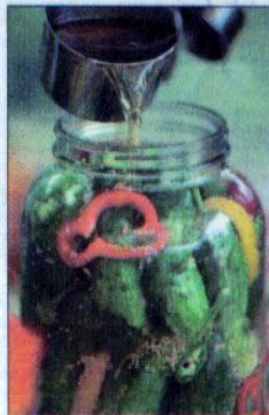


Cool as a cucumber, delicious as a dill



Vinegar is added to a gallon jar of Cold-Pack Refrigerator Dills, which must be refrigerated right away.



PHOTOS BY LEM PRICE/THE NEWS TRIBUNE

Tracy Simpson, left, watches as Kim Goetz puts on a pickle-making demonstration at the Duris Cucumber Farm's produce stand on River Road.

Cold-pack method is easiest way of making dill pickles

By Debbie Cafazzo
THE NEWS TRIBUNE

The Duris family has been farming in the Puyallup River Valley since the 1950s, gradually expanding from rhubarb to today's crops that include cucumbers, fresh dill, yellow wax and green beans, zucchini and yellow squash.

Each year, the farm's bounty spills into the Duris produce stand right off River Road, along with produce, flowers and honey from farms elsewhere in Pierce County and in Eastern Washington.

The stand has attracted a steady flow of customers over the years, many of them curious about what's been going on behind the scenes.

"We've always made pickles in the back," said Sandra Andrews, a Duris daughter who manages the family's produce stand. "People were always asking, 'What are you doing?'"

So this year, she and her employees decided to show them.

Pickle-making demonstrations start each week-day at 9:30 a.m. and continue until 11:30 a.m. The demonstrations will continue Mondays through Fri-

■ The Duris Cucumber Farm is located at 6012 44th St. E. in Puyallup. For more information, call 253-922-7635.

days during pickling season, which runs through the first week of October, Andrews said.

"We thought it would be a way to give a little more service to the customer," Andrews said.

She's made it easy for customers who watch the demonstration to try the recipe at home. In addition to cucumbers and other produce, the Duris stand also sells dill, pickling jars and spices used in the recipe.

On a recent Monday morning, the parking lot in front of the Duris stand was beginning to fill with cars. Most were driven by senior citizens who had come to browse. Many of the silver-haired men and women seemed to know exactly what they wanted, choosing carefully from the bins of vegetables, packages of seasonings and spices and rows of canning jars.

But others were just a little curious about Kim

Goetz and her cold-pack pickle demonstration.

The cold-pack method she teaches for pickling cucumbers means canners don't heat the brine, and they don't use a hot water bath to seal the canning jars. But pickles made this way must be refrigerated immediately after they're made and kept refrigerated.

"We're doing it this way because it's the easiest way to make them," Goetz said. The goal, she said, is to get customers started pickling with a recipe that's simple and not very time-consuming.

Goetz starts with a clean jar. She pushes a giant grape leaf to the bottom, allowing the sides of the leaves to reach up around the sides of the jar to cradle the pickles. The grape leaf is said to help keep the pickles crisp, along with alum, a substance traditionally used in pickling. Goetz uses both.

In a half-gallon jar, the grape leaf can go in whole; in a quart jar, she cuts it in half.

Next, she takes a few stalks of dill, from which she has trimmed the flower, and twists them into a circle around her fist. She places the dill circle atop

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