

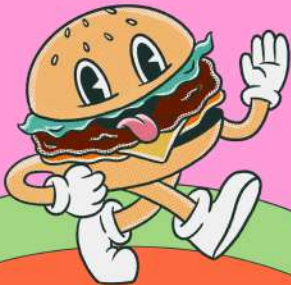


*NC Summertime Recipes*

**CATEGORY**

**MELONS**

*Forsyth County Public Library*



## *Recipes*



**WATERMELON RIND PICKLES**  
**SUMMER MELONBALL SALAD**  
**WATERMELON PRESERVES**  
**SPICED CANTALOUPE**



**BACON-WRAPPED WATERMELON-RIND PICKLES**  
**PORK SHOULDER STEAKS IN RED CURRY-BRAISED WATERMELON**  
**RAW CORN AND CANTALOUPE SALAD WITH RED ONION AND**  
**ROASTED POBLANO**  
**WATERMELON ARUGULA TABBOULEH WITH FETA AND MINT**  
**MYRTLE'S MELON BALLS**  
**SHERRI BROOKS VINTON'S CANTALOUPE PICKLES**  
**CANTALOUPE SORBET**  
**KATHY STRAHS'S WATERMELON-LIME JELLY CUBES**  
**HORCHATA DE MELON**

## *Watermelon Rind Pickles*

10 lbs. rind  
8 lbs. sugar  
1/4 qt. vinegar  
Spices

2 cinnamon sticks  
1 tbsp. cloves  
1 tbsp. allspice

Boil rind 20 minutes in salt water (3 tbsp. salt). Drain. Boil 20 minutes in alum water (2 tsp. alum). Drain. Boil 40 minutes in plain water. Start in cold water every time. Cook rind in vinegar, sugar, and spice, until syrup is clear and slightly thick.

Mrs. Walser H. Allen  
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

## Summer Melonball Salad

Jeff & Julie West  
Winston-Salem, NC

Ingredients: 2 cantaloupes, balled  
1 honeydew melon, balled  
1 watermelon, balled  
juice of 6 limes  
zest of 1 lime  
1 tbs. finely minced ginger  
1 tbs. finely minced fresh mint  
1/4 cup sugar  
1/2 cup water (or triplesec if you're brave)

Mix together and chill. Delicious and very fresh tasting.

## WATERMELON PRESERVES

Peel and cut a medium thick watermelon rind in cubes. 1 gal. of water and 1 kitchen tbsp. of lime, stir until dissolved. Pour same over rind and let stand overnight. Pour off next morning and boil in clear water for 15 min. then pour water off. Make a syrup of 3 1/2 lbs. of sugar, 1/2 gal. water, add rind and boil for 2 hrs. Just before taking from fire add juice of 2 lemons, or 2 small cans crushed pineapple.



## SPICED CANTALOUPE

1 qt. cantaloupe  
1 pt. vinegar  
1 lb. sugar  
cinnamon bark

cloves

When canning fruit  
know when to stop,  
Too much in a jar  
will blow its top.

Cut cantaloupes into strips about an in. wide and peel off outside rind. Cover with strong salt water and let soak several hrs. or overnight. Drain. Cook in plain water and when soft, put in syrup of vinegar, sugar and spices (tied in bag), and boil until transparent. Put into jars and cover with syrup.

# Bacon-Wrapped Watermelon-Rind Pickles

Makes 24 skewers

ASSUMING YOU HAVE THE PICKLES on hand, this could be the easiest and most gratifying finger food you ever make. They don't have to be served hot, but they ain't that good cold, so try and find a warm spot for these to hang out while they last... which will be all of about a minute.

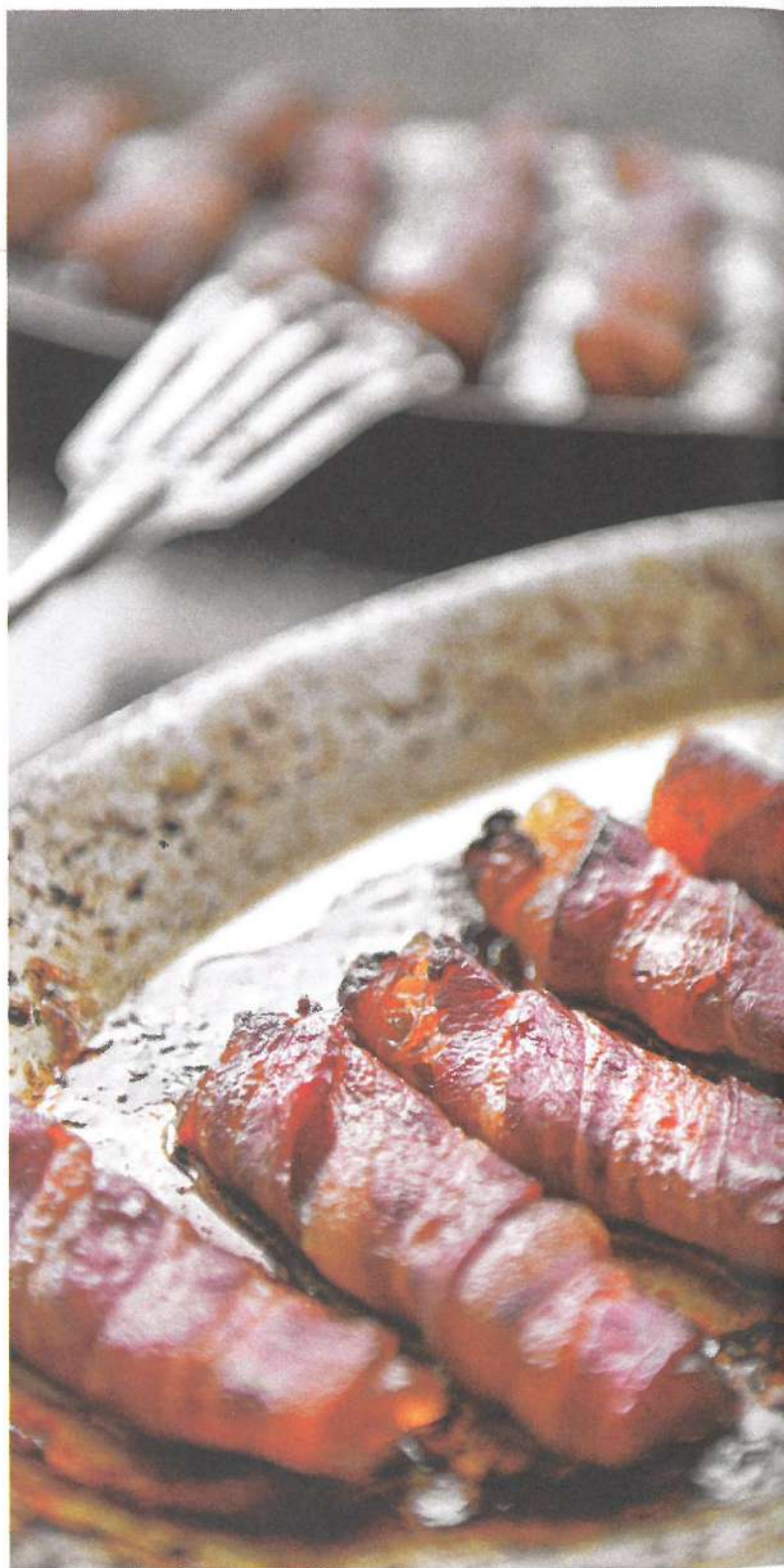
24 short pieces of your thickest watermelon- rind pickles	12 slices smoked bacon (thick-cut slices will not work)
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Preheat your oven to 375°F. Cut each slice of bacon in half and wrap the slices around the watermelon pickles. Wrap around the pickles leaving a little extra on either end so that when the bacon shrinks, you're not left with naked pickles. Don't take that as a cue to wrap the pickles two and three times, though; the bacon won't render properly.

Lay the wrapped pickles in a single layer on a baking sheet with at least a half an inch of space in between them. Just before you're ready to serve them, bake for about 15 minutes on the middle rack of your oven until the bacon is shrunken, fragrant, and caramelized.

Sometimes I like to take a little of the pickling liquid and stir it together with the bacon fat that's rendered out onto the pan and drizzle the tops. But that's just when I have time to spare. It's not necessary.

Serve warm with skewers, so folks can pick them up.





## Pork Shoulder Steaks in Red Curry–Braised Watermelon

Serves 4

LIKE CUCUMBER, watermelon loses much of its spirit when subjected to heat, so I almost never recommend it any way other than cold and raw. I've made an exception here because more people need to know about the wizardry that happens when watermelon and pork cook slowly together. Everybody who eats this will think the watermelon is tomato. Everybody.

Serve it alongside Perfect Rice with Herb Butter (page 292) or Stewed Fresh Butterbeans (page 133).

1 tablespoon vegetable oil	$\frac{2}{5}$ cup red wine vinegar	5 cups watermelon, cut into $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch cubes, seeds removed
4 8-ounce pork shoulder or blade steaks	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup honey	
3 teaspoons salt	3 tablespoons red curry paste	
1 teaspoon black pepper	2 teaspoons fish sauce	

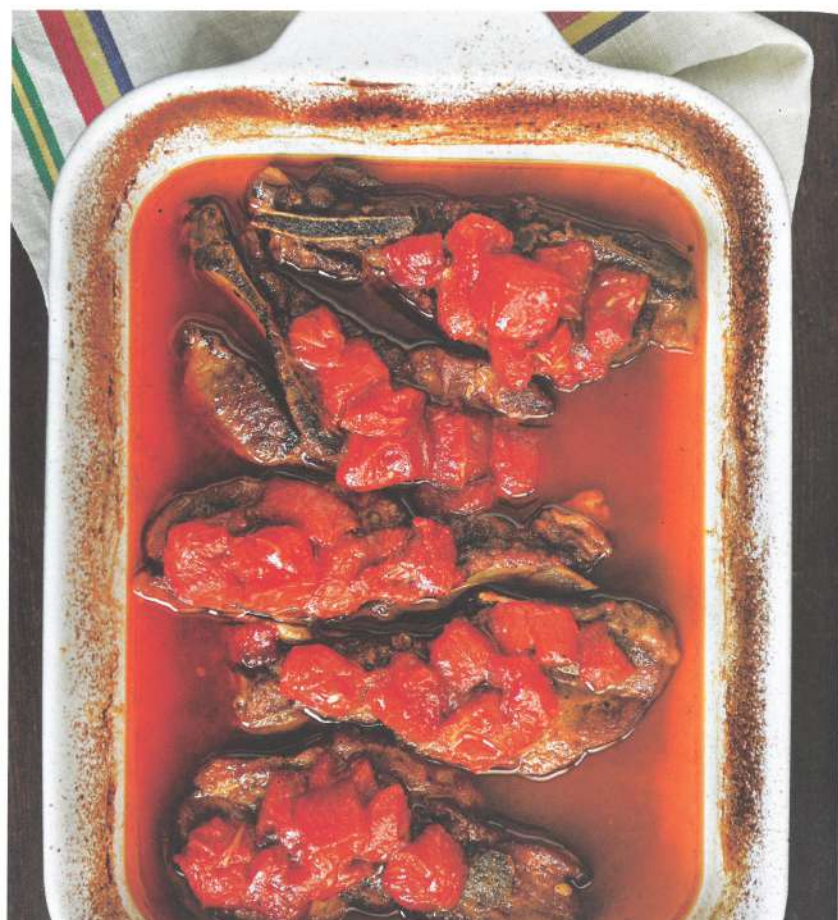
Preheat your oven to 350°F. Heat the oil in a 12-inch brazier, cast-iron skillet, or Dutch oven over medium-high heat until almost smoking. Season the pork with salt and pepper on both sides and put it in a single snug layer in the bottom of the pan to brown. Maintaining medium-high heat, brown the steaks on all four sides, and I mean that. The more caramelization your steaks take on, the more flavor the end braise will have.

While the pork is browning, whisk together the vinegar, honey, red curry paste, and fish sauce. Once the pork looks like something I'd be happy with, turn off the heat and drain away the excess fat. Scatter the watermelon over the top and pour the vinegar mixture over that. Either

with foil or a lid that fits snugly, cover and slide the pork onto the middle rack of your oven. Bake for 1½ hours. Remove the lid and bake an additional 30 minutes.

After 2 hours in the oven, the pork will be tender and the watermelon will look like shriveled tomatoes. There will be a good amount of juicy aromatic liquid pooled around it all. It should be more brothy than saucy.

To serve, spoon the watermelon chunks and some of the red curry broth on top of the pork steaks and know that if you don't serve this on top of something with the ability to soak up the red juice, you've totally missed the point.





# Raw Corn and Cantaloupe Salad with Red Onion and Roasted Poblano

Serves 4

I TEST THE QUALITY OF SWEET CORN by peeling back the husk and silk and biting into the raw kernels. At some point over the last nine summers of doing this at the restaurant, I decided I liked raw corn just as much as, if not more than, cooked corn.

When sweet corn is at its peak and your farmer tells you this is as good as it's gonna get, run home and make this salad.

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|--|---|--|
| 1 medium poblano pepper  | ¼ teaspoon granulated sugar                                     | 2 tablespoons olive oil for finishing          |
| ½ small red onion, halved and sliced super-thin with the grain | 2 cups raw corn, cut from about 5 ears                          | 1 teaspoon salt                                |
| ¼ cup red wine vinegar   | 1 cup cantaloupe, diced just slightly larger than a corn kernel | 2 tablespoons mint, roughly torn               |
| ¼ cup water  | 3 tablespoons lemon juice                                       | 1 tablespoon tarragon, picked and roughly torn |
| ¼ teaspoon salt  |   |  |



Roast the poblano over an open flame, on the grill, or under the broiler in your oven. Peel and discard most of the char. Remove the pepper's seeds and stem and slice the remaining flesh into a 1-inch julienne or matchsticks.

In a small bowl, combine the poblano, onion, vinegar, water, salt, and sugar and let it hang out or "pickle" for at least an hour before assembling the salad.

To assemble the salad, drain the onions and poblano and discard the liquid. In a medium bowl, combine them with the corn, cantaloupe, lemon juice, olive oil, and salt. Just before serving, stir in the herbs.

# Watermelon Arugula Tabbouleh with Feta and Mint

I GREW UP EATING SALT ON ICE-COLD WATERMELON, so this combination seemed only natural. The sweetness of the melon and the salty feta cheese make it one of my favorite summer treats. **Serves 6 to 8**

1 cup bulgur  
Zest and juice of 1 lemon  
Zest and juice of 1 lime  
4 cups cubed watermelon  
4 handfuls arugula or mixed baby greens  
2 small Kirby cucumbers, chopped  
1 cup (4 ounces) cubed feta cheese  
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil  
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar  
2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint  
2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro  
2 tablespoons minced red onion  
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Combine the bulgur, lemon zest and juice, and lime zest and juice in a saucepan with just enough water to cover, about 1 cup, and bring to a low boil. Cover and let simmer until the liquid is absorbed, about 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and drain any excess liquid.
2. Place the bulgur, melon, arugula, cucumbers, feta, oil, vinegar, mint, cilantro and onion in a large bowl. Season with salt and pepper to taste and toss gently to mix. Serve or refrigerate in an airtight container until ready to serve.

## In the Kitchen

**DELICATE SALADS** The secret to delicate salads like this is not to overmix. Simply place everything in a bowl, season with salt and pepper and mix only once. Otherwise, the melon and the arugula will start to break down and become watery and/or wilted.





## Myrtle's Melon Balls

1 cantaloupe, scooped into balls	½ cup sour cream or yogurt
¼ watermelon, scooped into balls	½ cup confectioners' sugar or honey
1 honeydew melon, scooped into balls	½ cup orange juice
2 cups strawberries, washed and halved	⅔ cup chopped pecans
2 cups blueberries, washed	

In a large bowl combine the fruits. In a separate bowl combine the remaining ingredients. Pour the dressing over the fruit, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

Serves 12.



## Sherri Brooks Vinton's Cantaloupe Pickles

*I adore these unexpected pickles, made from the fruit that I tend to lock into a sweet context, limiting its possibilities. My friend Sherri Brooks Vinton thinks creatively and delightfully about flavor and fun, and her books on preserving make me want to head to the farmers' market every weekend and come home with abundant goodness to put up. Sherri suggests an underripe, firm melon for these pickles since they have a long cooking time.*

MAKES ABOUT 4 CUPS

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- 1 cantaloupe (to yield 4 cups of 1-inch chunks)
  - 2 cups apple cider vinegar
  - 1 cup sugar
  - 1 tablespoon peeled and grated or very finely chopped fresh ginger
  - 2 cinnamon sticks, broken into halves
  - 1 bay leaf, torn in half
  - 3 whole cloves
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Wash the cantaloupe well, and then peel it, removing all the rind and seeds. Cut it into 1-inch chunks—you want about 4 cups. In a large nonreactive saucepan, combine all the remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat and stir well to dissolve the sugar. Remove from the heat and stir in the cantaloupe chunks. Cover and let stand for 1 hour.

Place the pan over medium-high heat and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and cook gently, simmering for 1 hour. The fruit will become translucent.

Transfer the pickles and their cooking liquid to a bowl to cool to room temperature. Then scoop the pickles into jars and add enough cooking liquid to cover them. Cover and refrigerate for up to 3 weeks. For information on water-bath canning, see page 27.

# Cantaloupe Sorbet

*With its bright color and pure and refreshing flavor, this cool treat can turn a heat wave into a tropical tea party. A few bites and you'll feel the woes of summer's soaring temperatures melt away. Plan to make the cantaloupe mixture in advance, as the sweetened fruit purée needs at least three hours to chill thoroughly once it's made. You can make it in the morning and churn it at night. It's best right after you've churned it. If you have extra, freeze it in a shallow pan then break it into chunks and purée it in a food processor to bring back its sorbet texture.*

MAKES ABOUT 1 QUART OR 6-8 SERVINGS

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**1/2 cup sugar**

**1/2 cup water**

**4 cups peeled chunks of cantaloupe**

**(3 1/2- to 4-pound cantaloupe)**

**1 tablespoon fresh lime juice or lemon juice**

**1/4 teaspoon salt**

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Make simple syrup by combining the sugar and water in a medium saucepan. Bring to a rolling boil and stir well to dissolve the sugar. Cook, stirring often, until you have a smooth, clear syrup, 2-3 minutes. Remove from the heat, transfer to a small bowl, and chill until very cold, about 1 hour.

Place the fruit in a food processor fitted with the metal blade and, pulsing on and off, grind it into a smooth, evenly textured purée. Add the cold syrup, lime or lemon juice, and salt and process until evenly combined, stopping often to scrape down the sides of the bowl. Transfer to a medium bowl and chill until very cold, at least 3 hours.

Transfer the purée to an ice cream maker and freeze according to the manufacturer's directions. Serve at once.

## Kathy Strahs's Watermelon-Lime Jelly Cubes

*Wiggly-jiggly, ruby-red, and wonderful, these watermelon delights from my friend Kathy Strahs generate smiles and not just from youngsters. I love having a container of these geometric treats in the refrigerator so that when I want a snack or need an accent to a busy-day lunch, all I need to do is reach for some cool cubes. For cookouts and picnics, these scarlet squares are a cool, make-ahead addition to the menu, as an appetizer or among the sweets.*

MAKES 64 CUBES

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**8–10 cups cubed, seedless watermelon**  
**¾ cup sugar**  
**5 (¼-ounce) packets unflavored gelatin**  
**3 tablespoons fresh lime juice or lemon juice**  
**⅓ cup chopped fresh mint (optional)**

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Grease an 8 × 8-inch glass or ceramic baking dish or metal baking pan with vegetable oil, and wipe out any excess with a paper towel. Purée the watermelon in a food processor or blender, working in batches if necessary. Pour the purée through a fine-mesh sieve into a medium bowl to strain out the pulp. You will need a total of 6 cups of strained watermelon juice.

Transfer 1 cup of the watermelon juice to a small saucepan. Add the sugar and stir well. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring until the sugar dissolves completely. Remove from the heat and set aside.

Measure out a second cup of the watermelon juice to a large bowl and sprinkle the gelatin over the surface. Stir to mix it into the watermelon juice and then let stand for 1 minute.

Pour the hot watermelon juice / sugar mixture into the bowl. Stir well with a whisk or a large spoon to dissolve the gelatin completely and mix everything well. Add the remaining watermelon juice to the bowl along with the lime or lemon juice. Stir to combine everything well.

Pour the gelatin mixture into the prepared dish or pan. Use a spoon to skim off and discard any foam that may have formed on the surface. Refrigerate the gelatin for at least 4 hours, or until it is completely firm and set. Cut the gelatin into 1-inch cubes and garnish each cube with mint. Serve chilled.

NOTE \* If you are using a blender to purée the watermelon, you may need to add a little water in order to move the blades. You can also add some of the strained juice from the first batches back into the blender to coax the fruit along in its transformation from solid to liquid.

*From The 8x8 Cookbook: Square Meals for Weeknight Family Dinners, Desserts and More—in One Perfect 8x8-Inch Dish, by Kathy Strahs. Copyright © 2015 by Kathy Lipscomb Strahs. Burnt Cheese Press, 2015.*



# Horchata de Melon

*This classic Latin beverage makes use of cantaloupe seeds, turning them into a bright, nutty, and delicious drink. How wonderful to learn that the seedy portion of a cantaloupe, which I have always viewed as compost (and once upon a time, as garbage), has culinary possibilities. Horchata is beloved from Central and South America through the Caribbean and Spain, and is often made with raw rice, sesame seeds, coconut, barley, or almonds. Traditional in Mexico, horchata de melon makes the most of the mighty magical melon.*

MAKES 1 SERVING

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**About 1/2 cup seeds, juice, and pulp from the  
center of 1 ripe cantaloupe**

**1 cup cold water**

**2 tablespoons sugar or honey**

**1 tablespoon fresh lime or lemon juice**

**Generous pinch of salt**

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In a blender, combine the cantaloupe seeds, pulp, and juice with the water, sugar or honey, lime or lemon juice, and salt. Blend at high speed for 30 seconds. Stop and scrape down the sides of the blender jar. Blend again for 1 minute, or until the seeds are very finely ground. Pour the contents of the blender jar, seeds and all, into a small bowl or a big glass and chill for at least 1 hour, up to 3 hours. Strain well and then discard the seedy bits left. Pour the liquid over ice and serve cold.