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Student writing

Food—The Spice of Life

Plus:

The Proof is in the Pudding—Social Enterprise in Australia

Jacinta Agostinelli

Some Bite-Sized Ideas—Food-related websites Lynne Matheson

ESL and Hospitality—Dual Certification—A Great Way to Learn Jean Mitchell

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the Community

Student Writing

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Editorial

Welcome to the Student Writing edition of *Fine Print* for 2010.

This year our theme was *FOOD—The Spice of Life*. We encouraged students to write about their own food traditions and culture. We asked them to consider the flavours, smells and tastes of their favourite dishes. We hoped that they would write about the way in which preparing and sharing food had shaped so many of their memories.

We received a large number of delightful submissions, which the editorial committee thoroughly enjoyed reading. We have printed a wide selection of stories—stories that best fitted the guidelines and demonstrated a range of learning contexts and student backgrounds.

We have assembled the selected writing into four distinct groups. The first group, *Preserving Time*, contains many poignant stories that describe the very real connections and associations between food and memories. The second group, *Handed Down on a Plate*, focuses our attention on the way that culture and tradition is often passed down from generation to generation around the table, while our third group, *Comfort Food*, presents a number of stories reminding us, that when all is said and done, food is a simple and basic need. The final group of stories, *The Kitchen and the Origins of Equal Opportunity*, contains some wonderful writing that serves to pose questions about the place of men and women in the kitchen.

Many thanks go to all the students who willingly shared their insights so creatively, and in so doing, brought this edition of *Fine Print* to life. Thanks also go to the many

teachers who work tirelessly teaching, encouraging and inspiring their students to tell their stories.

In keeping with our theme, *And For Dessert*, the second section of this edition, contains some great food for thought. Jacinta Agostinelli offers insights into the nature of social enterprise and the shape that it might take. In so doing, she profiles two local examples, the Saffron Kitchen and the Sorghum Sisters. Jean Mitchell describes a pilot course designed to introduce ESL students to the hospitality industry and prepare them for work in an Australian food outlet. Lynne Matheson has put together a detailed list of food-related websites, and provides practical information as to what each site has on offer for both teachers and students.

So find some time, make yourself a little snack, and enjoy.

Tricia Bowen



The Victorian Adult Literacy and Basic Education Council (VALBEC) aims to lead the adult literacy field through identifying issues of importance to practitioners and facilitating positive change. This is achieved through networking, professional support, the sharing of information and the promotion of best practice.

Preserving time

To preserve something is to protect it, keep it intact or prevent it from spoiling. Food is preserved by pickling, freezing, drying and sealing in jars or cans. Time is preserved in memories. The following stories bring food and memories together and explore how the flavours and aromas of food evoke the past and keep it alive. In the feature story, *Appreciate Each Grain of Rice*, Tran Luc describes how a tiny grain of rice summons memories of moral lessons. Among other entries in this section the flavour of coconut ice cream takes Lan back to a happy time, while Merv Nichols and Stewart Brohan associate food, childhood, and nurturing father figures.



Appreciate each Grain of Rice

By Tran Luc

“You commit a sin if you leave anything in your bowl.”

“You won’t go to heaven if you don’t finish your meal!”

My grandma and parents often told me this to scare me off. I would leave nothing in the bowl because I wanted to be a good child in order to be in heaven, not in hell. Thus, I learnt to appreciate how valuable food is. Actually, scaring is not the best way to teach a child but I think it is very useful. I did try again with my younger brothers when they were little. Fortunately, it worked effectively.

I come from a developing country, which is the second largest rice exporting country in the world. So, we are always grateful for every grain of rice as well as the effort of hard-working farmers. Never leave anything in the bowl; even just a small grain of rice. I think that I should not waste food when millions of hungry people around the world are waiting for food donations.

I sometimes imagine one day if I were in poverty, what would I do? My grandma taught me that if I do good things, I would get a good result; so if I don’t waste food, I will never be a beggar. Sometimes, I pretend to forget that lesson. As soon as I feel full in my stomach, I stop eating and the leftover food is thrown into the bin or used to feed the pets such as dogs, cats and pigs. Honestly, giving the leftover food to the pets makes me feel less guilty than throwing it into the bin. At least I don’t waste food for nothing.

I’m very lucky living in this country, which has an abundant supply of food. Now I’ve only got a small problem when eating in restaurants. A meal for each person is still too much for me. As my father said, “Try to finish everything in your meal. If you can’t, you should order a small meal or take the left-over away”. Thank you Daddy, it is a good tip for me!

Tran Dan Luc is a Certificate III in Spoken and Written English student at Swinburne TAFE (Hawthorn Campus) Centre for Cultural and Linguistic Diversity.

Dad Made Pasties

By Merv Nichols

When I was a small child my father made homemade pasties. He mixed beer batter and boiled the vegetables. They took a long time to make. When they were cooked we sat at the table waiting for them to be served. They were so tasty we went back for seconds.

The smell was so good it made you want to eat more. I will never forget the best pasties in the world.

Merv Nichols is a student in Certificate 1 (Introductory) in General Education for Adults at On Track Employment and Training Bendigo.

Coconut Ice Cream

By Lan

Coconut ice cream is a luxurious dessert. It is made of coconut and ice cream with different varieties of fruits on top. When I see it, I remember my happy days with my good friends.

It was a summer day. My friends and I went to see a movie called "Mua thu La Bay". The movie was about a couple. They were in love but they could not find happiness in love because their parents had a problem. The boy's father was in love with the girl's mother but, unfortunately, the girl's mother got married to his friend. Therefore, the boy's father wanted to separate them to satisfy his selfishness. Then the girl had a heart attack and passed away. That was such a romantic movie.

After we left the cinema, we rode bikes around the city centre. We went to Saigon market and passed Duc Ba church, a famous church in Saigon. It was built decades ago, when the French colonized Vietnam. Then we went to the Vinh Doc Lap to take some photos. Vinh Doc Lap was the place where the President used to stay and work. It was the most important place in the south of Vietnam. Before 1975, no residents could come close without permission. After 1975, it became a museum for visitors. While we were passing Vinh Doc Lap, all of us wanted to have a coconut ice cream. So, we took a trip to Ho Con Rua. That location was not too far from Vinh Doc Lap. Along the roads of Ho Con Rua, there were many juice and ice cream shops. We stopped at the

one with a good view, and where it was convenient to see our bikes.

We ordered four coconut ice creams. We were so excited, waiting and chatting together. Later that afternoon, this area became crowded. There were visitors who came with family. Others arrived with boyfriends or girlfriends. This area was particularly cool and quiet. There were many huge trees and the air was fresh. You could take a rest there after a day's work.

Finally, the girl appeared in front of us with a tray of coconut and four glasses of coconut juice. We were surprised, looking at each other strangely. Then we explained to her that this was not coconut ice cream because coconut ice cream was not only the meat of coconut; there should be ice cream and lots of fruits on top. That was so disappointing and the taste of the coconut was awful. They had chopped up the coconut and poured out the juice. Then they put some ice cream with some peanut butter on top. And the price was not cheap! One of us even had a stomach ache. We just laughed and could never forget about this.

On the way home, all of us could not stop laughing and smiling at each other. That was the price of carelessness but we have a good memory that lasts until today.

Lan Baker is a Certificate III in Spoken and Written English student at Swinburne TAFE (Hawthorn Campus) Centre for Cultural and Linguistic Diversity.

New Life Brings Hope and Joy

By Arob Deng

The following are my thoughts and feelings relating to the traditional food, 'akubp', which is prepared at the celebration time of births.

Traditionally in Sudan when a baby is born we celebrate after one week with food and to name the baby. Friends and family get together to celebrate after eating a traditional Southern Sudanese food called 'akubp', which is similar to Australian couscous.

We plant the grain and when it grows we cut the grains from the stalk. We clean the grain. Then it is crushed. When powdered it is mixed with water. It is left to sit for three days to improve the taste. We scoop it by hand and

put it in a large bowl and add some more powder. This is repeated over and over for more than an hour.

The birth of my brother's first child was a very important birth for me. It was special in that I am the youngest and in our culture when the lady has her first child she has to have the birth in her family's house. But we decided for my sister-in-law to have the baby at our house. Everybody would come and visit and give presents. The women all come together and over time make the food and the 'akubp'. It is our tradition. When we serve the food we give the food to the men because in our culture they do not get food by themselves.

After eating the women danced. We had a good time. I enjoyed dancing. We wore traditional clothes including skirts, sarongs, short-sleeved and long-sleeved tops or dresses. We must also wear scarves. The clothes must match the scarf. On this day I wore yellow with red and black.

For me the food 'akubp' is very meaningful and I have very good memories of this birth. It was also a good time to see my aunty gain hope for the future at this special time as she had lost her only child. This birth gave her hope and joy.

Arob Deng is a student at Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE, Castlemaine Campus.

Dad's Pancakes

By Stewart Brohan

When I was a child my dad would make pancakes. Occasionally my two brothers and sister and I would have a competition with each other to see who could eat more than the other. Dad would make a huge bowl of pancake batter. He would cook the pancakes in two frypans on the stovetop. We would eat them quicker than he could cook them.

Some of the toppings we would have on them would be strawberry or plum jam, along with lemon and sugar, cream or just butter spread over the top. We would roll them up in a tube shape and when we took a bite out of them the topping would flow out the other end. Dad had been known to cook more than 200 pancakes in one sitting.

Stewart Brohan is a student in Certificate 1 in General Education for Adults at On Track Employment and Training Bendigo.

Dinka Culture

By Martha Nayal

When I was little in my country, Sudan, my aunty helped me to cook my country's food. I cooked chicken for my family every Saturday and on weekdays sometimes. We cooked corn with milk for my family on Sunday and we cooked fish to eat with bread. After that my father liked coffee with his friends.

I had my friends and we milked cows with my family. After that we sold milk to people in Bor.

My country likes cows very much. In Dinka when girls marry, the man gives many cows to the girl's family. In my culture we don't give the girl to that family for nothing. The cow is very important in Dinka culture.

Martha Nayal is a student at Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE, Castlemaine Campus.

Memories of my Favourite Food

By Gay Gay Paw

When I was a little child my family cooked rice noodles with barbequed pork in the afternoon. My family cooked the rice noodles. Then I saw my family heat the oil in a large wok and add the garlic, spring onions, baby corn, bamboo shoots and pork and cook it for 30 seconds. They added the noodles and cooked it for another 30 seconds, then added the soy, oyster sauce, sugar and salt. Then they stirred for one minute. When it is ready to eat you put it on a plate and sprinkle it with black pepper. You eat it and it's very nice. I will never forget when my family cooked rice noodles.

Gay Gay Paw is a student in Certificate 1 in General Education for Adults at On Track Employment and Training Bendigo.



Handed Down on a Plate

Food, cooking and eating are so central to daily living that they are inextricable from culture. Culture is passed from one generation to the next around the table. Our feature is a beautifully detailed story by Christopher Uriah Small, in which he shares his knowledge of hunting and cooking in the red centre and northeast Arnhem Land. In other stories we read about a butcher with soul; we learn how in the Dinka tradition killing a cow for the important occasions of weddings and funerals is showing it the highest respect; and we learn about food-related conversation starters in China.



Hunting on the land and the sea

By Christopher Uriah Small

This is about hunting and cooking in the red centre and in the northeast Arnhem Land.

Kangaroo, emu and perentie are the main food sources, so are the other various bush-tuckers in the desert.

I learned how to cook a kangaroo simply by watching my father and grandfather cook. I would do the cooking in the next hunting trip. My grandfather would instruct me how to cut it in a traditional way and how to cook it.

First you've got to dig a hole. Next, get the guts out and then sew the stomach with a sharp stick. Put the kangaroo on a fire and turn it round to burn the fur. After that, scrape the rest of the fur with a stick. Last of all put the kangaroo in a hole and cover it with coals. It is great tucker. You can eat it with damper like I do or just with a simple salad.

In the northeast Arnhem Land I would go hunting with my brothers and an old man called Nuonky. The old one passed his knowledge of hunting and cooking to us. The old one encouraged us to hunt and cook all sorts of sea animals such as stingrays, turtles, crayfish, and crabs.

To cook a turtle first you've got to hit the turtle on the head and tear the head off. Next, reach in and pull the guts out and then chuck the turtle on a fire for a minute to make the shell soft. After that, cut the shell off and cut the meat off. Last, put the turtle meat in a shallow hole and put the coals on top and scatter rocks around. Put leaves on top and cover. Turtle meat and green turtle fat are good to eat together.

Hunting and cooking in the traditional way is the spice of life for me because I am looking after nature and being out there with nature.

Christopher Uriah Small is a student in Alice Springs.

Taiwan's Food Culture and History

By Hugo

Food culture represents one nation's face, which shows itself to the world. Due to Taiwan's multicultural society and its ethnic diversity, it has a wide variety of food culture. When you wander around Taipei, the capital city of Taiwan, you will find how diverse its food culture is. Because of historical and political reasons, Taiwanese food consists of the old and the new, of Taiwan and other provinces of mainland China, of the East and the West.

Taiwanese cuisine basically was from Fujian province of China. A street food culture, representing the early lifestyle, was created by the early settlers. And then it developed into the present snack culture of the night market. Taiwan's snacks are very famous in the world and they are popular in Taiwan. Oyster Noodle, which is my favourite, is also my breakfast almost every day. In addition to this, I also love to drink pearl milk tea and eat oyster omelette, stinky tofu, Taiwanese meatball, beef noodles and steamed bun. Seafood cuisine is also famous in Taiwan because Taiwan is an island and was influenced by Japan. Australians will go to the bar with colleagues on Friday night. However Taiwanese will go to the beer restaurant to eat seafood and drink beer.

The great influence on Taiwanese cuisine also came from the National Party's troops, which consisted of a large number of chefs from many provinces of China. These culinary masters brought their knowledge of cuisine, settled down and opened some restaurants. They gave the Taiwanese a whole new range of dining options. Thereby, you can almost find all Chinese gourmets in Taiwan, for example, Hunan, Jiangzhe, Canton, Sichuan and Beijing cuisines.

Because Taiwan began to accept Western cultures from 1950 and has been internationalised for 60 years, there are many different country's restaurants you can choose, such as Japanese, Korean, Thai, French, Italian, Indian and American. As you can imagine, there are also many fast food restaurants on the street, such as McDonald's, KFC, Subway, Mos Burger and Domino's Pizza.

You can say that a different background of history makes a different food culture.

Taiwan is such a place. Because of its food culture, you will definitely not deny that eating in Taiwan is quite convenient and a delightful thing.

Hugo Wei is a Certificate III in Spoken and Written English student at Swinburne TAFE (Hawthorn Campus) Centre for Cultural and Linguistic Diversity.

Preparing the Meat

By Assia Assaad

My dad Abdul-Karim grew up in a large family of eight children, who lived a country lifestyle in a small town located in the north of Lebanon, close to the Syrian border. My father and his family used to be farmers looking after cattle, wheat, olives, almonds, green garlic and onions. My dad was the oldest of the boys, which meant he had many responsibilities.

During that time, life was so difficult. People had to work very hard to get their essential needs. Abdul-Karim was his parents' favourite because he was always there for them, especially when they were old and unable to buy expensive food. He was a business man, well known in the local community, so people came to him to sell their crops.

Dad's store had a wide range of everyday goods such as oil, butter, rice, and free-range eggs. He had herbal products such as sage and oregano. When the people sold the herbs to him, he had to keep them in a clean place and under the sun to dry thoroughly. It was essential to keep them away from the rain otherwise they would rot and end up in the bin

Another vital and important job that he performed was being the town butcher. He killed beef, sheep, and goat in the Islamic tradition. If the killing was not done properly, the taste and the colour of the meat were affected. Men came from the surrounding towns for Friday prayers. Every Friday, my dad used to get up at about 3:30am to kill a huge bull. This animal must be fed and watered the night before the killing. The knife must be very, very sharp so the killing happens in a flash. The slaughterer must be hygienically clean.

After offering the bull water to drink, two or three men are needed to assist the person who is performing the

killing, because it is very hard to control a huge animal after the cutting. The bull's Adam's apple must be cut through the middle otherwise it will not be counted as *Halal*.

A professional cut will provide meat that is very dry and a very light red colour. Dark red meat means blood remains in the meat and it will not taste delicious. Most people believe it is the soul of the person who performs the killing, and that has nothing to do with religion or cultures. It is a personal quality that a person might have. My dad always had this quality as he used to get amazing results. This job was passed on to all of my brothers who follow the same rules and traditions.

The meat was ready to sell at about 9:30 in the morning. My dad used to provide a barbecue to everyone, especially for those men who had come from distant towns. Other butchers did not sell any meat until my dad's meat completely sold out. God bless my dad and his contribution to his community in the 1970's.

Assia Assaad is a student in Certificate III in General Education for Adults at Kangan TAFE.

Comparing Food Culture—Afghanistan and Australia

By Jamala Bibi Hashimi

In Australia some things are the same as Afghanistan but a lot of things are better here.

In Afghanistan at night time we eat meat, rice and some veggies, and we drink green tea. In Australia at night time we also eat meat, sometimes chicken and vegetables. We have soup sometimes and spaghetti sometimes. There are more vegetables available in Australia.

For breakfast in Afghanistan we have tea with milk, sugar, cinnamon and cream, bread and butter and sometimes pancakes. In Australia we also have tea with milk, sugar, cinnamon and cream, and bread. But we also have rice bubbles or cornflakes with milk, banana or other fruit.

For lunch in Afghanistan we have okra, potato, beans, cauliflower, tomato and onion, cooked in oil with yoghurt and salad. In Australia, my husband comes home for

lunch and we have the same as in Afghanistan. My children go to school and take sandwiches, sometimes sausage, sometimes chicken, sometimes honey. They also take cake and fruit.

In Afghanistan, we eat on the floor together. If visitors come, men and boys eat together and women and girls eat together. In Australia, we all eat together. We eat with only our right hand in Afghanistan, and in Australia we eat at the table with a knife, fork and spoon. In Afghanistan, ladies stay home all the time. In Australia, women can go out and eat and men and boys can do the cooking. In Australia there is more take-away food. There is cake, ice-cream, drinks, chips, lollies, biscuits, chocolate—No good!

Jamala Bibi Hashimi is a student at Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE, Castlemaine Campus.

Reflections on Fasting

By Mallika

Fasting is staying without food for one day or many days. There are many types of fasting. Some people eat only fruits or stay on liquids. People have different reasons for fasting. Some people fast for their religious beliefs, and some for health reasons.

Fasting has both advantages and disadvantages. Firstly, through fasting, people try to concentrate on their faith. So fasting increases concentration power. Secondly, fasting is a test for determination, as we have to control our instincts from different types of temptations such as food. It is good as it also helps balance our mind and body. Thirdly, it is good for health because by eating nothing for one day, it gives rest to our digestive system and it gets the power to throw dangerous elements out of the body. Above all, fasting is also useful in losing body weight.

In India, fasting is very common. It is believed that fasting is a medium to meet God. As I observed, it is easy to keep fast for religious reasons in comparison with health reasons. I have kept many fasts since I was young. When I keep fast for dieting, most of the time, I break it in the middle, and when I keep fasts for religious reason, I try to follow the rules seriously. Our religious beliefs give us inner power for fasting for many days. To me, fasting gives strength not only to my body but also to my soul.

There is a story behind every fast in India. Most of these stories are related with Gods. There is one story based on moral reason. In the time of India's second Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri, there was a drought. India was at war at that time and there was a shortage of food. So the Prime Minister decided to keep fast for one day. And he also decided to eat only two meals a day. He did that so that he could save some food. He advised the whole country to keep fast for one day, or at least for one time. And the whole country followed him.

However, every plus has a minus. Firstly, fasting causes many problems such as headache or weakness. Secondly, many religious people keep fast despite their illness and damage their health. Some teenage girls keep fast for more than one or two days to lose weight but this is very dangerous. It can result in malnutrition and many health problems in the future.

In conclusion, fasting is good for health if it is under control. Even doctors and scientists do not find any harmful side-effects in fasting. According to Ayurveda (an Indian ancient book of medicines), fasting is a source of power. Would you like to try fasting and get a new experience?

Mallika Kamboj is a Certificate III in Spoken and Written English student at Swinburne TAFE (Hawthorn Campus) Centre for Cultural and Linguistic Diversity.

Dinka Food Traditions

By Aleng Malwal

Southern Sudanese people from the Dinka tribe don't like to kill animals, cattle, goats, or sheep. Animals are respected, liked and protected because they are useful for various purposes, for example, for a marriage dowry, or for traditional medicine. It is traditional to kill an animal for a wedding or to cure a person who has been sick for a long time.

Quin is a traditional food. It is served with milk and it looks like porridge but it is dry not wet. If there is a guest who is someone important, Quin is served with butter and milk. Quin is a favourite food of Dinka people.

Traditionally Dinka people eat two meals per day. When there are newly -wed couples, until they have a baby, they

eat in the early morning. The wife prepares breakfast for her husband. Other people will have their first meal of the day at about 11 or 12 o'clock.

It is traditional to kill an animal for a wedding. First when the guests came to the village of the lady their family will kill more than two cows for the family of the groom. The boy's family should have to give about 40 or 50 cows to the girl's family. Both families sit together with some other people in a place call luak to discuss how many cows. At the wedding, the Dinka men have to sing traditionally, the man must sing or two men or more than four.

An animal is killed. The meat is cooked in a pot with water over an open fire. An alcoholic drink is made from seeds. It is served in a big pot or someone sits with the pot and serves the guests. Meat can be mixed in with Quin. This food is traditional in Southern Sudan.

The family will kill a sheep or goat for a funeral. Only the family will eat the meat. Dinka people are buried on the land where they are living, not in a cemetery. Other people might help with the burial then return home. Only the elders will talk with the family after the burial and share meat with the family.

Traditional food Quin and acuk are national foods in Dinka tribe. Quin is quicker to make than any other food like acuk or aror. If you want to help a person who is coming from a long journey or if a person travelled to another village you may put some acuk in the bag. This is for a longer journey.

Aleng Malwal is a student at Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE, Castlemaine Campus.

Chinese Food Culture

By Dan

In China, if your friend comes up to you on the street and says, "Have you eaten", don't think it is strange. It is just a way of starting a conversation and is also another way to say, "How are you?"

"Food is people's primary need." This idiom reflects the importance of food in people's lives. Many Chinese festivals relate to food culture too. I want to share the story of dumplings.

People always eat dumplings on Chinese New Year's Eve and on the first day of Chinese New Year. They think dumplings symbolize prosperous omens for starting a new year. This custom is rooted in a popular legend. During the Han dynasty, there was a famous doctor whose name was Zhang Zhongjing. He was not only a good doctor but also a warm-hearted person. One year, it was quite cold in winter. When Zhang passed through a village, many people were sick because of the fierce weather. They were all very poor and had no money to buy medicine. Zhang decided to help them. He wrapped meat, chilli and vegetables in flour pastry and then put them into boiling water. He gave this food the name "Jiaozi" (dumpling). Patients ate these dumplings with soup and recovered. At that time, it was nearly New Year. Since then, people regard dumplings as good luck and eat them during the New Year to remember Zhang Zhongjing.

People from different places have different dietary customs in China, because of different weather and lifestyle. In the north of China, the climate is very dry and cold. It's not good for crops to grow, hence, in the past there was a shortage of fresh vegetables. During winter, there were only a few kinds of vegetables on offer. So people cooked them in different ways to avoid the food becoming too monotonous in style. They made lots of different wheaten food, such as dumplings, steamed stuffed buns, steamed bread and pancakes with meat and vegetables.

In the south of China, people like eating rice and soup. Because the climate is quite wet and hot, soup helps them to remove the moisture from their body. It is very interesting that northern Chinese people always look taller and stronger than southern Chinese because of the different dietary customs. It's always easy to distinguish people who come from the north or the south in China.

China has a great variety of food, and each cuisine has its own history. You will learn a lot of Chinese culture

and tradition from them. Welcome to China and taste all this wonderful cuisine!

Dan Han is a Certificate III in Spoken and Written English student at Swinburne TAFE (Hawthorn Campus) Centre for Cultural and Linguistic Diversity.

Chinese Festival Food

By Hong Ye

In China every family celebrates the Dragon Boat Festival in May with a special feast. Qu Yuan, a famous poet, started this custom thousands of years ago. We have traditional Chinese rice pudding, which has pork, rice, eggs and other foods in a wrap with Zong leaf.

We have another food festival in September. The special food is Moon Cake. It is round and means families getting together. Like in Australia we have birthday cakes which mean wishing long life. We have candles on our cakes too.

Shopping for food in China is like shopping in Australia.

Yum Cha is a late breakfast with lots of different dishes, such as dumplings, spring rolls, dim sims, rice noodle rolls and wantons.

Another favourite meal is Beijing Duck. When USA's President Nixon visited China in 1972 he had Beijing Duck and liked it very much. I like it too.

Hong Ye is a student at Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE, Castlemaine Campus.



Comfort Food

Food is life. In our complex and sophisticated daily routines how easy it is to forget that food is our most basic need. We fill our kitchens with gadgets that speed up preparation; we fit the shopping in around other 'important' jobs; we make time for a quick coffee with friends, but not a meal. And yet food is basic to our survival. The following story morsels explore the non-business case for food. Our feature, *The Ups and Downs of Growing your Own Vegetables*, brings us back to earth, *The Night Market in Taiwan*, tempts us with wonderful descriptions, while Tina's story about going to the Salvos for a food voucher, is a powerful and poignant expression of our most basic need for food.



The Up and Downs of Growing your own Vegetables

By Anita Finn

They are popping up everywhere: Vegetable gardens. People want to eat chemical free grown vegetables without paying a fortune for them. They like to eat tomatoes, which taste like tomatoes. Growing your own food is big business for suppliers of garden equipment, TV shows and colourful magazines. But is the reality always so easy and colourful? Do you really save money?

A typical Australian family consumes 96 kilos of vegetables a year. (Source: Australian food statistics, 2004) If you buy organic vegetables you would probably spend an average of \$10 per kilo, which is round about \$1000 a year. \$1000 dollars are easily spent on fencing, rainwater tanks, garden tools and books, plus the ongoing costs like plants, seeds and fertilizers. Gardening can be quite time consuming as well. Purely from a business point of view the labour costs would be more than you would have to pay for the veggies in the supermarket.

But imagine enjoying the first green seedlings appearing on the surface. But beware! It is a jungle out there. They will come and they are hungry. The bigger enemies like rabbits can destroy your work in one night. The little ones take their time. One morning you may pick up 10 slugs, the next morning 20, and so on until you decide to do something—chemical free, of course. A beer trap is not very helpful when your cat likes beer and has this funny smile on her face after she has been in the garden. Use coffee grounds and the slugs will die of a heart attack? My slugs asked for cake with it. Even with salt around the already half eaten lettuce they were still happy hungry slugs. Pet friendly slug bait destroyed them, along with my hope of being full organic.

Growing your own vegetables does not guarantee that they have the best taste. If the soil is very good, with the correct PH, if there is sun, but not too much, and if there is enough water, but it is not water logged, you will get wonderful tasting veggies. Otherwise they may be tasteless or bitter.

So why bother? Because it is fun. Spending your free time outside, doing physical work is healthy. You can control what goes into the soil and therefore into your

food. If you compare the cost including your work time it is cheaper to buy even organic vegetables, but who wants to make the supermarket richer? It is fantastic to see the vegetables growing and to eat tomatoes direct from the plants. And they really do taste like tomatoes. It is great—but you must love it.

Anita Finn is a student at Southern Grampians Adult Education in Hamilton.



Lance's Food Adventures

By Lance Larsen

I like to cook Indian food. I like it because it has many herbs and spices. I got a mortar and pestle for Christmas. It was great. I mix and crush herbs and spices. I have cooked more recipes. I cook Spanish, Mexican, Italian, Greek, Chinese and Indian food.

Lance Larsen is a student in Certificate I in General Education for Adults (Introductory) at On Track Employment and Training Bendigo.

Learning to Cook the Hard Way

By Mia Maunus

"Hey, what's that smell? Is something burning!" yelled my boyfriend. I was outside and rushed into the kitchen, just to see that my first attempt to cook potatoes had turned to disaster. There were black balls in a pot, smoke and a bad smell. It was not at all appetising. My boyfriend had a big laugh but I wasn't too happy and lost my interest in cooking for a while.

A couple of years later, when I was married at the age of sixteen, I had to learn to cook for my dear husband, (who had laughed at my first cooking attempt), and myself. It has been a rocky road from failure to the pleasure of success. I've been thanked and sometimes mocked because of food.

Over the years I have learned to make reasonably good food for my big family and it's my duty to create good and healthy food for my dear husband and six gorgeous kids every day. This panel of seven judge my creations every time I cook.

I personally love all kinds of food, and although I never use exact recipes, I'm inspired by various recipes from different countries. This may be the impact of travelling a lot and living in two different cultures. I fill my kitchen with all sorts of smells and flavours and I love it when my kids come home from school and say, "What is that beautiful smell?"

In addition to making food I've started to grow our own food. That's something all the family takes a part in. I'm still learning in this area, as I haven't done this for a

long time. We've successfully produced beautiful organic vegetables and herbs, like pumpkins, beetroots and swedes just to name a few. We've also raised little chicks to beautiful hens and we get fresh eggs every day.

Kids love to collect all the eggs and they love to watch or help when I bake cakes, make omelettes, frittatas, egg 'bull's eyes' or anything where we use eggs. My kids love to crack the eggs for me. At the same time I hope they learn to cook, because I never wanted to take part in cooking when my mum cooked. That's why I had to learn to cook when I got married. I learned the hard way without any help.

Mia Maunus is a student at the Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE, Castlemaine Campus.

Cooking Goat

By Shee Sha

Every year when my family come to visit me we have a party. So we go to buy a goat. We shoot the goat with a gun and slit the throat. After that we carry it back home. We then cut up the goat and we put it in a pot and we mix it with salt, ginger, garlic, chillies, onions, lemon leaf, lemon grass, celery, turmeric, eggplant, and oil. We put it on the stove for about 45 minutes. After cooking it smells very fragrant and it makes us hungry.

In the afternoon we have a big party and we enjoy it all day. We have a good time with our family.

Shee Sha is a student in Certificate 1 in General Education for Adults at On Track Employment and Training Bendigo.

I love the Night Market in Taiwan

By Nicholle

When you are hungry, you can always find delicious food in Taiwan. There are so many vendors on the street who gather together as a night market. The night market is always full of people. It is as bright as daytime and the air is filled with the fragrance of all sorts of snacks. You can identify from the succulent smells that there are many foods such as Taiwanese, Japanese or Turkish

food. Making the decision on which food to start with is really difficult.

My husband and I love eating. We always have some snacks on Friday nights because we like to relax after a hard-working week. I would like to introduce some special snacks that we enjoy.

The first one I would like to introduce is deep-fried chicken seasoned with pepper and salt. We usually order not only chicken but also others such as squid, tempura (it is made of fish, a little bit like Japanese foods), dried bean curds, and sweet potato with plum flour. Some vendors will put Chinese basil or garlic on it. It's not healthy because it's too greasy, and we all believe that we should not eat this too often. However it is hard to resist.

The second one I would like to introduce is meat of fowl stewed with soy sauce. Vendors have their own special sauce, which usually comes with Chinese herbal medicine or chilli sauce. There are two different ways to eat this food, one is cooked already, and could be eaten directly. This one is cold. As for the other one, it is cooked after you order and it is hot. My husband and I prefer the first one. We always order food such as meatballs, seaweed, pork ears, chicken livers, dried bean curds, and tempura. They are sliced and put in a bag with some green onions or coriander leaves or pickled cabbage. It is not oil fried so it could be a better choice of snack when we are hungry but also on a diet.

The third one I would like to introduce is fried oyster with egg and flour. I like to eat it with sweet and chilli sauce, but some vendors put sweet and garlic sauce on it. I don't like sweet and garlic sauce because they just do not match.

The last food I would like to introduce is barbecue. We always order chicken skin, chicken butt, chicken leg, sticky rice sausage, dried bean curds, and tempura.

It's carbon-grilled. Some doctors suggest barbecue is unhealthy so that sometimes stops us.

Now, do you feel hungry after I have described these snacks in our country? The midnight snacks of Taiwan are well known in Asia. It is a favourite conversation topic among our friends who come from different places. My husband and I will welcome you if you ever come to Taiwan and we will show you a good time in the Night Market.

Nicholle Hsiao-Wen Chiang is a Certificate III in Spoken and Written English student at Swinburne TAFE (Hawthorn Campus) Centre for Cultural and Linguistic Diversity.

From the Bottom of my Heart

By Tina

A few years ago I was forced to go to one of the centres where I learnt that I was not the only one who needed help. I didn't know what to do. Jean at the resource centre told me to go to the Salvos. One of the women in the office asked me "when did you come last time?"

"It was a long time ago." I replied.

"Because of this I will write you a voucher for 250 dollars."

I was embarrassed and happy at the same time. She told me good luck on the way out and I thanked her from the bottom of my heart. I will never forget her kind words. I felt like the sponge you find in the sea, I cried outside of the office and all the way to my home.

Tina is a student at Carlton Neighbourhood Learning Centre.



The Kitchen and the Origins of Equal Opportunity

Kitchens are symbolic places. For women the kitchen is, traditionally, a symbol of domesticity, and less desirably, servitude. For men the kitchen is, traditionally, a worthy place to be if he can derive income from it. But are things changing? Ironically we might find the gender melting pot, not in the corridors of power, but in the kitchen. In our feature *Cooking*, Philip Aguer describes this social change as being 'too fast', and female readers in particular might be delighted by his description of slicing an onion. Most of the other pieces are written by displaced refugee and migrant men who have been separated from their families and wives. Necessity, being the great inventor, forces them to re-assess their cultural assumptions, and cooking and nurturing become a source of joy.



Cooking

By Philip Aguer

I am not good at cooking compared with others. I wish to be like them. But that won't stop me getting better one day. As usual, according to our culture, mum and sisters are responsible to cook for us as sons at home, but things are changing in this world too fast, like thunder every day.

After I left Sudan I went to Egypt, then to Australia. When I left mum and sisters behind in Sudan I learnt one thing, which is to be independent.

My sister has always been a good cook, and when I used to live with her she tried to teach me how to cook and how to become a professional cook. Unfortunately I ignored her.

A year later I moved to Wagga Wagga. I discovered I really needed to learn how to cook. From that moment I started to learn from my friends. I was thinking cooking is too easy, but I was very wrong. Firstly I learnt the way I should slice the onion. It's a bit complicated. I started with cutting both sides of the onion then taking the skin off. I learned how to slice the meat and how to use the spices for cooking. After a while I started to have a bit of experience with cooking. That makes me feel excited because I know how to cook from now on. In the future I would love to learn many kinds of cooking.

Philip Aguer is a student at Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE, Castlemaine Campus.

Sudanese Food

By Malek Noy

Kissra is the most important staple food in Sudan. It is like flat bread, which is made from wheat, corn and millet. Kissra is an important food for Sudanese people, for example at parties, weddings and celebrations. Women start preparing the dish three days before the celebrations in big special clay pots. They mix the flour, water and salt and let it stand for three days. Then they take the mixture to the party and fry it there.

Soups are important to Sudanese food. The most popular is kawari, which means it is made of cattle or sheep hooves cooked with vegetables and spices.

Sudanese people are very hospitable. Meals are eaten around a large communal tray on which various meats, vegetables, salad and sauces are placed. These are eaten with the right hand using flat bread (kissra) and millet porridge known as asida.

In the South of Sudan the abundance of rivers, lakes and swamps produce a lot of fish, which helps keep the people healthy. A popular fish is kajaik, which is a dried fish. It is very good for your health.

When I was living in Egypt I didn't know how to cook. One day I asked my friend to teach me to cook. He said, "Today we will cook kebabs together". When we went to the kitchen he showed me how to do it. My friend said that next time I would have to do it myself. Now I can cook.

Malek Noy is a student at Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE, Castlemaine Campus.

My Culture

By Shukri

My culture's food is pancakes, beans, pasta and rice. Most women cook and clean because women don't have work. Their job is to be a housewife. In my house I cook traditional food from my country, Somalia. Now I cook vegetables and fish. I like Australian food but I don't know how to cook it.

Shukri is a YAMEC student at NMIT Collingwood.

Food and Cooking—An Important Part of Culture and Tradition

By Chan Nyok

In Southern Sudan where I grew up on a farm the favourite food is a type of flour made from sorghum and millet, which we cook and eat with milk, butter and yoghurt. It is cooked in different ways. First we crush the seeds in a mortar and pestle and then we mix it with water. We can cook pancakes with the mixture but there are many other ways to cook it too.

There are differences in the type of foods of the villagers and the farmers, people who look after animals and people who live in towns. In the towns we use dried beans cooked with onion, meat and tomatoes. We buy our food at the market. All Sudanese people eat okra. It is added to stews.

Cooking is the women's job, as well as looking after all the food in the house. She is also responsible for how much food is given to friends or family who don't have enough food and need help. Also, if the family has cows the women are responsible for giving milk to families with children who need it. According to our culture the young ladies have to learn the women's job at their houses and the mothers are responsible to teach the girls everything. If they don't teach the girls no young boy can marry her because it is very important for young ladies particularly in Southern Sudan. Before the wedding the boy has to ask the girl's neighbours these things. The men do the farming, grow the food and look after the cows and decide when to sell them or give them away.

In Southern Sudan, according to our culture, the men can't share the kitchen with the women. If you do that, the women can leave the kitchen to you and it would be something to embarrass you in the community. Also the men are responsible to teach the young boys how to do what the men do to look after their family, community and nation.

When there are visitors the men eat in a different room to the women because the women want to leave the men free by themselves so they can discuss their business. Men's business is different to women's business. Sometimes there is business we can share together.

When I came to the town I found it different because if the women have a job or have a baby or if they are sick

it is okay for men to help in the kitchen, but not always, only if she needed help.

Chan Nyok is a student at Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE, Castlemaine Campus.

Being a Waiter in Australia

By Gordon

I'm merely another waiter trying to build experience truly. I was working for the second time in a restaurant. I will tell my story as honestly as possible, since I want to show you the real picture of my first work experience in Australia.

The opportunity of being a waiter was rare; it was a joke for me, as the second job was a very different story from the first job. Working in a Japanese restaurant is a different experience compared to a Chinese restaurant. They have different ordering procedures and different styles of setting tables. A waiter has more work to do in a Japanese restaurant compared to a Chinese restaurant. In a Chinese restaurant, the jobs are divided, for example, taking orders and serving, but this is not the case in a Japanese restaurant. Actually when I was working for the Japanese restaurant, it was the first time I learnt to take orders from customers. However when I was working for the Chinese restaurant, the ordering procedures were divided and the restaurant was as crowded as an ants nest.

The first time I worked for the Japanese restaurant, I had to take orders. It was such a new experience for me. If there were 3 or 4 customers, I could handle it; but I was the unluckiest waiter if there were over 6 customers. I was so nervous; it was obviously not that easy to handle. Ok, this was the case—many people were ordering and you must take their orders one by one. But you cannot let them wait too long and you must write down their orders as quickly as possible. After the first customer's order and the second customer's order, there was the third and more. When someone changed his mind and wanted to revert back to his first order, this made me feel so faint. Then, after everything settled down, I discovered one order was not right, so I went to ask my colleague, "Hey mate, can you help me with this?" My colleague stared at me and said, "What's wrong with that?" Immediately, I felt myself to be so useless! Before you knew exactly what the wrong order was, you had to give the order to the kitchen chef who of course couldn't make sense of the order at all. Luckily, in the end, the problem was

somehow fixed, the customer got exactly what he ordered; but I had lost another colleague's respect.

Being a waiter has confused me so many times. For some days, I reflected on what could have caused the frustration. Time passed by. Things slowly faded away; and I finally cast off this sweated occupation. But I never regretted having been a waiter.

Gordon Wei is a Certificate III in spoken and Written English student at Swinburne TAFE (Hawthorn Campus) Centre for Cultural and Linguistic Diversity.

Learning to Cook

By James Lual

When I was in Sudan I didn't know how to cook because in my culture men don't cook, only women cook. When I came to Australia, my wife would do everything, cooking and cleaning.

But in 2006 I started work at KR Castlemaine Foods, so I left my family in Melbourne. We were all men sharing the rent. There were no women sharing with us. We are all Sudanese men, from the same tribe and the same culture. We tried to cook and I knew how to cook soup, potatoes and other African food.

I learned to cook a little bit but I'm not a good cook. I'd like to learn more in the future to become a good cook. Now I have decided to do a course to train as a cook in school at TAFE. I can learn about Australia, about different food, and how to cook.

James Lual is a student at Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE, Castlemaine Campus.

Comparing Food and Culture in Thailand and Australia

By Watthana Dabsomsri (Got)

I come from Thailand and I want to explain some of the differences between food in Thailand and Australia.

When I was a small boy I lived on a farm in a village in the countryside, which was about 900 kilometres from

Bangkok. I liked living on the farm. My family and I grew our own rice and we had many different foods like coconuts, bamboo, bananas and fish.

Sometimes I would go to the farm and cut bamboo, pick bananas and coconuts to sell. This gave my family money to buy other things we needed.

I learnt to cook from my mother. She taught me to make papaya salad, BBQ chicken, bamboo soup and pork salad, which is very hot and spicy.

Our family would help to make our meals and we would all eat together and talk about what we did during the day.

When I was 17 years old I went to live and work in Bangkok. I got a job working as a kitchen hand in a Thai restaurant. I learned how to make different Thai food like tom yum goong, which is a hot and very spicy prawn soup. Tom yum smells very nice. Thai people like food that is very spicy. I worked in that restaurant for five years and it was a good job.

I arrived in Australia one year ago and I got a job working in a Thai restaurant as a cook. The restaurant is in a small town but many people come on weekends to relax and it is very busy.

Working in a Thai restaurant in Thailand and Australia is very different. In Thailand people do not think of food as entree and main courses. Traditional Thai food

is very spicy with lots of chillies. In Australia the food is not as spicy as some customers do not like very spicy food. Australia does not have all the ingredients you need to make proper Thai food and recipes have to be changed. However, Footscray Market in Melbourne has many shops where you can buy most of the ingredients to make Thai food. Thai people eat a lot of fish, prawns and octopus, as seafood is less expensive than it is in Australia.

Thai people eat at restaurants and food stalls for most meals as it is cheaper and many homes do not have kitchens. If people cook at home the kitchen is usually outside so the smell of chilli and garlic does not make the house smell bad. In Australia people go to the supermarket to buy food and then cook food in their house.

I am amazed at how many people from Australia like Thai food. Eating in restaurants in Australia is very expensive compared to Thailand because salaries for staff in Australia are much higher than in Thailand.

People in Thailand enjoy cooking. In Australia people are busy with work and have to travel long distances to work so they do not have enough time to make food and relax together.

Got is a student at Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE, Castlemaine Campus.



The Proof is in the Pudding—Social Enterprise in Australia

By Jacinta Agostinelli

What is social enterprise and what is the scope and impact of social enterprise in Australia? Jacinta Agostinelli offers both insights and answers, while profiling two locally based examples, the Saffron Kitchen and the Sorghum Sisters.

The Australian Centre for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Studies is currently undertaking a project titled *Finding Australia's Social Enterprise Sector* (FASES). The project aims to explore the scope and impact of social enterprise in Australia. A Social Enterprise is an enterprise or business that brings about social change through market-focussed business activities.¹ Profit is understood to be a means to an end and is put back into the business, community or charitable organisation. Some local social enterprises include *Lentil as Anything*, *The Big Issue*, and the *Hunter—Gatherer* retail chain. Social enterprise is not a new phenomenon and can be traced back to worker and consumer cooperatives such as Friendly Societies and Credit Unions. A recent global resurgence of social enterprises that began in the 1990's has prompted some discussion and debate.

The Definitional Debate

Recently I was enjoying dinner with two friends who work in Adult Education and wanting to pick their brains for this *Fine Print* assignment I raised the question 'what is social enterprise?' That was like asking 'what is literacy?' The result of our discussion was a serviette full of variant notes.

The definitional debate had at dinner, however, is happening in the research papers and social enterprise conventions around the globe. Talbot, Tregliva and Harrison (2002) give a broad definition:

Social Enterprise is a means by which people come together and use market-based ventures to achieve social ends. It is characterized by creativity, entrepreneurship, and a focus on community rather than individual profit. It is a creative endeavour that results in social, financial, service, educational, employment or other community benefits.²

However, questions about what constitutes social purpose, trade and enterprise then arise. Barraket and Collyer (2009) suggest that even if social purpose is defined as 'for community identity group, or cause', this meaning is still open to different interpretations. The idea of trade that appears in most definitions is interpreted as commercial transaction, yet many enterprises use alternatives to money; community gardens, for example, trade in surplus. Barraket and Collyer (2009, p5-6) raise other questions about the meaning of social enterprise. What distinguishes a social business from a commercial business with social benefits? To what extent should for-profit business forms be included in our understanding of social enterprise? How do we define an end-point on the spectrum? Some for-profit businesses have provided powerful social change; for example, think of the changes brought about by *Google*. Can the changes generated by relatively small scale social enterprises be generated more efficiently by larger for profit companies?

While the debate on contemporary meanings of social enterprise might not matter to those involved in enterprises, it does matter if government is to provide financial support and foster the development of enterprises (Barraket, 2010). Government needs to know what organisations belong in the social enterprise sector; what types of activities and innovations are being undertaken, and how they are contributing to the economy and community; what models to promote, and what their problems and advantages are.

Social Ventures Australia provides a contemporary meaning that is adequate for this article and situated in the Australian context:

Social enterprises provide a range of solutions to deeply entrenched social or environmental issues, ranging from new approaches to delivering public

services, to financial inclusion, to child care, to community recycling, etc.³

In summary there are four concepts common to most definitions of social enterprise: provision of access to disadvantaged groups and people on low income; an entrepreneurial or business principles approach; a community context; and social impact.

Models of Social Enterprise

Social enterprise models are differentiated by their motivation. There are three types of motivation: employment, service delivery and income generation. A typology prepared by Social Traders provides a description of these motivations: employment 'provides employment, training and support for marginalised groups' such as Saffron Kitchen and Sorghum Sisters discussed below; service delivery 'creates services in direct response to social or economic needs in the community' such as childcare cooperatives; and income generation 'generate profits to support other community or not for profit activities' such as fair trade organisations and charitable business ventures. Many social enterprises are hybrid organisations that combine characteristics of two or three typologies.

The Saffron Kitchen

The Saffron Kitchen and Catering Company began as a community kitchen based at the Werribee Community and Education Centre. The Kitchen was an initiative first undertaken as a Community Learning Partnership in 2008, and was funded by ACFE. The other partners are Centrelink Area West, Wyndham City Council and Victoria Police.

A Social Inclusion Plan developed by Werribee Community and Education Centre identified the need for employment pathways for recently arrived refugees, who come predominately from the Karen and Sudanese Communities. This plan, plus the building of a commercial kitchen at the Werribee Community and Education Centre provided the impetus for the Community Kitchen project. Jennie Berrera, Manager at Werribee Community and Education Centre says the motivation for establishing a community kitchen 'was to provide a meaningful/realistic pathway to employment through informal training of the workings of a community kitchen' and to 'facilitate their (the Karen and Sudanese communities) involvement with established local communities.' As with many Social Enterprises the Saffron Kitchen is a hybrid enterprise,



Participants at the Saffron Kitchen

combining the two motivations of employment and social change.

Initially twelve women were trained to operate a community kitchen to cater for the local community, by way of a Friday lunch. By 2010 the Kitchen had become a company catering to outside organisations as well as providing the Friday lunch. There are now thirty women and one man in training. The company can also now give paid employment to the women who prepare and serve food. The original supervisor has gone on to full time employment, and one of the original Karen women has filled the 15 hour per week position.

The use of simple skilled or unskilled labour is a characteristic of social enterprises because the beneficiaries are generally from marginalised or disadvantaged social groups and have had limited access to education and training, have often had little previous employment, or may have limited English. To be productive as well as employ higher numbers of beneficiaries the work needs to be non-technical and easily learnt. A hospitality enterprise satisfies these requirements. The Karen and Sudanese





Cooking at the Saffron Kitchen

women generally have little or no education and no or interrupted working experience in their own countries. However they do have cooking skills and knowledge. Another common feature of employment motivated social enterprises is the need for high levels of support. A paid supervisor with knowledge and expertise in the hospitality industry supports the women involved in the Saffron Kitchen by coordinating the Friday lunches, and mentoring. The Werribee Community and Education Centre provide support through English classes enabling women to attain an accredited certificate.

The Sorghum Sisters

The Sorghum Sisters uses a similar model to the Saffron Kitchen. The Sorghum Sisters is based at Carlton Primary School, which sits in the shadow of the Carlton Estate. AMES provides administrative support. The Sorghum Sisters was established in 2005 with a number of employment and social motivations. (Tsopanis, 2009) These included addressing systemic social and economic disadvantage faced by migrants and refugees (predominately from the Horn of Africa) in the Carlton Estate; increasing parent participation in the school; providing lifelong learning to school children and residents; providing healthy lunches to children and local residents. In 2009 The Sorghum Sisters has 19 paid staff, one volunteer and 22 on work placement. One of the paid staff, Melinda Hall, is a chef with industry experience who provides mentoring and administrative support.

When I visited The Sorghum Sisters' kitchen there was a weekly schedule on the whiteboard that included lunch orders for two primary schools; at least three orders from city and metropolitan corporate companies; and lunch

everyday for local residents. While it seemed like a busy schedule to me the two African women in the kitchen were quite relaxed about the huge amounts of vegetables and meat waiting to be chopped, and took time out to chat to me. Both of the women worked part time and viewed their work as real work and adhered to strict work guidelines. This is an important point because a challenge facing many social enterprises is sustainability, which depends to a large degree on the application of business principles.

According to Tsopanis (2009) from AMES the tension between the social and business purposes of The Sorghum Sisters enterprise has been a challenge. While the enterprise was established to respond to community disadvantage it became clear that business planning and a sound financial base were crucial to sustainability. An unsustainable business does not survive long enough to begin to generate social change for its beneficiaries. This contributed to AMES now employing an industry specialist as coordinator rather than a Community Developer. Another aspect affecting sustainability is the number of beneficiaries that can be employed without affecting productivity. People who have been out of the workforce for some time require substantial support



**Food preparation at Sorghum Sisters
AMES © 2010.**



Plating up at Sorghum Sisters
AMES © 2010.

to become employable. If the model and funds do not allow suitable levels of support the enterprise will fail. (Daniels, 2009) The issue facing administrators of a social enterprise is how to create a sustainable business model without compromising the original social aims of the enterprise. If an enterprise cannot fund the support required to train beneficiaries and assist in their transition to mainstream employment, who should fund it? Is there a more effective and efficient alternative to social enterprise that would produce the same economic and social benefits to the group of beneficiaries?

Measuring Impact

While questions about the effectiveness of social enterprise are raised by many in, and out of, the field, they are not an issue for the staff and beneficiaries whom I interviewed. At the recent 2010 VALBEC Conference *'I learn...YOU learn...WE learn'*, Merv Edmonds spoke about cognitive apprenticeship. Foundational to the approach of cognitive apprenticeship is the idea that intrinsic motivation to learn is linked to emotion: if a person feels interested, satisfied, challenged and enjoys the process of learning they will learn. New knowledge of the functioning of the brain shows that emotion is more important than intellect when it comes to learning. We also know that learning is not independent of context, meaning it is social and must relate to the environment it is intended for, as with an apprenticeship. The cognitive apprenticeship

approach ties the learning process to the apprenticeship idea—allow people to learn in a scaffolded authentic environment where they have a sense of purpose, and they will have an internal desire to succeed. They will learn. This sums up the social enterprise model at work in The Saffron Kitchen and The Sorghum Sisters. Edmonds also stressed that as learning is dependent on emotions, the tools we have been using to measure the impacts of teaching and learning—accountability measures, tests, targets and competency based outcomes—are flawed. He believes we need to have more subjective methods for measuring impact.

In the Measuring Impact Report 2009 provided by The Werribee Community and Education Learning Centre, the social outcomes of the Saffron Kitchen have been noted in subjective terms: 'the participants have strengthened social and cultural ties with mainstream communities'; 'the women have developed ownership of the project and are proud to share their cultures'; 'participants [have] opportunities to...increase confidence and develop relationships'. In relation to employment outcomes the report also states that the Kitchen provides employment for women who prepare and serve food, a steering committee has been set up to look into expanding the services of the Kitchen, and ten women so far have been awarded Certificate I in Food Safety. Since the Kitchen has expanded and is catering to outside organisations it can be viewed as providing mainstream employment to those involved.

Samya Bashir has been studying English at the Carlton Neighbourhood Learning Centre since 2006, but at the same time she has been working and doing vocational training with The Sorghum Sisters.



Ready to serve. AMES © 2010

I started working at the Sorghum Sisters in 2008. I was doing English at Carlton Neighbourhood Learning Centre and a part time Food Handling course with Ames. I did 3 days a week work experience with the Sorghum Sisters for 3 weeks. Then they asked me if I could do some paid work for them. I now do casual work there. I work there 2 days a week, from 9:30am to 3 pm so I can pick up my boys from school.

My work is cooking, preparing and chopping. Working there has helped me with many things: like communication, and learning to cook biscuits, sweets and baklava. It's not just the money. It is comfortable to work there too. , It's like a family. We speak different languages: Oromo Arabic Amharic and English and some Somali. We cook African food and it's like the way my mum used to cook at home.

I have just finished a Certificate 2 in Commercial Cookery at William Angliss. It was very hard but working at The Sorghum Sisters gave me good skills. I would like to do an apprenticeship and be a chef.

Other social outcomes reported include skill development of disadvantaged women, parent participation in the Carlton Primary School, community strengthening and promotion of healthy eating. (Tsopanis, 2009) The same report quantifies the employment and training outcomes: since 2005 The Sorghum Sisters has provided for five traineeships; 53 accredited hospitality training and work placements and employment of 20 casuals. This is significant social impact for the beneficiaries concerned;

however the successes of most social enterprises are limited by their small scale. And yet, if we apply Edmond's ideas and measure the social impact of The Saffron Kitchen and The Sorghum Sisters subjectively we discover that 'the proof is definitely in the pudding'.

Jacinta Agostinelli is an ESL and Literacy teacher in Melbourne. She is also on the Fine Print editorial committee.

Endnotes

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Some Bite-Sized Ideas

By Lynne Matheson

Lynne Matheson has compiled a comprehensive list of food-related websites to explore, and offers practical information as to what each site has on offer for both teachers and students.

Ayen's Cooking School for African Men

<http://www.vidafilms.com.au/>

Tel: 08 82425226

Email: info@vidafilms.com.au

This is a fascinating film about Ayen Kuol, a Sudanese health worker who decided to challenge a million years of custom and culture and start a cooking school for African men. Watching the film you will see the generations battle it out for their right to be in the kitchen and how the boys cook a feast for the elder women. (52 minute DVD)

CERES

Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies, pronounced 'series'.

CERES is an internationally recognised model of a sustainable society located in Brunswick, Melbourne. CERES provides a range of site tours and professional learning sessions, one or two hours long, during which groups can explore working examples of sustainable technology.

See: <http://www.ceres.org.au/excursions>

CERES Food Connect—CERES are starting a new organic box delivery scheme based on the successful Food Connect distribution model. Called CERES Food Connect, it's part CSA, part Co-op and fully fair. This site will evolve and grow to become a vital source of ideas and information about the fair food movement to Melbourne.

See: <http://www.ceresfoodconnect.org.au/>

Community Gardens

Find out about the Australian City Farms and Community Gardens Network and the interesting and innovative projects happening in communities across the country.

See: <http://communitygarden.org.au/>

The Fact Sheets may be useful for reading texts: <http://communitygarden.org.au/fact-sheets>

German allotment gardens—find out about this exhibition at the Goethe Institute 448 St. Kilda Road Melbourne, Vic. 3004, Tel: 98648999

See: http://communitygarden.org.au/goethe_exhibition-201

Yarra City is an example of an inner urban council committed to providing services and information to the residents and community groups.

See: <http://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/Environment/Community%20Gardens.asp>

Community Gardens St Kilda

See: <http://www.vegout.asn.au/>

Veg Out is an organic, chemical free garden run by volunteers. To enquire about community group visits to Veg Out, contact Veg Out Secretary hello@vegout.asn.au

Costa's Garden Odyssey

Find out about Costa and what makes him so passionate about growing your own food.

See: <http://www.sbs.com.au/shows/costa/flash-app/page/>

Watch episodes of Costa's Garden on SBS online.

See: <http://www.sbs.com.au/shows/costa/watchonline/page/i/1/show/costa>

Crisis Help Network

Find help for the homeless with food vouchers.

See: <http://www.melbourne.homeless.org.au/food-vouchers.html>



Fare Share

Find out about this organisation and how it provides free, tasty, nutritious meals to the hungry and the homeless using donated food not needed by markets, caterers, and retailers around Melbourne.

See: <http://www.fareshare.net.au>

Farmers' Markets

Find out where and when these weekend markets are being held.

See: <http://www.vicfarmersmarkets.org.au/>

Food Growers Group

If you want to start your own community food growers group the Sustainable Gardening Australia website is a great place to start. Visit the forum section for Neighbourhood Gardening Groups and post your location or look for others who have already posted. While you're there check out the Yummy Yards page for great seasonal tips on produce gardening.

See: <http://www.sgaonline.org.au/index.html>

Living Greener

This government site has lots of information and hints including how to start a worm farm.

See: www.livinggreener.gov.au

Salvation Army Emergency Support Services

See: <http://www.salvationarmy.org.au/contactus/victoria-divisions/south-east-services-network/doveton-community-support-centre/emergency-relief.html?s=1001>

Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation

Check out the school program and find ideas for your workplace.

See: <http://www.kitchengardenfoundation.org.au/index.shtml>

TLC Cooking

This site has lots of parts to explore. It is commercial but there are things you could use as a springboard with students to develop their own "10 Best..."

See: <http://recipes.howstuffworks.com/food-and-lifestyle-channel.htm>

Lynne Matheson is the co-president of VALBEC and a member of the *Fine Print* editorial committee.

Developing English and Hospitality Skills Dual Certification—A Great Way to Learn

By Jean Mitchell

Jean Mitchell describes a pilot ESL/Hospitality course, designed to introduce ESL students to the hospitality industry and prepare them for entry to work in an Australian food outlet.

In 2009 the Vocational Pathways Department and the Hospitality Department delivered a pilot ESL/Hospitality course at the Preston campus of NMIT. Students enrolled in two certificates: the Certificate III in ESL Employment and the Certificate II in Hospitality (Kitchen Operations). The hospitality course (usually 6 months fulltime) was modified to suit ESL students who need more time and support to be successful. The course was a great success and the students and staff were very happy with the results.

The course is designed to introduce ESL students to the hospitality industry and prepare them for entry to work in an Australian food outlet. Both the Hospitality Department and Vocational Pathways Department are committed to a team approach to delivery. A priority role for the ESL teacher is to reinforce and extend concepts, skills and knowledge required for the Certificate in Hospitality.

The students worked with two experienced chefs and their ESL teacher. All practical classes were held in the commercial kitchens and in the bistro next to St Georges Restaurant, which is NMIT's training restaurant. In term 4 additional work experience was provided so the students had hands-on work preparing



Engaged in learning

and serving food to customers. This was an exciting and challenging time, which gave them genuine experience working as a team with tight deadlines, and serving “real” customers.

Responses from Students

Students were asked to offer comments as to their reactions to the course. They were also encouraged to describe what they liked about the course. A summary of their thoughts is provided here.

Michael (from China) “I’m interested in learning about Western culture and cooking for example cooking methods and ingredients.”

Dung (from Vietnam) “I love Mondays (in kitchen & bistro) because I can say -Would you like take-away or eat-in? This is the first time I’ve done customer service.”

Allan (from China) “Before, I never cooked for service, it’s so exciting because it’s the first time, and we are learning about team work and how to handle pressure to get the job done on time.”

Qiu (from China) “I’ve enjoyed learning about Food Safety laws for example the 2hr-4hr rule. You must understand the government regulations if you want to open a food business.”

Minh (from Vietnam) “I love learning about different styles of salad from different cultures. For example, Vietnamese salad uses lots of vegetables with lemon and fish sauce dressing. Western style salads use oil or mayonnaise dressing seasoned with salt and pepper.”

Mai (from Vietnam) “I’ve learned a lot about using piping bags for cakes. Also I’ve learned how to use



specialist kitchen equipment like a Cryovac Machine for vacuum packing food, Commercial Mixers and special Bread Ovens.”

JoJo (from China) “I’m very happy to see customers enjoy our food. We prepare, cook and serve like in a real restaurant.”

Yu Chen (from China) “I have really enjoyed learning new skills on Friday and Monday. I’ve never cooked scrambled eggs (made with cream and chopped chives) before. I made it for customers.”



SuiKhar (from Burma) “I enjoy learning how to cook from Mathew and Kris. I enjoyed learning about Food Safety and Food Hygiene from Raymond the Food Auditor. I enjoyed learning about customer service and personal presentation because it will help me to get a good job.”

Mimi (from Malaysia) “I love cooking, I love cook books and I love Chef Mathew’s class on Fridays because I learn new skills and new words. This will help me to find a good job.”

Joe (from China) “I’ve enjoyed learning how to read and write new recipes.”

XiaoLin (from China) “I enjoy making salads especially Chinese salad dressings with salt, sugar, vinegar, soy sauce, chilli, oil and garlic.”

At the end of the course seven students decided to pursue a career in hospitality. Five students applied to enrol in Certificate III Commercial Cookery and two students in Certificate III Patisserie. All the ESL hospitality students are now able to actively seek work in the field as they have the three necessary hospitality certificates to be employed: Implement Food Safety Procedures, the Food Handling Certificate and the Food Safety Supervisor’s Certificate.

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