



## YOUNG CHEFS COOK LOCAL WITH SOLAR POWER

Carole Clark  
ccSCOOP News

07-27-09 - 5:15 p.m. - No, the shiny reflective surfaces hovering behind the raised beds of the Hudson Youth Center Garden on Third Street are not spaceships, but they can claim a close relationship to the Sun. Two solar ovens, on loan from Jody Rael of Sundog Solar, are being put to good use by the City of Hudson's Oakdale campers.

Under the direction of Amy Eitelmann, Sundog's oven specialist, the children have been learning how solar ovens work. Last week, five- and six-year-old campers ran a test. They baked half their chocolate chip cookie batter in the solar ovens and half in the Youth Center's gas oven. Then they ran a taste test. Ask about the results and you will unanimously hear that solar cookies are softer. Some of our pint-sized bakers are adamant that solar baked cookies taste better too, but that appears to be a matter of opinion.

This week older campers will be using the solar ovens to bake apricot solar energy bars for the [Taste of Columbia County Bounty](#) event on Monday, August 3.



Baking with fresh, local apricots has been a learning experience. Although the apricots are grown just outside of town, they are a new experience for both campers and counselors. Encouraged by the more intrepid members of the group, even those who are hesitant to try the apricots take the plunge and find to their delight a new fruit that they quite like.

In addition to the energy bars, campers are preparing for the event farm fresh frittatas, using eggs donated by Feather Ridge Farm and vegetables donated by the Community Supported Garden at the St. Joseph Center in Valatie. The City of Hudson's innovative "Gardening, Cooking, and Eating" program was launched this summer by former restaurant owner and chef Carole Clark and, with funding, will continue throughout the school year. Funding for this summer's program has been made possible through the Healthcare Consortium's Kids in Motion Program. Equipment has been donated by The Second Show in Hudson and numerous friends and neighbors. If you are interested in becoming a supporter of the Hudson Youth Center's "Gardening, Cooking and Eating" program, contact Trudy Beicht, director of Hudson's Department of Youth at [Beicht@mhcable.com](mailto:Beicht@mhcable.com), or call (518) 828.0017.