



Tips & Techniques: Food Swaps!

So, you'd like to try your hand at preserving food. Or you've done it already – nice work! But turns out you don't have the time, equipment, and chutzpah it takes to make several kinds of jam, dry some fruits, and can tomatoes and pickles, let alone try your hand at that tasty-looking peach chutney or sauerkraut. So many types of food to preserve and so little time!

Urban harvesters across the country, faced with similar situations, have begun swapping their wares with each other. We mentioned swapping briefly in our earlier food preservation post, but wanted to delve in a bit more now. This really is a great way to hold onto what comes to you in droves, and then barter it for a varied cupboard of homemade goodness. What a great win-win!

If you've got a lot of homemade wares and some energy for organizing, consider creating an event for friends and acquaintances. [Here's](#) some information to get you started. And here are some links to some other food swaps, around the country (and from our neighbors to the north!):

- [Philadelphia, PA](#)
- [Upstate New York](#)
- [Montreal, Canada](#)
- [Richmond, VA](#)
- [Los Angeles, CA](#)
- [Minneapolis, MN](#)
- [Denver, CO](#)

A food swap can run something like a silent auction. But the “amount” you offer (on a card next to the item you'd like) is another item, that you made. Not money. The maker of each item then chooses which trades to accept. Bonuses = making new friends and getting new recipe ideas.

Of course, bartering doesn't have to be this organized. If this summer is the summer of boatloads of pears, for example, make chutneys and cinnamon pear sauce and preserves. See if you've got a friend who canned tomatoes or froze corn and wants to trade a bit. Or, save up your pears and use them for thank you and birthday and holiday gifts.

If you're planning a canning swap and want some help spreading the word, let us know, at info@growpittsburgh.org! Just put “Canning Swap” in the subject line. We'll be happy to reach out to the Urban Harvester network!