

PRESERVE TO SELL



Photo credit: Our Jar, City of Liverpool College



STUDENTS
ORGANISING FOR
SUSTAINABILITY
UNITED KINGDOM

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PRESERVE MAKING HANDBOOK

GROW, SELL, EAT THROUGH SOCIAL ENTERPRISES.

PRESERVE MAKING

Preserving food is a practice which dates back to pre-historic times and which has been essential to human preservation. From sun drying foods in 12 000 BC, to emerging fruit in honey by the ancient Greeks, food preservation ensured a stable food supply beyond the seasons of abundance. Methods include drying, refrigeration and fermentation, and more modern methods such as canning, pasteurisation and freezing. Home preservation of food reached its peak in the UK in the 19th century and was a way to continue reaping the benefits of surplus foods from the kitchen gardens. Today we are so used to this being done for us, most of us take these processes for granted and preserving food is usually just considered a hobby.

WHY PRESERVE MAKING?

Exploring ways of preserving food is a great way to reconnect with the food that we eat, to extend the availability of local produce and to reduce food waste. It also plays a great role in our food culture. Have a look in your shopping basket next time you are out shopping, and you will likely find many methods of preservation, some of which have been part of our history for thousands of years. Setting up a preserve making enterprise on campus can provide fun and engaging activities that are accessible for everyone to take part in. Not only does it teach students about the ancient art of preserve making and basic cooking skills, but it will spark conversations around the journey of food, seasonality, and food waste. Students will also learn how to run a food enterprise in an environment with lots of room for creativity and innovation.

SET UP A FOOD ENTERPRISE

Good for you, good for your institution, good for your community.

- Fresh affordable food for students, staff and members of the public.
- Provides real-life experience of setting up and running a business.
- An opportunity to see your ideas come to life.
- Enhances employability skills - leadership, teamwork, planning etc.
- A great way for emerging student enterprises and societies to market their products.
- Potential income generation for your students' union or society.
- A chance to raise awareness about the importance of buying sustainable food.
- Supports the local economy and community partnerships.



WHERE TO START?

If you are starting up a food preserving enterprise on campus, there are few things to make sure you have in order before starting production.

- Space - is there a kitchen space on campus that is Health & Safety approved that can be used? If you are a student, enquire if there is a kitchen space available that you have permission to use and that conforms to all necessary health and safety requirements.
- Support - get in touch with your students' union and ask how they can support your enterprise venture. Would setting it up as a society be the right thing for you, or perhaps there is an enterprise aspect of the students' union you could feed into?
- Sales - where and how would you sell your products? Is there a market on campus or nearby? Could you stock a shop or café on campus? Have a chat with your students' union as they might be able to help you with this.
- Business model - create a plan describing how your enterprise will operate. A Business Model Canvas is a great tool that can help you visualise how your enterprise will generate income, sell products, etc. This will help your understanding of the different elements of running a business and build a framework that will support your enterprise journey.
- Values - write a list of your enterprise's core values. This will be an important part of how you operate, source ingredients, promote your products and give back to your community. Get together with your team to establish your enterprise's purpose.



SOS-UK LEARNING ACADEMY

Learn more from our
'Starting up a Social Enterprise' course



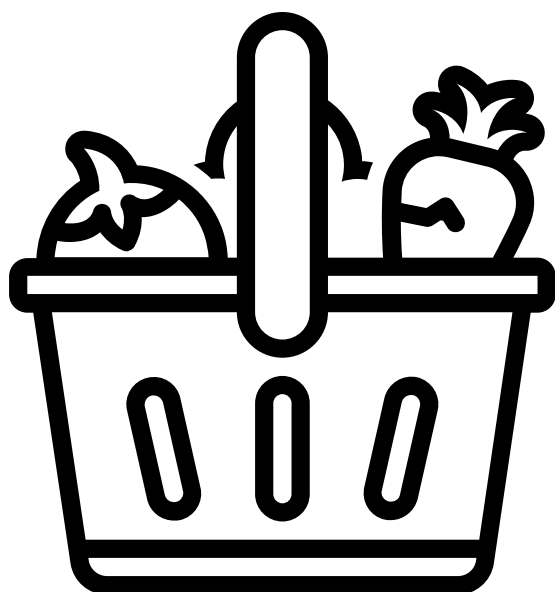
THE PRODUCT

Figuring out what will be your best selling product that everyone enjoys can sometimes be a challenge, but a great place to start when setting up a sustainable preserve making enterprise is to let this be determined by what is available in your area.

Is there an apple orchard on campus that produces lots of apples which usually fall to the ground and rot? Any green spaces or woodland areas nearby where you can forage for wild foods? Maybe there is a growing site on campus or allotments nearby that produces surplus food? Or could you get in touch with a local supermarket or greengrocers and ask what they usually do with their unsold fruit and veg? You could perhaps look into joining a Community Supported Agriculture group as an option of getting produce. There are many routes to sourcing ingredients to preserve, so start by looking in to what would work best for you where you are.

WHAT TO MAKE

Found a wood full of nettles? Got a box of aubergines from the market? The internet is your best friend when researching recipes for a preserve using what is available. Look for basic recipes and take out or add the ingredients you have available. Making preserves is a great way to experiment with recipes and allow students to get creative in the kitchen!



BENEFITS OF LOCAL SOURCING:

- Add value to food grown on campus.
- Save food from going to waste.
- Work with seasonal ingredients.

EQUIPMENT

There are a number of ways to preserve food, for example: smoking, salting, drying, pickling, fermenting, as well as creating jams, chutneys and cordials. Or you can do it quite simply by making preserves where you add sugar, salt and/or vinegar to your main ingredient. This means that you can manage with just a few basic kitchen tools.

Basic equipment for making jam, chutney, jelly, cordial, syrup, and pesto:

- Chopping board
- Knives
- Large pots
- Sieve / strainer
- Muslin cloth
- Stirring spoon (stainless steel)
- Ladle (stainless steel)
- Hand blender

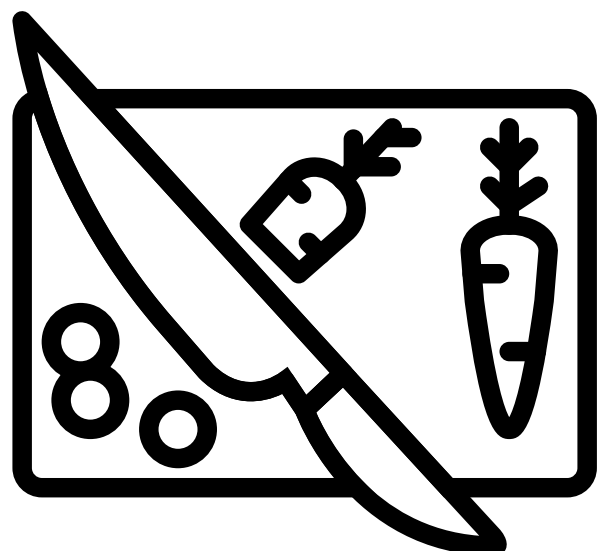
optional add ons:

- Food processor
- Microwave (for sterilising jars and bottles)
- Pasteuriser
- Dehydrator (for drying fruit and herbs)



For making apple juice:

- Chopping boards
- Knives
- Muslin cloth
- Apple scatter
- Apple press
- Pasteuriser





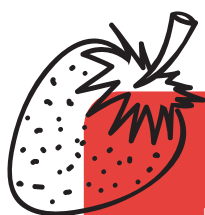
JARS / BOTTLES

Finding good quality jars and bottles for your product is essential. You want jars and bottles that you can seal tight, that will not leak or let air in as this will spoil your product. Consider introducing a scheme to encourage your customers to bring back their empty jars and bottles for you to reuse. This will not only save you money, but it will contribute to a circular economy system for your enterprise.

SOURCING

In addition to your main ingredient which defines your product, you will need to source ingredients such as sugar, salt, vinegar, spices etc. You should be mindful of where you are sourcing these additional ingredients so they adhere to the sustainable ethos of your enterprise.

- Buy from and support local businesses. Avoid purchasing your ingredients from the large supermarkets, but rather spend your money supporting local economies by purchasing from independent shops, markets, food coops or directly from the producer if you can.
- Buy organic, Fairtrade certified products to ensure sustainable farming practises have been used and farmers have received a fair pay for their work.
- Have a look at [SOS-UK's Sustainable Food Guide](#), a guide calling for more sustainable food to be sold and served on UK campuses. It outlines 8 key actions institutions can take, and 15 actions students can take, with links to numerous resources and additional information for each action.



LEARN MORE FROM OUR PARTNER
SUSTAIN ABOUT
[WHAT MAKES FOOD SUSTAINABLE](#)

HEALTH AND SAFETY

It is your responsibility as a food enterprise to ensure the food you make and sell is safe for consumption. The space, the ingredients, method of production and the people making the food all have an impact on the final product.

You will need access to a space which allows for the safe practice of processing food. You have to make sure that the space adheres to a high standard of food safety following your local governments' guidance. It is important that you have a risk assessment in place for the area you are working in, as well as for the activity itself. Make sure you have good routines in place before, during and after the cooking sessions, and that these routines are clearly communicated to the people involved.

REGISTERING YOUR FOOD ENTERPRISE

Although preserving fruit and vegetables are considered a low-risk venture, you still have to register your enterprise with your local authority. It is free but you need to register 28 days before you start trading. You may get prosecuted and fined if operating a food enterprise without registering

FOOD HYGIENE TRAINING

Lead staff and/or students should be trained in Level 2 Food Safety and Hygiene, which will allow them to train, supervise and instruct volunteers to a level appropriate to the activity. You can easily find Level 2 Food Safety and Hygiene courses available online, and they usually cost £15 - £25 per certificate.



PRODUCTION

Before you start making your products, please ensure you have all necessary routines and risk assessments in order. This is crucial for your enterprise's success, ensuring that you offer a product which is safe to sell.

Below are some of our recommendations, but please also make sure to do your own research and find a process that is best suited for your enterprise's production. You can learn our more from the Food Standard Agency's ['Better Food, Better Business' pack](#).

1. Wash your hands before preparing or handling food. Long hair should be tied back or covered by a hair net.
2. Ensure chopping boards, pans and utensils are clean and kept in good condition.
3. Use clean, disinfected jars/bottles and invert them after sterilising until you are ready to fill them to prevent foreign body contamination. You can sterilise them by placing them in the oven (10 minutes at gas mark 3/160°C), by passing them through the dishwasher, submerging them in hot water (above 90°C) for 10 minutes or fill them with half an inch of water and put in the microwave (highest setting) for 2 minutes.
4. Hot products should be filled into hot jars/bottles. Hot product into cold jars/bottles may cause them to crack. Jars and lids should be screwed on as soon as possible after filling the jars/bottles.
5. For longer shelf life, products should be pasteurised after you have filled them and screwed the lid on. This process ensures that any remaining bacteria is killed. You can pasteurise them in a pasteuriser, or by placing them in a pot with hot water (85°C) reaching the neck of the jar/bottle for 20 minutes.
6. Unless you have undertaken an independent study, it can be difficult to determine an appropriate shelf life for your product. Some recipes state an approximate shelf life, but it can sometimes be sensible to give your products a shorter shelf life than is stated to be on the safe side.
7. Keep records of each batch produced. This would typically include the name of the food, date of production, number of jars/bottles produced, use by or best before date and batch number. You can create a batch number by reversing the date the product was made, e.g. if you made a batch of chutney on the 13th April 2021, then your batch number could be 210413. If you supply to other businesses, you must be able to identify what you have supplied them with in case you need to recall the food in the event of a problem.

LABELLING

To be able to sell your product you will have to produce a clear and easy to read label.
The label should include:

- Name of product
- Ingredient list (starting with the highest content 50%>, ingredient), allergens in bold.
- Weight of product (product content, not including the packaging)
- Storage of product, before/after opened.
- Use by or best before date
- Batch number



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MIXED BERRY JAM



INGREDIENTS: Blackberries,
strawberries, raspberries, sugar, water,
citric acid

ONCE OPENED PLEASE REFRIGERATE

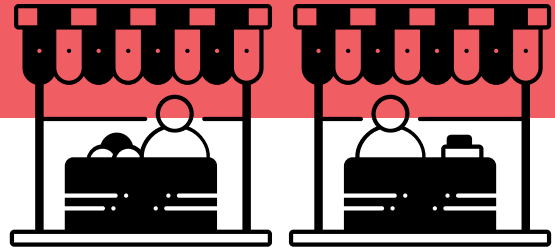
Lovingly Made by:
Tilly and Odette

BEST BEFORE: 24.05.2022
BATCH NO: 220524

250g

You can learn more about correct labelling at gov.uk/food-labelling-and-packaging,
attend a [free labelling training course](#) or
contact your local Trading Standards office for support.

SALES



Campus made preserves offers a unique selling point where you can offer a really delicious product with a great story. Once you have set up a sales point, identify a consistent pricing system for your products. If you are selling to low waged students or community members, perhaps offer a reduced (student discount?), but charge a fair price and possibly higher price to higher earners (university staff) so that you receive a fair return for your labour.

If you are including a scheme to encourage your customers to bring back their empty jars and bottles for you to reuse, ensure that how and where they can return the jars and/or bottles is clearly communicated to your customers.

MARKETING

Finding a name and developing a logo for your preserve-making enterprise is a valuable way for people to get to know about and recognise your enterprise. It will help you promote volunteering opportunities, events, and your products.

Using social media to promote your enterprise is an easy way to reach your target audience. Consistency in engagement is important to build up a following, no matter which channel you use. Decide on the imagery and tone of your profile, and stay consistent with this. You can keep it interesting and interactive by using hashtags, captions, competitions, polls and so much more. You want to capture the attention of your audience and share your story. Social media also offers some great platforms for you to share recipes and cooking methods with your audience by uploading videos.

Signs and labels at your sales point also play an important role in sharing your story with your customers, communicating what makes your products unique. For example:

'Made from local produce grown 5 minutes from campus!'

'Made from produce saved from landfill!'

'Grown, harvested and cooked by our students!'



IMPACT & EVALUATION

Keeping track of your enterprise's operations will support you in developing your enterprise by helping you to see whether you are reaching your aims and that your time and effort is making a difference to the people you are working with. It will also support future funding bids, award applications and reports. One simple way to track your impact is by using a spreadsheet in Excel where volunteering hours and produce harvested / sold can be tracked on a weekly basis. This can be stored in the cloud and shared among a core group of project leaders (staff and students). Ensure any personal data for volunteers is stored appropriately and securely, in line with GDPR requirements.

VOLUNTEER SURVEY / FEEDBACK

When your preserve-making enterprise is up and running, consider introducing a survey which is sent out to your volunteers once or twice a year at the end of the academic term(s). Although you are running an enterprise which focusses on the production and sale of value added products, your activities will inevitably have an impact on the people running the enterprise. The volunteers are also the heart of your enterprise, and that is why measuring this impact is so important. Regardless of your enterprise management structure, there should always be space for volunteers to give feedback about their participation, ideas and wishes. This will provide volunteers with a sense of belonging and ownership, which in turn will encourage long-term participation. It will also help you implement collaborative strategies to improve and develop your enterprise.

IMPACT REPORT

Producing a yearly impact report at the end of the academic year is a great way to collate all your data and produce a document that tells your story. It also acts as 'proof of impact' and can make it easier for you to pull information out for writing funding bids, award applications or to promote your enterprise in social media. An impact report should include a mix of storytelling, quantitative (numerical) and qualitative (quotes/experiences) data. The impact report will also be of value when the time comes to write a handover document to ensure the smooth transition from outgoing to incoming student leaders.

SOCIAL IMPACT

Some things are harder to measure than others, especially anything that cannot easily be measured numerically. That does not mean it is not equally as important. Measuring your social impact is of great importance when measuring the success of your social enterprise but can often be challenging to capture. The Social Impact Toolkit is a multimedia tool full of useful information and indicators to help you understand the outcomes of measuring your social impact and how to do it.

CASE STUDIES



THIS IS OUR JAM

This Is Our Jam is a preserve making enterprise set up by student volunteers from Growhampton, an urban food growing project based on the grounds of the University of Roehampton. After experiencing an overwhelming surplus of tomatoes, Growhampton volunteers started to make tomato chutneys as a way to tackle this issue. They would then go on to sell these value-added products at their campus market. This was something students found very enjoyable, and it offered an opportunity to experience another part of the food journey, food processing. With a green campus offering a great variety of edible plants, students started making elderflower and rose cordial, and wild garlic pesto as well as tomato-based products: chutney, salsa and ketchup.

With help from SOS-UK and support from Growhampton staff, a dedicated group of students launched 'This Is Our Jam' in March 2017 with great success. Through food education and preserve making sessions, This Is Our Jam are educating students and young people about sustainable food, introducing them to local, affordable and good quality products, whilst instilling invaluable life skills within an inclusive and friendly environment.



“It is important to us to develop a sense of community with the students that participate with our sessions through social interactions, fun activities and approachable staff and student leaders. We want to show students that making preserves is a fun and worthwhile experience, and to raise awareness of food waste whilst demonstrating ways to avoid this.”

- Kai Davis, student leader



The profits from the products go straight back into the Growhampton project and the continuation and development of This Is Our Jam. This allows them to put on more events and food education sessions for their students, allowing them to gain valuable skills and experiences at university. Thanks to additional funding from SOS-UK, through the Our Bright Future programme, the enterprise has been able to improve their kitchen space and develop their product range to include dried herbs and teas, jams and juices.

To this day, Growhampton's preserve making sessions are one of the most popular activities

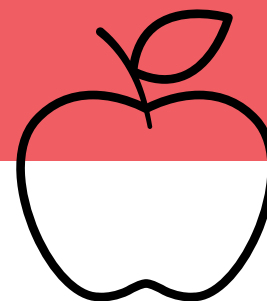
they organise, and one that their students find particularly enjoyable as they get to go out to forage for or harvest the main ingredient, before taking it back into the kitchen, cook it up, jar, label and see their finished product on the shelf in their sustainable café, the Hive. Not only do students gain valuable skills which can aid their future employment, but they gain a new appreciation for the journey of food as they get to experience it for themselves.

The enterprise's greatest challenge has been to sustain the success from when it first launched. This Is Our Jam was set up by a keen and dedicated group of students who graduated from university not long after the enterprise was up and running. It was challenging to recruit a new group of students that could dedicate as much time as it sometimes takes to run a small food enterprise, and the Growhampton staff and student volunteers found themselves starting over and over again a few times in the years that followed. They have now found a solution that works! By writing This Is Our Jam in to the job description of the Growhampton Project Coordinator role, they have embedded This Is Our Jam into all Growhampton activities. Now they engage volunteers with all aspects of Growhampton from growing, foraging and preserving, and they have been able to put on more regular cooking sessions and increase production as a result.

“We wanted to get students as passionate about food as we are so they can spread the word (and the jam!) wherever they go.”

Emily Wright, Sustainability and
Kitchen Coordinator

FOLLOW
GROWHAMPTON ON
INSTAGRAM:
[@growhampton](https://www.instagram.com/growhampton)



THE APPLE PROJECT

The Apple Project is a small social enterprise that is run by Foundation Studies students and staff at Wiltshire College and University Centre. This project is part of a partnership together with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust who manage a community orchard in Devizes.

As apples fell to the ground and rotted, a plan was devised to glean a third of the apples for juice, give another third to the community and leave the remaining third for wildlife. Since then, the Apple Project has started collecting apples from all around their local area which otherwise would have gone to waste. Apples are very seasonal and only available in the orchards between September and the end of November.



Photo credit: The Apple Project, Wiltshire College

“With the help of SOS-UK we were able to turn a small student project into a factory set up and enterprise which is now running in its fourth year! We have also been able to expand the enterprise to include a growing project with vegetables and herbs being grown by our learners.”

-Bea Lilley,
Lecturer in Foundation Studies

The enterprise is run by learners who have special educational needs and/or challenging behaviour. Learners are involved in every part of the process of making apple juice, from picking the apples for producing juice, to maintaining the orchards the apples are grown in. The enterprise has been fully embedded into the student's timetable and has been able to continue to run and grow each year.

The Apple Projects' greatest achievement has been the development of the learner's employability skills and engagement in the enterprise. They have also had success in being able to keep a good working relationship with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, which has allowed learners to continue to develop skills in coppicing and how to look after the local wildlife areas. They have managed to get their products into the local zero waste shop and they have been regularly selling the products over the past two years since they opened. Some of the challenges the enterprise has faced have been that the project is run by teaching staff with other teaching commitments, which makes selling their products in the local area a challenge.

Despite a few challenges due to Covid-19, which saw the shut down of local markets to sell at, the impact on learners has been really positive. Not only do they think more about where their food comes from, they have become more confident in talking to customers, working with others and following health and safety in a workplace setting. The learners have also been able to use the experience they have had of making apple juice in their project's factory to be able to promote themselves in interviews for future jobs.

Today the Apple Project is a well established small business fully embedded in to the department's curriculum, and well known within the College. In the future they would like to have more products added to their range; they are currently experimenting with making their own tea, and growing more of their own vegetables to be mixed with their delicious apple juice.



Photo credit: The Apple Project, Wiltshire College

FOLLOW THE APPLE PROJECT
ON INSTAGRAM:

[@appleproject_wiltscoll](#)

PRESERVE TO SELL

Since 2017 our Student Eats enterprise programme has worked with almost 80 student and staff groups to help them establish sustainable food social enterprises on campus. These have included zero waste shops/stalls, vegbox schemes, growing to sell and food preserving enterprises, pay-as-you-feel cafes, beekeeping and many more.

We have been working with universities and colleges across the UK to bring social enterprise ideas to life. These enterprises have changed their local food systems and encouraged students and staff to choose ethical, healthy and affordable food.

Visit SOS-UK to check out our training and courses:

[Setting up a social enterprise](#)

[Set up a no-dig food growing site](#)

WWW.SOS-UK.ORG/project/food-and-farming

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