

AFTERTASTE

## IDEOLOGICAL RELISH

BY GABRIELLE LANGHOLTZ

So you read Michael Pollan and then Wendell Berry. You ruined your mother's Fourth of July when you regaled her friends, mid-barbecue, with descriptions of CAFOs and feedlots. You made friends with the livestock farmer at the Greenmarket, swore you'd visit the farm someday, asked him a thousand questions about breeds and butchering, heard him bemoan how everyone wants the rib eye and how each animal leaves him with a hundred more pounds of hard-to-sell ground beef. You took Tom Mylan's butchering class and tried to get your roommate to go in on half a cow carcass. And now 10 friends are about to show up for honest dogs and grassfed burgers—and you're putting *what* relish next to the heirloom watermelon on that handmade farmhouse table?

Your guests will be here in an hour, so there's no time to make your own. Lucky for you there's an upstanding alternative to the stuff made with corn syrup and dye—Brooklyn's pickle patriarch Bob McClure makes a rapture-inducing relish that will do those dogs justice.

"The spicy pickle recipe came from my great-grandma. But there were always a few pickles that wouldn't fit into the jar. Instead of tossing bigger cukes we thought we would turn them into chopped pickles." That is, relish. *Edible Brooklyn* staff got addicted to it last summer and now gastro giant Williams-Sonoma has started carrying it, too.

"The relish," explains McClure sincerely, "maintains the same ideology as the pickles.

"We know exactly where each ingredient comes from, how it's grown, traceability on all steps. If people have questions, it's like, 'here's the farmer's number.'"

But agriculture isn't this pickle pusher's only ideology. The two-town business is based in Brooklyn and Detroit, and Motown's downturn isn't lost on McClure. "Union auto industry made cars that aren't in demand. You can't just pump out stuff and hope there's a market for it. You have to make it to order," he says.

He's also careful to diversify his clients. "Suppliers who make mufflers and tires for GM got themselves involved with one huge cus-



tom. Big red flag! When they declare bankruptcy, you're screwed. Imagine if we were only selling to Williams-Sonoma and they dropped us tomorrow." Instead McClure does business with many small retailers—like Bedford Cheese, Greene Grape Provisions, Stinky Bklyn, Grab, Bklyn Larder and Marlow & Daughters.

Does he have any advice for Detroit? "They shouldn't make cars at all. They should make relish." 🍅