

4-H FOOD PRESERVATION AND CULTURAL AND ETHNIC FOODS LARIMER COUNTY

INTERNSHIP INTRODUCTION

4-H is a national youth development program that serves 6 million youth ages 8 to 18. This internship helped solve two problems for 4-H:

Many 4-H'ers who chose the Food Preservation Curriculum were unknowingly canning their foods incorrectly and submitting them to fairs and festivals. This could potentially be incredibly dangerous if the spoiled food was consumed. This internship's Food Preservation Project aimed to create a series of instructional videos about Boiling Water Canning and Pressure Canning to accompany the existing curriculum manual and enhance learning. These supplemental educational videos will help 4-H'ers can foods safely and successfully.

The existing Cultural and Ethnic Foods Manual received feedback that it was outdated and needed significant revision. This internship's Cultural and Ethnic Foods Manual Project thoroughly updated and expanded the existing version. The project called for collecting stories about cultural recipes, which will help youth in the Foods and Nutrition project area learn about foods from other cultures.

INTERNSHIP GOALS

This internship had two primary goals:

First, to create a series of instructional videos that will support 4-H'ers ages 8 to 18, so they learn to can foods safely and successfully.

Second, to update, revise, and expand the Cultural and Ethnic Foods manual, so it is more inclusive and engaging for 4-H youth.

HOW THIS APPLIES TO MY EDUCATION

As a Master of Communications and Media Management student, this internship has been invaluable.

In addition to further developing my skillsets in research, writing, photography, videography, directing, video editing, and graphic design, this internship has provided me with extensive project management experience.

Further, I've expanded my professional network and met so many incredible mentors, who have taught me about their careers.

WHAT I DID

For the Food Preservation Project, I attended a 30-hour Master Food Safety Advisor Training to learn about canning from Extension experts and conducted extensive research through informational interviews. Next, I wrote the video scripts and revised based on feedback. I then coordinated and directed the video shoot, which was 18 hours over the course of three days. Then, I spent weeks editing the videos; these videos underwent multiple rounds of revision based on feedback. Finally, the videos were made accessible, and they will be published on the Colorado 4-H website as supplemental material to aid young 4-H'ers.



Figure 1. Emma Cailene(intern) makes jam at the Master Food Safety Advisor Training.



Figure 2. Joy Cailene (volunteer, left) presents in video, while Emma Cailene (intern, right) records audio during the video shoot.

For the Cultural and Ethnic Foods Manual, I reached out to 44 people and organizations, requesting informational interviews. After meeting with the interviewees and learning about their recipes, I wrote the articles and used the graphic design platform Venngage to design the pages in the manual.

WHAT I LEARNED

I started this internship with a love for cooking, but no knowledge about food preservation. For the Food Preservation Project, I not only learned how to can foods, but I also learned food science fundamentals. The food safety knowledge that I gained has even changed how I live and cook in my personal life.

I also learned about many recipes, cultures, and histories while conducting research for the Cultural and Ethnic Foods Project. The informational interviews expanded my worldview and taught me that food is inherently braided with culture, history, and stories.

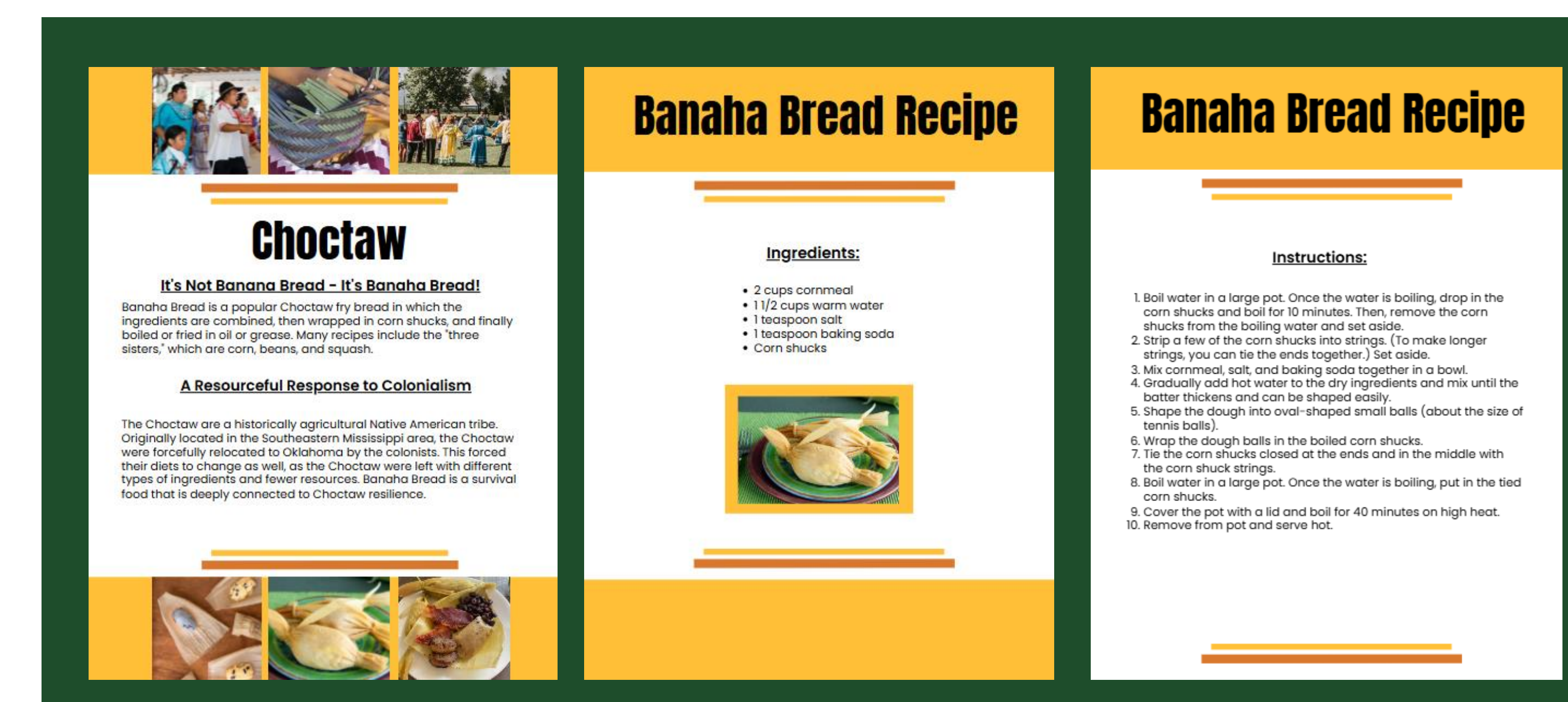


Figure 3. Sample pages from the updated Cultural and Ethnic Foods Manual.

While this internship further developed my skills in writing, photography, videography, video editing, and graphic design, I also learned entirely new skillsets, including set design, lighting, sound design, and directing.

Perhaps the greatest lesson I learned was to get outside my comfort zone by reaching out to strangers, networking, trying new things, and making connections with mentors and peers.

NEXT STEPS

The canning videos and the manual will be published on the Colorado 4-H website as a resource for 4-H'ers as they learn these new skills.

There are more 4-H Food Preservation curriculums that can be transformed into instructional videos, including Drying Foods and Freezing Foods. There are also more manuals in the process of being updated and expanded, like the Passport to Foreign Cookery Manual.