



Under the umbrella of Bainham Rural Women

Aorere Valley Practical Living Series

Learn • Share • Grow Together

Recipe Booklet

Session 1 — Food Preservation

21 February 2026 • Bainham Hall, Golden Bay



Fresh herbs and tomatoes from the valley — ready for preserving

connectedpathways.co.nz/aorere-community/

About This Booklet

This collection of recipes was gathered at the first session of the Aorere Valley Practical Living Series, held on 21 February 2026 at Bainham Hall, Golden Bay.

A small but warm group came together to make tomato sauce and kumikumi pickle from fresh garden produce, herbs, ripe tomatoes and beautiful green kumikumi. Watching simple ingredients transform into jars of ready-made goodness was deeply satisfying, and the stories and laughter shared along the way made it even better. It felt warm and connected - exactly what this series is about.

The recipes here are contributed by community members and reflect the diversity of our valley's food culture - from slow-cooked Italian-style sauces to traditional Worcestershire, fermented vegetables and Japanese-inspired pickles. We hope you enjoy making and sharing them.

Our monthly sessions run on the 21st of each month, February to November 2026. Everyone is welcome.



Preparing the produce

Acknowledgements

This session was organised and facilitated by the core group of the Aorere Valley Practical Living Series:

Core group: Fiona Newey, Iona Jelf, Anna Friedlander, Birgit Schauer (Bergie)

Recipe contributors: Barbara McKay, Iona Jelf, Anna Friedlander

The Aorere Valley Practical Living Series is hosted under the umbrella of Bainham Rural Women / Rural Women New Zealand.

The series was inspired by a Civil Defence Preparedness survey conducted in September 2025 among 167 Aorere Valley households, which revealed a community desire for practical skills that foster resilient and fulfilling lives.

Slow Cooked Tomato Sauce

Contributed by Iona Jelf

Makes 2–3 jars (approx. 300 g each)

INGREDIENTS

- 1 kg ripe tomatoes
- 10 cloves garlic, roughly chopped
- 2 brown onions, finely chopped
- 1–3 tsp sugar
- 1–3 tsp salt
- 1 tsp balsamic vinegar
- Olive oil
- Fresh herbs: basil, oregano

METHOD

1. Soften garlic and onions in olive oil over a gentle heat.
2. Add tomatoes, sugar, salt and balsamic vinegar. Mix well.
3. Cook slowly on low heat for 2 hours without a lid or stirring — let it reduce and develop flavour.
4. Stir in fresh herbs at the end.
5. Pour into sterilised jars and seal.

Zucchini or Kamokamo Relish

Contributed by Iona Jelf

INGREDIENTS

- 1.5 kg zucchini or kamokamo, diced
- Salt (for drawing out moisture)
- 2 Tbsp mustard seeds
- 2 Tbsp cumin seeds
- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 25 g fresh ginger, grated
- 1 Tbsp turmeric
- 1 Tbsp ground coriander
- 2 tsp chilli flakes (optional)
- 300 ml wine vinegar or cider vinegar
- 300 g brown sugar

METHOD

1. Dice zucchini and toss well in salt. Leave overnight ideally, or at least 30 minutes. Rinse and drain thoroughly.
2. Gently fry mustard and cumin seeds in hot oil until they begin to pop.
3. Add garlic, ginger and onions and fry until soft.
4. Add turmeric, coriander and chilli flakes; stir for a minute or two.
5. Add zucchini, vinegar and sugar. Simmer on low heat for 45 minutes.
6. Spoon into sterilised jars and seal.

 *Both sugar and spices can be reduced by up to 30% to taste.*

Worcestershire Sauce

Contributed by Barbara McKay

INGREDIENTS

- ½ gallon (approx. 2.3 litres) malt vinegar
- 1 lb (approx. 450 g) brown sugar
- 1½ lb (approx. 680 g) pulpy apples
- 3 cloves garlic
- 1 Tbsp ground ginger
- 2 Tbsp common salt
- 1 Tbsp ground cloves
- ½ orange, peel finely grated

METHOD

1. Combine all ingredients in a large pot.
 2. Boil for two hours, stirring occasionally.
 3. Strain through a fine mouli or sieve.
 4. Bottle in sterilised bottles.
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Red Capsicum Sauce

Contributed by Barbara McKay

INGREDIENTS

- 500 g red capsicum (can be frozen)
- 1½ lb (approx. 680 g) tomatoes, or 2 × 425 g tins
- 500 g onions
- 2¼ cups vinegar
- 500 g sugar
- 4 tsp common salt
- 4 tsp curry powder
- 2 Tbsp flour
- ¼ tsp chilli powder

METHOD

1. Roughly chop onions, capsicums and tomatoes.
 2. Add sugar, salt and vinegar. Boil for 1¼ hours.
 3. Blend with a stick blender or put through a food processor.
 4. Add curry powder, flour and chilli powder. Mix well.
 5. Return to the heat and reboil briefly until thickened.
 6. Bottle in sterilised jars or bottles.
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Classic Tomato Sauce

Contributed by Barbara McKay

INGREDIENTS

- 12 lb (approx. 5.4 kg) tomatoes
- 3 lb (approx. 1.4 kg) sugar
- 3 Tbsp common salt
- 1½ pints (approx. 850 ml) vinegar
- 2 oz (approx. 55 g) whole allspice
- Small knob of garlic (about the size of a walnut)

METHOD

1. Tie allspice and garlic in a piece of muslin.
 2. Combine all ingredients in a large pot with the muslin bag.
 3. Boil for 3½ hours, stirring occasionally.
 4. Remove muslin bag. Put sauce through a mouli or fine sieve.
 5. Bottle in sterilised bottles.
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Japanese-Style Soy-Pickled Cucumber

Contributed by Anna Friedlander — from 'Pocket Pickler' by Alex Elliott-Howery & Cornersmith

Makes 1 × 300 ml jar • Prep: 20 mins + 15 mins salting • Storage: 2–3 weeks in the fridge

Ready in just a few hours. Delicious with rice, noodles or dumplings. Try with Lebanese or telegraph cucumbers, daikon, celery or radishes.

INGREDIENTS

- 1–2 cucumbers
- ½ tsp salt
- 60 ml (¼ cup) soy sauce or tamari
- 2 Tbsp rice wine vinegar
- 1 Tbsp caster sugar
- Few slices fresh ginger (optional)
- 1 small chilli, chopped (optional)
- 1 garlic clove, sliced (optional)
- Splash of sesame oil (optional)

METHOD

1. Peel cucumbers if preferred. For large ones, halve lengthways and scoop out seeds. Slice into rounds, cubes or wedges.
 2. Place in a colander, sprinkle generously with salt and leave 15 minutes to release liquid.
 3. Gently heat soy sauce, vinegar and sugar until sugar dissolves. Remove from heat.
 4. Pat cucumber dry and transfer to a clean jar. Add any optional flavourings.
 5. Pour soy mixture over cucumber, pushing it down under the liquid. Seal and swish to coat.
 6. Refrigerate. Ready in a few hours; keeps up to 2–3 weeks.
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Fermented Carrots

Contributed by Anna Friedlander — from 'Pocket Pickler' by Alex Elliott-Howery & Cornersmith

Makes 2 × 300 ml jars • Prep: 30 mins + 2–7 days fermenting • Storage: up to 6 months in the fridge

These steps work for almost any sturdy vegetable — try beetroot, radishes, kohlrabi, green beans, celery or cauliflower. Surprisingly sweet, and great for getting kids into fermented foods.

INGREDIENTS

- 500 g (approx. 1 lb 2 oz) carrots, thinly sliced
- 1 brown onion, thinly sliced
- 40 g fresh turmeric, finely grated
- 40 g fresh ginger, grated
- 2 tsp salt
- 500 ml (2 cups) water

METHOD

1. Bring water and salt to the boil. Remove from heat and cool completely to room temperature.
2. Mix together carrot, onion, turmeric and ginger.
3. Pack tightly into clean jars. Pour cooled brine over, ensuring all vegetables are fully submerged. Leave 1 cm space at the top.
4. Wipe jar rims, seal and place in a cupboard away from direct sunlight.
5. Open lids to 'burp' the jars every 1–2 days to release carbon dioxide.
6. After approximately one week, transfer to the fridge for a further week before eating.
7. Refrigerated, fermented carrots keep for up to 6 months.

 *Ferment anything! Use the same brine (500 ml water, 2 tsp salt) with 500 g of any sturdy produce — cucumber, carrot, chilli, rhubarb stalk, radish and more.*

Basil Pesto with Cashews

Contributed by Anna Friedlander - her father's recipe

Storage: 1 week in the fridge, or freeze for up to 3 months

A fresh and vibrant pesto — perfect for using up a bumper basil harvest. Cashews give it a lovely creamy texture. Freeze in ice cube trays for easy portions throughout the winter.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups fresh basil leaves
- ½ cup cashews, toasted
- 50 g parmesan, grated
- ⅓ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 clove garlic
- Squeeze of lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 Tbsp water

METHOD

1. Place all ingredients into a food processor or blender.
2. Blitz until combined to your preferred consistency — chunky or smooth.
3. Taste and adjust seasoning, lemon juice or olive oil as needed.
4. Spoon into a clean jar and refrigerate. Pour a thin layer of olive oil on top to help preserve it.
5. To freeze: spoon into ice cube trays, freeze until solid, then transfer to a freezer bag. Use within 3 months.

 *Swap basil for rocket, parsley or even carrot tops. Swap cashews for any toasted nut - pine nuts, walnuts or almonds all work beautifully.*

Session 1 in Photos



Making the sauce together at the stove



Sharing knowledge and laughter around the table



The finished jars — tomato sauce and kumikumi pickle

Food Safety Notes

Home preserving is a rewarding tradition, and with a few simple precautions it is very safe. Please keep the following in mind:

1. Sterilise jars and lids thoroughly before use. Wash in hot soapy water, rinse well, then heat in an oven at 120°C for 15 minutes, or run through a hot dishwasher cycle.
2. Always check that lids have sealed properly. Sealed lids will be slightly concave and will not flex when pressed.
3. Discard any preserve that smells off, shows mould, or where the lid has not sealed or has bulged.
4. Fermented foods should be kept refrigerated after the initial ferment and consumed within the recommended timeframe.
5. For water-bath canning of low-acid foods, always follow current Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) or equivalent guidelines.

Impressum

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First published: 8 March 2026

Disclaimer

The recipes in this booklet are shared in good faith by community members for personal, non-commercial use. Do you have a favourite preserving, fermenting or seasonal recipe to share? We'd love to include it in a future edition. Send it to bergie@connectedpathways.co.nz.

While every care has been taken to ensure accuracy, the organisers and contributors accept no liability for outcomes arising from use of these recipes. Readers are encouraged to consult current food safety guidelines for home preserving and fermentation.



Join Us

Every 21st of the month, February to November
Bainham Hall, Golden Bay

Next Session

Session 2 — Foraging & Wild Foods

Friday 21 March 2026 • 10 am – 2 pm
248 Mackey Pass Road, RD1 Collingwood
Guided foraging walk • Plant identification • Tasting & recipes

connectedpathways.co.nz/aorere-community/

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