oyster mushrooms can be sold fresh or dried, allowing for flexibility in distribution.

Current and prospective growers may be eligible to receive grants, secured loans, or government subsidies to offset expansion or other business costs. Learn more at farmgrants.ca/farm-grants-blog.

Mushrooms can also be used in other applications. Nammex Organic Mushroom Extracts, of Gibsons, BC, pioneered the development of mushroom extracts for the health and wellness industry. The company imports nutritional supplements made to its

Portobello



specifications in China for distribution across North America. It's a niche industry that contributes about \$10 million a year to the Canadian economy.

“Mushrooms are basically carbohydrates,” said Jeff Chilton, Nammex's CEO. “Among of those carbohydrates are some called beta-glucans, and they make up 50 percent of the cell wall of most mushrooms. Beta-glucans stimulate the human immune response to defend against bacterial, viral, fungal, or parasitic infections.

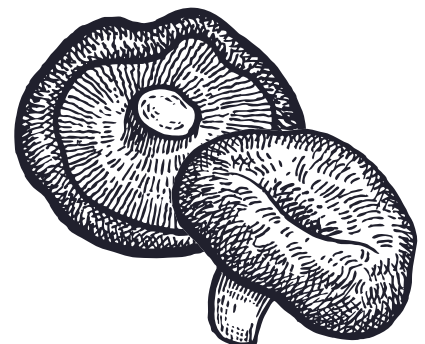
“Three mushroom species containing beta-glucans are highly recommended for use in supplements,” Jeff added. “There is the Reishi mushroom, which has the highest level of beta-glucans and other important compounds. Another is the Maitake and the third is a mushroom called Cordyceps.”

There are thousands of mushroom recipes for breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks, and even desserts. You'll find more than 100 of them on the website of Mushrooms Canada, whose members include growers, processors, spawn makers, suppliers, scientists, and other allied industries. The page is found at www.mushrooms.ca/recipes.

Bon Appetit! 🍄

Dick Nichols (loosechangeblog.com) is a writer and narrator from Okotoks, Alberta.

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THE FINE ART OF FARMING

ORGANIC AND TRADITIONAL

Story by Geoff Geddes.

While van Gogh and da Vinci were both fine artists, they each had their own style and signature, and the same applies to traditional and organic farming. Just as the great painters quenched our thirst for beauty, the two forms of farming feed a growing hunger for safe, healthy, and delicious food.

“We don’t produce food for others that we wouldn’t feed our own family,” said TJ Murray, owner of TNT Swine in Oxford County, Ontario.

Together with his wife Victoria, TJ runs a wean to finish pig operation that includes 20 contract barns and supports their growing family of three children aged 2, 4 and 6. His parents Tom and Cheryl bought the farm in 1989 and have recently been transitioning ownership to their son and daughter-in-law. Like many traditional farmers, TJ’s dad wanted to make sure his son worked away from the family farm for a while before taking the reins for himself.

Now that he’s back and in control, TJ is soaking it all in and enjoying all that traditional farming has to offer.

A JOB THAT GROWS ON YOU

“One of the great things about farming is being able to witness growth firsthand on a regular basis,” said TJ. “In some sectors, you know the company is on an upward trend, but it isn’t obvious. In our operation, we can see the pigs growing every day and know that the business is growing at the same time, and that’s very satisfying.”

Adding to that satisfaction is the use of cutting-edge technology to ensure the farm runs smoothly, supports sustainability and protects the most valued members of the business: the animals.

“We use technology to our advantage by placing auto sorters in several of our barns, thereby saving on manpower and ensuring

the pigs get to where they are supposed to go. Technology also helps us deliver medication to our animals when needed, and that is critical. You really feel like a good human being at the end of the day when you know you have done your utmost to provide proper care for your animals during their time in the barn and as you get them to market.”

In fact, animal welfare is top of mind for many consumers today, and they can feel good about buying pork products when they know how pigs are handled and cared for on the farm.

“I hear people from time-to-time questioning animal care in our sector, but the reality is that these pigs are my livelihood, so why would I treat them with anything less than the utmost of care?”

When they sit down to dinner these days, TJ and his family will only eat meat when they know where it came from, and he loves that he can give other families the same reassurance via farming.

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“There is a real sense of accomplishment in providing the high quality of food that people expect when they go to the store. When you can do that, you are really having an impact, and it makes everything we do on the farm worthwhile.”

Making a difference is also the driving force for James and Cammy Lockwood, parents of three and owners of Lockwood Farms in Cobble Hill, B.C. Perhaps fittingly, these organic farmers took a non-traditional route to the business. Cammy is the product of non-farming parents, and James was set to join the RCMP. When his application for the force dragged on, however, they partnered with James's father on 5.5 acres and never looked back.

Lockwood Farms has gone from 399 laying hens in 2014 to over 5,000 today. In spite of the growth, their focus remains producing high-quality eggs and vegetables in a sustainable, ethical manner.

“The farm is like our fourth child, though with much higher demands than the other three put together,” said James. “When making production or purchasing decisions, we look at it holistically to ensure that animals, people and the environment are considered at every step.”

Though the challenges are plentiful, overcoming them is part of the appeal of organic farming.

“Every year is so different in regard to labour, weather, disease and pests,” said Cammy. “This is such a dynamic career that is constantly shifting with ebbs and flows, and how we respond as a business will determine our success.”

ORGANICS 101

A prime focus for the Lockwood's is helping customers understand what it means to grow organic food and how difficult it is. Why does the produce they grow on farm look different from what you see at the grocery store?

“We talk about things like growing methods and the fact that certain vegetables will improve over time as we master production techniques,” said Cammy. “If they buy organic



celery in the first year or two that we grow it, they won't be too impressed as the quality isn't yet optimal and we have to charge a fair bit to reflect the time and labour involved. With other crops like lettuce, we have really mastered the process, and consumers will see and taste the difference.”

Their customers also benefit from healthy soil, healthy produce, and the chance to support the local economy.

“We employ local workers and the money generated by the business stays in the community,” said Cammy. “We also really try and support fair trade practices. When you buy from producers in other countries, you don't always know if their labour practices are above board and if worker are given adequate gear to ensure their safety. There are a lot more

regulations to follow in North America, which is a good thing.”

Through it all, what keeps them going is the joy of producing good, healthy food for people and fielding compliments from chefs about their quality.

“I thrive on putting seeds in the ground and watching miracles happen, or marveling at how chickens produce eggs,” said Cammy. “These are things we get to witness every day, so I feel quite fortunate.” 🍁

Geoff Geddes is a freelance writer/editor based in Edmonton. He specializes in writing articles, blog posts and website content for the agriculture industry.

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FEEDING THE PERFORMANCE DOG FOR OPTIMAL NUTRITION

Story by Stacy Lynn Morley, MSc.

Ever considered the amount of work and energy it takes for athletes to train and prepare for a particular sport or competition? With training comes ensuring athletes are eating for optimal nutrition and performance. When it comes to hunting dogs, optimizing performance is an important focus and goal. Ensuring that your dog has not only a complete and balanced diet, but also high quality and optimal nutrition will help to complement your dog and ensure they are in top shape for the sporting season.

During training or working periods, performance dogs engage in intense physical activity that requires extra energy compared to adult dogs that are not as active. So, what does a typical hunting dog do in a day? It can be several things including running, sprinting, swimming and even maneuvering around difficult terrain. When we ourselves train and participate in these types of activities, we focus on diet and nutrition and this should be the same for our canine athletes. This type of intense and strenuous training can be both physically and mentally challenging so finding the right diet for your dog is very important for them to have their top performance.

Since performance dogs have higher energy requirements compared to adult dogs, they really benefit from a diet that is calorically dense and has an increased protein and fat content. A calorically dense diet is so important for these working dogs as more nutrition is packed into smaller meal sizes so they can continue to work throughout the day without the added bulk. Their stool sizes will also be smaller since they are eating a more calorie dense diet.

We know that protein plays an important role in building and maintaining lean muscle mass. Why would an increase in protein for a sporting dog be of a benefit to them? Just like athletes who train and increase the amount of protein in their diet, this is a similar recommendation for the canine athlete. According to Case et al “A proportion of energy that is supplied by protein should be increased in the diets of endurance dogs in training to ensure adequate tissue accretion, prevent tissue loss, and possibly aid in the prevention of injury”¹.

Amino acids, the building blocks of protein, are used to build new muscles and repair damaged muscles. These amino acids are

also used to make red blood cells which carry oxygen to the cells. An increased level of oxygen in muscle cells means there is an increased capacity of the muscles to use fat as an energy source. This allows for a more efficient use of fat during prolonged exercise and a delayed onset of fatigue.

Dietary fat requirements are affected by the duration of exercise. The longer the canine athlete exercises, the more dietary fat it requires. A study of sled dogs showed that when the dietary fat increased from 15% to 60% of the calories, the VO₂ Max increased by almost 50%². A high VO₂ Max and maximal fat oxidation means better performance during exercise.

Carbohydrates are broken down into sugars like glucose and are stored in the muscle and liver cells as glycogen. These stores provide energy for canine athletes during periods of increased intensity in exercise. Once glycogen stores are depleted, the body will shift to fat as an energy source. It is important to find a complete and balanced diet to help meet a hard-working dog's nutritional needs when it comes to exercise.



Feeding working and performance dogs requires more than increasing the quantity of food in a canine's daily diet, especially where stomach capacity is a factor. A highly digestible diet provides the necessary calories more efficiently than a lower digestible diet, supporting canine athletes with the necessary energy sources in smaller volumes.

It is important to remember to always provide adequate amounts of water for hard-working dogs. Small amounts of water should be offered throughout exercise to maintain hydration.

For many owners that have sporting dogs, having a dog that is very active during the hunting season and less active in the spring and summer seasons may very well be the norm. Other sporting dog owners may have training all year round. According to Dr. Brian Zanghi, Ph.D., M.S., Senior Research Nutritionist at Nestlé Purina PetCare, "A hardworking dog's energy needs can double or as much as quadruple over the course of the season." What does this mean in terms of feeding requirements? If on a normal day with no training you feed your dog 2 cups of food, you may need to feed during the hunting season 4-8 cups a day depending on your dog's activity level. It's important to remember that each dog is different and to increase or decrease your dog's food amounts slowly and not all at once. Dr. Zanghi suggests increasing or decreasing the amount of food by ¼ to ½ every few days to maintain stable body condition.

When measuring your pet's food daily, it's important to use a 250ml (8oz) measuring cup and ensure you are not overflowing the cup with extra kibble. Also, ensuring you visit your veterinarian on a regular basis to ensure your dog is maintaining a healthy body condition is key.

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Feeding performance and working dogs for optimum performance during exercise requires a deep understanding of the canine athlete's needs both during exercise and for recuperation. All these suggestions mentioned above can help you make the right choices for your dog and help you provide an optimal feeding plan for them.

1. Case et al. (2006). Canine and Feline Nutrition. Third Edition. Mosby.
2. Reynolds A et al. (1995) Sled dog endurance: a result of high fat diet or selective breeding? FASEB J 9: A996. 🍁

Stacy Lynn Morley MSc is the Nutritional Communications Manager at Nestlé Purina PetCare Canada.



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BEEF BRISKET

A SMOKY DELIGHT

Recipe by Tu Le.

There's nothing like smoked brisket but sometimes you don't have the time (12 hours), space or smoking equipment to make it. This very simple oven roasted brisket recipe can help cure your meat cravings.

INGREDIENTS

Here is what you need:

- 1 brisket trimmed (roughly 2kgs)
- 2 tablespoons kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons coarsely ground black pepper
- 4 cloves of garlic crushed

- 2 tablespoons liquid smoke
- 1/4 cup light soy
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 cup beef broth

Preheat oven to 375

Combine salt, pepper and garlic. Rub all over brisket (both sides).

Placed seasoned brisket fat side up in roasting pan and roast in oven for 45 minutes.

Remove from oven and add broth, liquid smoke and bay leaf to the pan. Cover tightly with foil.

Lower oven temperature to 300 and cook for another 3 hours or until fork tender.

Remove and slice meat against the grain and top with pan juices. 

Tu Le is chef and co-owner of Jack's Burger Shack, Jack's Sandwich Shack and Jack's Mobile Shack, in St. Albert, Alberta.

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BAKED BEANS AND COLESLAW

THE PERFECT COMPLEMENT

Recipes by Michaela Pitman.

These baked beans come with a kick of flavor. The star ingredients are curry paste and bay leaves, to give you that depth of flavor. But don't worry, these beans will not blow your head off in terms of heat. The amount of curry paste you put in (as well as the type) is completely up to you – adjust it to your taste buds and tolerance.

These go perfectly with meat and coleslaw as a side. Plus they taste even better the next day if you want to warm them up and have them with a piece of fresh bread.

NOT YOUR AVERAGE BAKED BEANS (SERVES 4)

What you will need:

- Baked beans (in sauce)
- 1 Onion
- 1 tablespoon of cooking oil
- 4 Bay leaves
- 1 tablespoon Curry Paste (adjust to your liking)
- Salt and pepper to taste

DIRECTIONS

Start off by slicing the onions. Then in a saucepan over medium heat, add a dash of oil to the pan. Add the onions and stir until the onions are translucent. Next add one tablespoon of curry paste (adjust accordingly to your taste and tolerance) and at the same

time add three tablespoons of water so that you do not burn the paste. Add the baked beans. Finally, you will add four bay leaves. Let it simmer for 10 minutes whilst stirring occasionally.

And there you have it; a hearty side of baked beans packed with flavor and perfect for a cold day.

TASTY HOMEMADE COLESLAW

This coleslaw recipe is perfect as a side served next to ultra-savory meats, like braised beef or pork.

With a generous amount of acidity from apple cider vinegar and Dijon mustard, this recipe is anything but dull. Instead, it is packed with fresh, lively flavors that wake up anything you serve with it.

You will need:

- 1 medium cabbage (about 2 pounds), outer leaves removed
- 3 medium carrots, peeled and shredded OR 2 bags of ready-to-go coleslaw mix
- 1/2 cup loosely packed fresh parsley leaves, coarsely chopped
- 1 cup (170 grams) mayonnaise,
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar or more to taste
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard or coarse ground mustard
- 1 teaspoon celery seeds

- 1/4 teaspoon fine sea salt or more to taste
- 1/4 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper or more to taste

DIRECTIONS

Quarter the cabbage through the core, and then cut out the core. Cut each quarter crosswise in half and finely shred. Place the shredded cabbage in a very large bowl (you will have 6 to 8 cups).

Add the shredded carrot and parsley to the cabbage and toss to mix.

You can ignore this step if you have chosen to buy a prepacked bag of coleslaw.

In a separate bowl, stir the mayonnaise, vinegar, mustard, celery seeds, salt, and pepper together. Taste for acidity and seasoning then adjust as desired. Pour two-thirds of the dressing over the cabbage and carrot then mix well.

If the coleslaw seems dry, add a little more of the dressing. Eat right away or let it sit in the refrigerator for about an hour to let the flavors mingle and the cabbage to soften. 🍁

Michaela Pitman is a copywriter and content creator from South Africa, who has a passion for writing.

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