



STOPFoodWaste.ie

WORKPLACE TRAINING

WORKING TO REDUCE FOOD WASTE

TOPIC 6.

PRESERVING

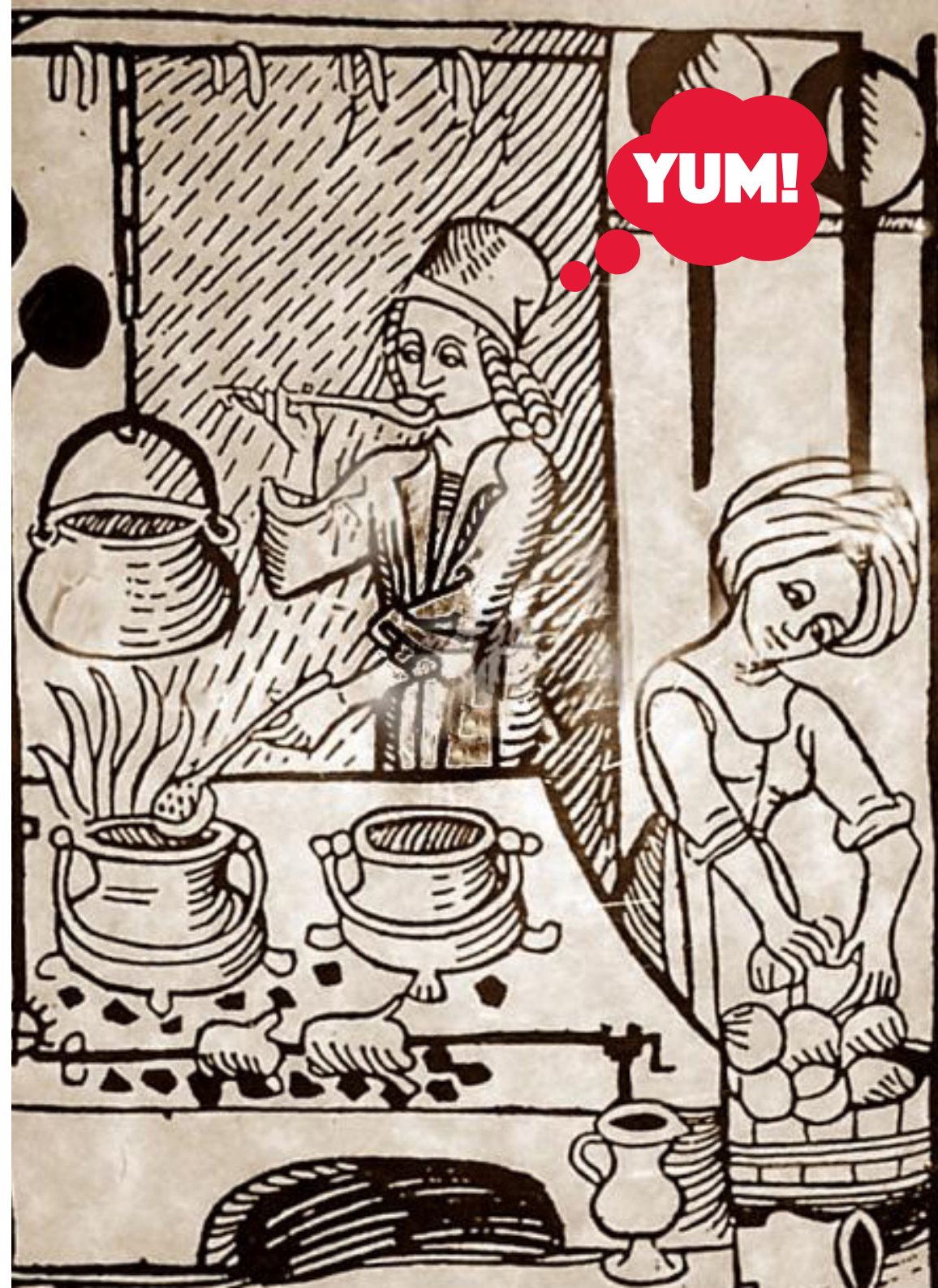
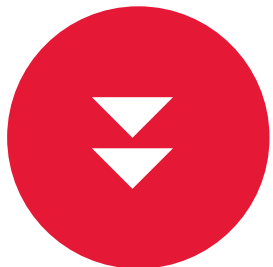
6 PAGES - APPROX 5 MINS READING TIME



The history of preserving

Preservation of food has been taking place since ancient times when, in order to survive, humans needed to harness what nature gave them. In arctic climates, food was preserved by freezing while drying was used in hotter climates. Here in Ireland, butter was stored in peat bogs thousands of years ago. Amazingly, when unearthed this bog butter is still edible.

Without preservation methods, humans would not have been able to settle in one place as they would have constantly been on the move for fresh food.



Preserving today

Today we preserve food to help save money and to conserve resources. Preserved foods can also be incredibly delicious, allowing us to eat foods out of season prepared in a variety of different ways.

The process of preserving food either kills or slows down the activity of micro-organisms which cause food spoilage. Preserving methods such as curing, canning and freezing inhibits this growth. Preserving food is environmentally friendly – by using seasonally grown and locally sourced fresh produce, food miles are reduced, plus re-use of preserving jars also reduces food packaging.

**LET'S GET
FERMENTING!**

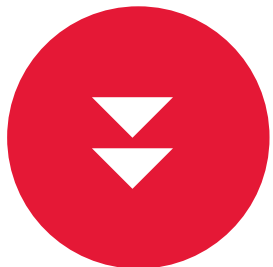


Facts about fermentation

Many everyday foods and drinks are fermented, including chocolate, coffee, cheeses, breads, cured meats, soy sauce, and vinegars.

Fermentation is a bio-chemical process where foods are exposed to bacteria and yeasts. These cause chemical changes in the food, giving it a different taste and much longer shelf-life. Luckily, you don't need to understand the science in order to make it work.

Historically, fermentation was fundamental to extend the life of perishable foods, before refrigeration became available. Fermentation is a great way to preserve foods when we encounter gluts in the garden, or when your favourite vegetable is in season and the shops are full of it.



Get into pickles

If you're new to preserving, why not start with a simple pickle? This is not a ferment as such, but will preserve almost any vegetable quickly and simply, introducing your palate to the tangy taste of fermented foods. Cucumber pickle is a sandwich favourite.

Here is a quick and easy recipe:

Cucumber Pickle

900g (2lb) unpeeled cucumber

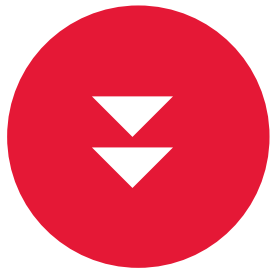
3 small white or red onions

350g (12 oz) sugar

2 level tablespoons salt

230g (8 fl oz) cider vinegar

Choose firm fresh cucumbers without bruising. Slice as thinly as possible. Slice the onions thinly also. Combine the remaining ingredients and pour over the layers of the cucumber and onion slices. Store the pickle in the fridge in a tightly sealed container. After about 3 hours it will be ready to eat. Cucumber pickle tastes great in a sandwich with leftover meats.



For more...

To get started learning about more food preserving methods, including drying, vacuum packing and canning, check out the [preserving section](#) of stopfoodwaste.ie

