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**First Annual Home Food Preservation Day a Success  
Home food preservation enthusiasts find helpful information and resources  
to prepare for the canning season.**

*"Seeing is believing. Hearing and reading about fermentation [and other home food preservation techniques] is one thing, but seeing the components and the steps to the process is huge in growing one's knowledge."* Barb Brenner, CCE Certified Master Food Preserver

The Monroe County community was invited to join Certified Master Food Preservers (MFP), Cornell Cooperative Extension of Monroe County (CCE-Monroe) program educators, and members of the CCE-Monroe Board of Directors for a cool but sunny morning on May 1st at the CCE-Monroe office. Michele Conners, CCE-Monroe MFP volunteer envisioned and organized the event that drew residents from all parts of Rochester and Monroe County.

Master Food Preservers, Michele Conners, Judy Price, and Barb Brenner were on hand to answer questions, provide free pressure gauge testing, and demonstrate the art of fermenting. CCE-Monroe staff and volunteers provided helpful information such as where to find local U-Picks, how to ensure nutritional meals, and gardening advice. The 4-H Youth Development program provided a hands on garden craft for youth. We even noticed some adults enjoying creating their own garden "kindness" rock. Canning jars of all sizes, recipe books, canning supplies, and pectin were available for sale.

*"The Home Food Preservation event was a wonderful way to connect with our home gardeners. Those who attended the event were eager to get their gardens organized and planted for the upcoming growing season. The Master Gardeners received great questions from transplanting and dividing fruit bearing bushes to planting different varieties of sweet corn."* Ashly Piedmont, Master Gardener Coordinator.

Visitors were able to discuss and ask questions about 4-H programs and experiences throughout Monroe County. Aside from the opportunity to learn more about the Monroe County 4-H Youth Development Program, visitors were invited to create kindness rocks and garden stones. Attendees seemed to really enjoy the variety of topics and discussions they were able to have while walking around to the different [educational and demonstration]

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tables." Destiny Draggett, AmeriCorps VISTA

*"Small fruit generated a big interest! It was wonderful to see community members enthusiastically sharing their berry growing experiences. Most discussions involved strawberries, blueberries, and raspberries, but there were also some in-depth talks about less known fruits like elderberry or currants. It was a great opportunity to chat and compare notes. Those who didn't garden received a Berry U-Pick Guide to help them find fresh fruit directly from local farms this summer."* Jarmila Haseler, Agriculture Educator

*"From garden experts to beginners, everyone was able to gain some insight and knowledge from the event. It was rewarding to be a part of it and create a space where knowledge could be shared with the community."* Zach Stoessel, Agriculture Program Volunteer

*"As someone new to agriculture, food production, and everything in between, I learned a lot of information. I thought I needed more space, knowledge, and even equipment; I found out I can easily do things at home. It was great speaking with the experts and getting to know them and seeing how much they love their work. I certainly am trying some of the recipes given and even going to a U-pick farm this year."* Edgar Santa Cruz, CCE-Monroe Board of Director

CCE-Monroe is ready to support our local food preservation enthusiasts this year; we have jars and pectin available for sale throughout the growing and canning season: 8 oz. cases, pint cases, 4 oz. cases, Sure-Jell Regular Pectin and Sure-Jell Low Sugar Pectin. Call ahead to place an order and set a time to pick up your supplies (cash or check only). 585-753-2550, extension 0. *Local orders only, please no drop in's.*

For more information about safe food preservation practices and to find some of Michele Conners' favorite recipes, check out the CCE-Monroe Master Food Preservation Blog. <http://monroe.cce.cornell.edu/nutrition/food-preservation-blog>

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