“instead of trying to find order in the endless diversity, one had to see that the diversity is the order and get on with mapping its psychological implications” (p.25). This preoccupation with diversity is, I think, a mistake, since it has led to a book that tries to cover far too many topics, facts, and points of view, without encouraging a deep or critical consideration of any of them. Scientific honesty may have pushed Rappaport away from a stronger theoretical framework, but it also weakened the power of this book.

Hence, his discussion of eating disorders barely skims the surface of what it means to the individual suffering from a disorder, the people around her, or those trying to treat her. As suggested by his book, it might be worth exploring the meanings of food, hunger, and satiation to all those affected by an individual’s eating disorder. But such a topic has no chance of emerging when it is mentioned in such a hurried way as the author moves on to yet another related topic.

In another part of the book, Rappaport touches on the ways in which parents try to socialize their children to use “good manners.” But he glides way too quickly from carefully culled observations and research to somewhat glib interpretations of anecdotal material (why we say that people eat like pigs, why parents worry what other adults will think of their children’s eating habits, and so on).

In another part of the book, Rappaport touches on the ways in which parents try to socialize their children to use “good manners.” But he glides way too quickly from carefully culled observations and research to somewhat glib interpretations of anecdotal material (why we say that people eat like pigs, why parents worry what other adults will think of their children’s eating habits, and so on).

In another part of the book, Rappaport touches on the ways in which parents try to socialize their children to use “good manners.” But he glides way too quickly from carefully culled observations and research to somewhat glib interpretations of anecdotal material (why we say that people eat like pigs, why parents worry what other adults will think of their children’s eating habits, and so on).

Expanding the Tomato: Transformation of Nature, Society and Economy
Mark Harvey, Steve Quilley, and Hue Beynon
Cheltenham, uk, and Northampton, ma: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2002 320 pp. $85.00 (cloth)

In the spring of 1993, I attended a New Jersey Museum of Agriculture benefit auction. I got twelve glass-and-wood cold frames from an earlier era for one dollar. Investigating a bit, I realized they were probably manufactured in the early part of the twentieth century for Campbell Soup Company contract farmers. In those days southern New Jersey had several thousand acres of Campbell Soup tomatoes in production. Times have changed; Campbell Soup cancelled their contracts with New Jersey growers and moved their sourcing. In many ways this book, an absolutely fascinating tale of food industrialization, brought home some of the forces driving those cold frames to my garden.

The world of food has changed dramatically since those cold frames were manufactured and used on contract-production farms. The authors illustrate this beautifully in a tale of tomato production, marketing, distribution, and consumption for the UK market. This volume continually reinforces that these four interrelated economic processes are neither independent nor strictly linear, but rather form a relational complex with one another. A constantly shifting array of people and new forms of technology interact to limit variation and surprise in the product stream. The tomato of today is a complex entity, no longer the “love apple” of yesterday, but rather a red orb with various embedded social values and economic demands, in many ways a metaphor for standardization and consolidation in our global society. For those interested in more local, community-based food systems, slow food, and/or participatory democratic control, this book can be read as a cautionary tale of shifting yet continually concentrating economic forces.

Exploring the Tomato is not bent on examining the cultural history of the tomato in South America or its early European introduction. Rather, it is intended as a social-political-economic analysis largely within the twentieth century using the UK as a case study, and a fascinating story it is. Prior to the perfection of industrialized plate-glass production in 1833, tomato production was a hit-or-miss affair, with absolute dependency on climatic factors. Quickly, there was a rapid expansion of greenhouse development within a strong local-regional context, with small family businesses at the core.

Fast forward to post–World War II uk and we find British households receiving a large proportion of their fresh tomatoes from the island of Guernsey off the French coast. However, as the authors state, “The ‘Guernsey Tom,’ a specific bio-social-economic species, had a meteoric rise followed by an equally rapid decline.” Historically, production was based on a large number of relatively small family holdings, all feeding the Guernsey Marketing Tomato Board (GMB) distribution system. Uniformity of tomatoes was not the operative frame; the grading standards of GMB acknowledged the large number of small farmers and resulting variability. By 1966 Guernsey production and export was less than 2 percent of the 1966 total. The decline in the seventies wasn’t due to any single factor in the global climate of tomato production but rather a number of external and internal factors, not least of which were the drive to greenhouse modernization and resulting consolidation, the oil crisis, and UK membership in the European Common Market. Production for
the UK market shifted to Western Europe, especially the Netherlands, and the bio-socio-economic tale of the tomato continues with a newer group of producers.

We also see in the modest tomato both the heightened sense of human fabrication of nature and probably the best example of human technological development as applied to food production. A sequence of developments—greenhouse environmental control, CO₂ enrichment, disease resistance and other cultivar characteristics, soil control with hydroponics, and industrial production of bumble bees for pollination—guarantees that today the common tomato is simultaneously “fresh” and “constructed.” The reach extends to the people who ensure that these “fresh” tomatoes arrive in the supermarket quick enough to maintain immediate consumer availability and retain shelf life. The consolidation of supermarkets and the creation of regional delivery centers (RDCs) have created an entirely new breed of worker contract. To handle the vagaries of consumer purchases, the desire (need) to maintain shelves full without maintaining a huge in-store inventory implies a great deal of labor flexibility at the RDCs. Thus, worker contracts in the cited cases allow a four-hour window for ending the workday, plus or minus two hours from the normal stopping time. Planning family life must become extremely difficult under these circumstances. Although these implications are not pursued in this volume, the family ramifications seem profound.

These are snippets of the fascinating and useful analysis provided in this volume. It reminds me that although, like many people, I raise tomatoes that include cherry and full size, plum and beefsteak, red and yellow and orange; although I like to freeze them for winter use and slice them in the perspective, is the definition of brunoise first as a “mixture of carrots, onions, and celery cut into a fine dice...for soups, sauces and the like,” then identifying the size of brunoise as a crosscut of bâtonnet. All three of the primary culinary texts used in this country disagree with this definition. (The trinity of vegetables named is referred to by most chefs as miirepoix; brunoise is commonly agreed to be one-eighth by one-eighth by one-eighth inch, not one-quarter by one-quarter by one-quarter inch.) Issues like this may seem picayune to the average reader, but professional chefs take this kind of kitchen precision very seriously.

For the reader looking for a culinary dictionary that is brief and to the point, with a relatively broad scope, The Chef’s Companion will fit the bill. As a quick reference for the home cook or busy professional, this volume would be useful. Those seeking more depth may wish to consider one of the heftier tomes on the market.

—Jeffrey Miller, Colorado State University

Elizabeth Riely has written a dictionary that fills a middle ground in the area of food reference works. It is less encyclopedic than the hefty Larousse Gastronomique, yet offers more depth than a traditional dictionary. One of the strengths of this volume is the large number of terms related to Asia. As Asian cuisines become more specialized by region and more associated foodstuffs come to the market, a dictionary that explains these terms is an asset for cooks.

This volume also has a large number of entries devoted to wine and spirits. For the wine aficionado a separate volume would be a must, but for someone wanting a quick reference to the more prevalent types of wines and spirits, the entries are informative, though southern hemisphere wines get less attention than their northern hemisphere counterparts. Most of the common terminology used in professional kitchens is found in this dictionary. A brief comparison with the three primary modern cooking texts (Wayne Gisslen’s Professional Cooking, the Culinary Institute of America’s Professional Chef, and Sarah Labensky and Alan M. Hause’s On Cooking) shows that most of the culinary terms used in those volumes are also in this dictionary.

The main shortcomings in the dictionary are in the area of equipment and terms for vegetable cuts. For a dictionary titled The Chef’s Companion the omission of terms like rondeau and sauteuse seemed curious. A chef might also take issue with one or two of Riely’s definitions of vegetable cuts. Most of the major culinary texts have precise names and size standards for vegetable cuts. As an example, The Chef’s Companion defines a dice as “smaller than a cube.” “Cube” is a term infrequently used in professional kitchens and has no particular size associated with it, as is asserted in this volume. In professional kitchens terms like “dice” are differentiated by modifiers like “large” or “small” and normally have a very precise meaning: “small dice” generally agreed to mean a quarter inch on all sides. A similar error, from a chef’s perspective, is the definition of brunoise first as a “mixture of carrots, onions, and celery cut into a fine dice...for soups, sauces and the like,” then identifying the size of brunoise as a crosscut of bâtonnet. All three of the primary culinary texts used in this country disagree with this definition. (The trinity of vegetables named is referred to by most chefs as miirepoix; brunoise is commonly agreed to be one-eighth by one-eighth by one-eighth inch, not one-quarter by one-quarter by one-quarter inch.) Issues like this may seem picayune to the average reader, but professional chefs take this kind of kitchen precision very seriously.

For the reader looking for a culinary dictionary that is brief and to the point, with a relatively broad scope, The Chef’s Companion will fit the bill. As a quick reference for the home cook or busy professional, this volume would be useful. Those seeking more depth may wish to consider one of the heftier tomes on the market.

—Jeffrey Miller, Colorado State University

Bookends

The Chef’s Companion
Elizabeth Riely
Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2003
xii + 355 pp. $29.95 (paper)

Elizabeth Riely has written a dictionary that fills a middle ground in the area of food reference works. It is less encyclopedic than the hefty Larousse Gastronomique, yet offers more depth than a traditional dictionary. One of the strengths of this volume is the large number of terms related to Asia. As Asian cuisines become more specialized by region and more associated foodstuffs come to the market, a dictionary that explains these terms is an asset for cooks.

This volume also has a large number of entries devoted to wine and spirits. For the wine aficionado a separate volume would be a must, but for someone wanting a quick reference to the more prevalent types of wines and spirits, the entries are informative, though southern hemisphere wines get less attention than their northern hemisphere counterparts. Most of the common terminology used in professional kitchens is found in this dictionary. A brief comparison with the three primary modern cooking texts (Wayne Gisslen’s Professional Cooking, the Culinary Institute of America’s Professional Chef, and Sarah Labensky and Alan M. Hause’s On Cooking) shows that most of the culinary terms used in those volumes are also in this dictionary.

The main shortcomings in the dictionary are in the area of equipment and terms for vegetable cuts. For a dictionary titled The Chef’s Companion the omission of terms like rondeau and sauteuse seemed curious. A chef might also take issue with one or two of Riely’s definitions of vegetable cuts. Most of the major culinary texts have precise names and size standards for vegetable cuts. As an example, The Chef’s Companion defines a dice as “smaller than a cube.” “Cube” is a term infrequently used in professional kitchens and has no particular size associated with it, as is asserted in this volume. In professional kitchens terms like “dice” are differentiated by modifiers like “large” or “small” and normally have a very precise meaning: “small dice” generally agreed to mean a quarter inch on all sides. A similar error, from a chef’s perspective, is the definition of brunoise first as a “mixture of carrots, onions, and celery cut into a fine dice...for soups, sauces and the like,” then identifying the size of brunoise as a crosscut of bâtonnet. All three of the primary culinary texts used in this country disagree with this definition. (The trinity of vegetables named is referred to by most chefs as miirepoix; brunoise is commonly agreed to be one-eighth by one-eighth by one-eighth inch, not one-quarter by one-quarter by one-quarter inch.) Issues like this may seem picayune to the average reader, but professional chefs take this kind of kitchen precision very seriously.

For the reader looking for a culinary dictionary that is brief and to the point, with a relatively broad scope, The Chef’s Companion will fit the bill. As a quick reference for the home cook or busy professional, this volume would be useful. Those seeking more depth may wish to consider one of the heftier tomes on the market.

—Jeffrey Miller, Colorado State University