

Applebutter

(Continued from Page 42)

Stewart, church member from Delta, "you can make a couple of circles around the kettle and then bring the stirrer straight down the middle, or you can make a figure eight," he says with a

grin. Then, he adds with a laugh, "Believe me, you come up with all kinds of ways when you stand here stirring for 12 hours." Believe it or not, 12 hours is the usual amount of time it

takes to get a good batch of applebutter. And, nearly 100 per cent of that time is spent standing by the fire, constantly stirring the mixture so that it doesn't stick. There are a few other key processes, but stirring is the main part. That's why having a whole community turn out for an applebutter making day is not only fun, but easier for everyone involved.

In the beginning stages, the apples and water are hard to stir, but as the apples break down and turn to liquid it becomes an easier task. When the apples do liquify, the mixture fills the kettles to the brim and must be cooked for about four or five hours until "most the water boils out," as the experts say. Then, when the water is out, and the mixture "looks

right", sugar is added. Ninety pounds of sugar go into one kettle of applebutter. This is a very key process of the applebutter making, and one that takes as long as an hour for seven pots. "If you put too much in at one time, the kettle will spill," explained Ben Burk, Delta RI, who was the chief

cook for this year's batch of applebutter, and who, along with his sister and other brother, Ramsey, is known as one of the main applebutter authorities in the neighborhood. So, Ben spends at least an hour or more going around to each kettle with a dishpan of

(Continued on Page 44)

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