

=====

Base recipe:
(low fibrosity, transparent, medium flexibility)

- Ingredients:
- approximately 20 apples
 - approximately 2 L water
 - ¼ cup sugar

(Makes approximately 3 L of pulp – approximately 1 L per 18” x 13” baking tray)

=====

Within this zine, I will outline the process and ingredients used to make a basic Apple Fruit Leather and a series of related material explorations conducted for the FoFA Gallery’s Exploring Sustainability Across the Arts sustainable signage program. The outcome of this research is 9 iterations of Apple Fruit Leather containing additional materials or using different drying surfaces. The base recipe can be made into leather on its own or be paired with one of the additional recipes. Each additional recipe to the base recipe will yield a leather material with slightly different qualities including varied flexibility, rigidity, stickiness, texture and fibrosity.

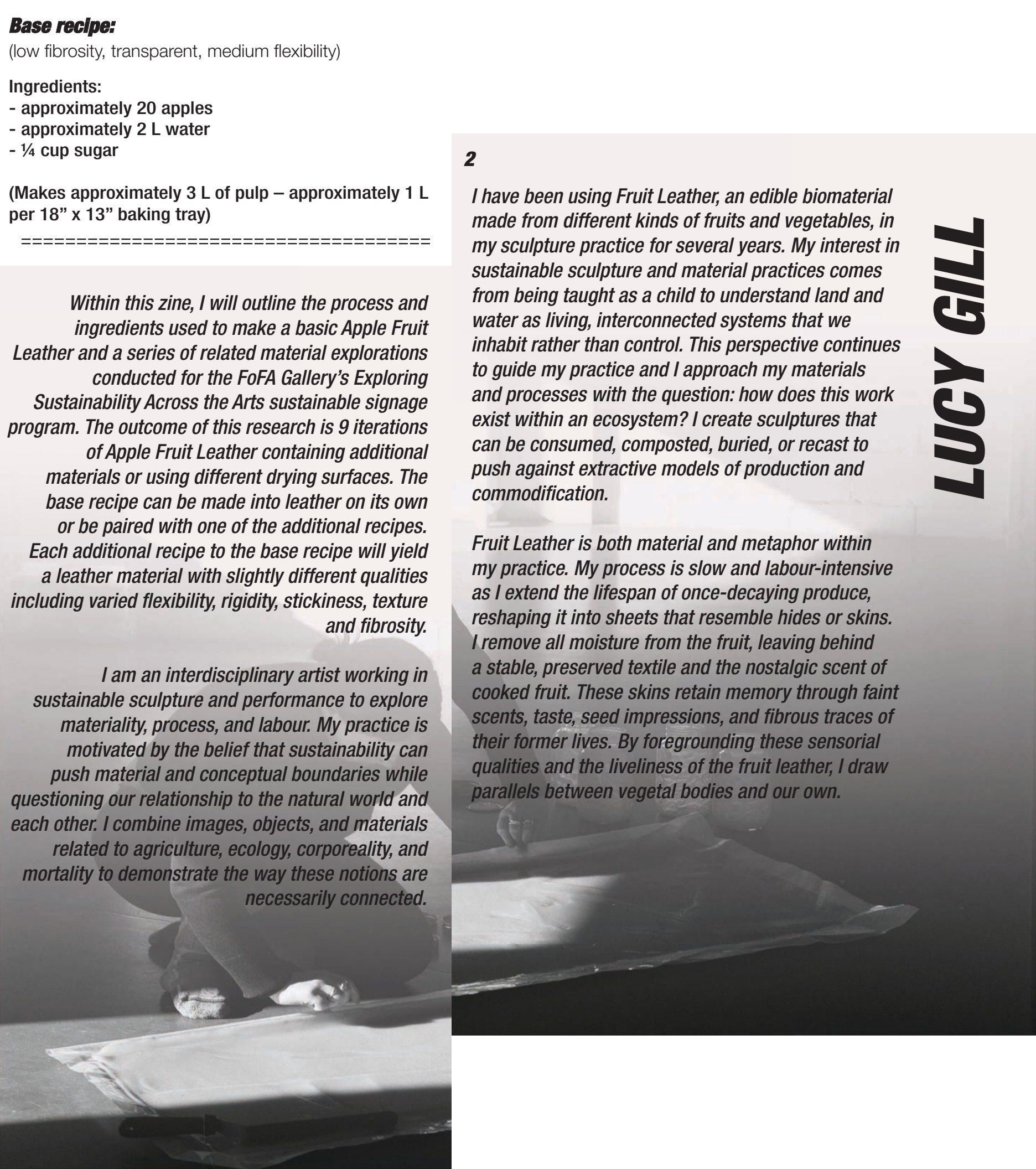
I am an interdisciplinary artist working in sustainable sculpture and performance to explore materiality, process, and labour. My practice is motivated by the belief that sustainability can push material and conceptual boundaries while questioning our relationship to the natural world and each other. I combine images, objects, and materials related to agriculture, ecology, corporeality, and mortality to demonstrate the way these notions are necessarily connected.

2

I have been using Fruit Leather, an edible biomaterial made from different kinds of fruits and vegetables, in my sculpture practice for several years. My interest in sustainable sculpture and material practices comes from being taught as a child to understand land and water as living, interconnected systems that we inhabit rather than control. This perspective continues to guide my practice and I approach my materials and processes with the question: how does this work exist within an ecosystem? I create sculptures that can be consumed, composted, buried, or recast to push against extractive models of production and commodification.

Fruit Leather is both material and metaphor within my practice. My process is slow and labour-intensive as I extend the lifespan of once-decaying produce, reshaping it into sheets that resemble hides or skins. I remove all moisture from the fruit, leaving behind a stable, preserved textile and the nostalgic scent of cooked fruit. These skins retain memory through faint scents, taste, seed impressions, and fibrous traces of their former lives. By foregrounding these sensorial qualities and the liveliness of the fruit leather, I draw parallels between vegetal bodies and our own.

LUCY GILL



BASE RECIPE INSTRUCTIONS

TOOLS:

peeler
knife
large pot
blender
baking tray
offset spatula
optional: dehydrator

PREPARE APPLES:

Wash and peel apples. Cut out the cores.

*(this step is optional: you can leave the skin on and even use the cores and stems in your pulp, this will result in a more textured, fibrous leather)
chop apples into smaller pieces (approximately 1-inch cubes).*

BOIL:

Add all ingredients into a large pot. Put on high heat until the sugar dissolves and the water boils. Once boiling, turn heat to low and let simmer until the apples soften (about 10 minutes).

BLEND:

*Let the apples cool, then blend the apples into a thick pulp
the mixture should be a thick apple sauce.*

(depending on how much water was released from the apples while boiling them, you may need to strain some water out of the mixture before blending to avoid the pulp being too liquid).

PREPARE SURFACE:

*Prepare a non-stick and flexible surface to dehydrate the pulp upon
(parchment paper, thick plastic, aluminum foil).*

note:

*Recipes in this zine may require different surfaces, be sure to consult the specific recipe you are following
do not spread the pulp directly onto your baking sheet.*

SPREAD:

Pour a small amount of pulp onto your prepared tray and begin to spread it around using your offset spatula until it forms an even layer. Continue to add pulp as needed (approx. 1 L) until the entire surface of the tray is covered in an even layer of pulp, approximately 1/8 inch thick.

note:

it is very important to create an even layer of pulp across your surface to ensure the material dries evenly. if the pulp is spread unevenly, thinner areas may burn/over-dehydrate while thicker areas will not dehydrate.

DEHYDRATE:

oven:

Set your oven to the lowest temperature it goes (usually about 170 F) and leave the pulp in the oven for approximately 6-8 hours, checking on it regularly (every 30 mins). The amount of time it takes to dehydrate will depend on the thickness of your pulp and your oven.

dehydrator:

Set your dehydrator to the fruits and vegetable setting (135 F / 57 C). The amount of time it takes to dehydrate will depend on the thickness of your pulp and the number of trays you are dehydrating at once.

Apple Fruit Leather on Parchment:

(low fibrosity, transparent, medium flexibility)

Follow base recipe.

Use parchment paper as your non-stick surface.

=====

Fruit Leather dried on parchment paper creates a slightly wrinkled and asymmetrically rippled leather because the parchment paper crinkles as the pulp dries. This is a good drying surface when dehydrating Fruit Leather in your oven at home because the parchment paper can withstand the heat. When peeling the leather away from the parchment paper, the paper will likely tear and will need to be removed in sections. For this reason, the parchment paper is not often reusable for future batches of fruit leather.



5

6

Apple Fruit Leather on Plastic:

(low fibrosity, transparent, medium flexibility)

Follow base recipe.

Use thick plastic as your non-stick surface.

note:
Do not use plastic if you are using an oven, this recipe can only be used with a dehydrator.

=====

Fruit Leather dried on plastic creates a very flat fruit leather that is smooth on the surface that dries against the plastic and slightly textured on the surface that air dries. This drying surface is best used in dehydrators that maintain a consistently low temperature and should not be used in home ovens. The thick plastic is easily peeled away from the fruit leather once completely dried, and they can be washed and reused for future batches of Fruit Leather. This recipe is ideal for making consistent and smooth leather.





Apple Fruit Leather on Fabric (linen/cotton):

(high fibrosity, opaque, medium flexibility, strong)

Follow base recipe.

When prepping your non-stick surface, use parchment paper or plastic as a base. Then lay a piece of fabric down. Its easiest to work with if the fabric is slightly larger than the surface of your tray. Pour the pulp onto the fabric and spread into an even layer as usual.

note:

You may need another person to hold the fabric in place while you spread it.

=====

Fruit Leather dried on fabric creates a strong structural integrity because the pulp is reinforced by the fibres in the fabric which is integrated into the material. The texture of the base surface (parchment paper or plastic) may affect the texture of the dried pulp and fabric.

note:

The dehydration time for this recipe may be longer due to the thickness of the fabric material and its capacity to hold moisture.

9

10

Apple Fruit Leather with Cheesecloth:

(high fibrosity, medium opacity/transparency, medium flexibility)

Follow base recipe.

When prepping your non-stick surface, use parchment paper as a base and spread pulp into an even layer as usual. Before putting the tray into the oven, cut a piece of cheesecloth to the size of your tray (a few layers of cheesecloth work nicely) and then lay it across the top of the surface lightly. Press the cheesecloth to embed it into pulp.

note:

Try not to use the offset spatula once the cheesecloth has been added, it will pull the cheesecloth and disrupt the even layer of pulp.



=====

Fruit Leather with cheesecloth creates a slightly more structural leather while remaining flexible and malleable. The cheesecloth adds some reinforcement, but it is not as stiff as the fruit leather and fabric recipe.





12

Apple Fruit Leather with Sawdust:

(high fibrosity, opaque, medium flexibility, strong)

base recipe

+

sawdust

Make the base recipe.

Pour a litre of pulp into a large bowl. Begin to add sawdust while stirring the mixture add sawdust until the pulp is thick but still mixable. Be sure to integrate the dry sawdust into the pulp until it is fully immersed and wetted by the pulp.

Spread and dehydrate as described in base recipe.

note:

Sawdust may be combustibile when exposed to high temperatures. Be sure to keep a low temperature in the oven and use caution when using this method.

=====

Fruit Leather made with sawdust creates a very textured and strong material.

The wood fibres are bound together by the pulp to create a malleable wood surface. The surface feels dyer in comparison to other fruit leathers.



Apple Fruit Leather with Gelatine:

(low fibrosity, transparent, rigid, brittle)

1 L of base recipe pulp

+

10 mL of gelatine

50 mL of hot water

Make base recipe.

In a small dish, combine the gelatine and hot water thoroughly until it creates a thick liquid. Add gelatine mixture to the base pulp and mix until the gelatine is evenly combined. Spread and dehydrate as described in base recipe.

=====

Fruit Leather made with gelatine creates a very rigid material. This leather is not malleable and may even snap due to its rigidity. The gelatine makes the pulp dry into a leather that resembles a hard plastic, but it does not have the same strength as plastic. This leather may also separate and form cracks in some areas throughout the drying process if the gelatine is not evenly distributed.



13

14

Apple Fruit Leather with Glycerine:

(low fibrosity, transparent, high flexibility, glossy)

1 L of base recipe pulp

+

10 mL of glycerine

Make base recipe.

Add glycerine into apple mixture. Re-blend the mixture to ensure the glycerine is fully integrated. Spread and dehydrate as described in base recipe.

=====

Fruit Leather made with glycerine will enhance the flexible qualities of the leather. The glycerine creates an almost oily or sticky quality to the surface of the fruit leather, making it seem like the leather is still wet or may never dry. Leather with glycerine will maintain a sheen and glossy quality that is usually lost during the dehydration process.



Apple Fruit Leather with Gelatine and Glycerine:

(low fibrosity, transparent, medium flexibility, strong)

1 L of base recipe pulp

+

10 mL of gelatine

5 mL of glycerine

50 mL of hot water

Make base recipe.

In a small dish, combine the gelatine, glycerine, and hot water thoroughly until it creates a thick liquid. Add this mixture to the base pulp and mix until the gelatine and glycerine are evenly combined. Spread and dehydrate as described in base recipe.



=====

Fruit Leather made with both gelatine and glycerine obtains the structural durability of the rigid gelatine and is balanced by the flexibility from the glycerine. The combination of the two additives creates a strong fruit leather that maintains its malleability. The quantities of both additives can be adjusted depending on the desired result.

15

16

Apple Fruit Leather with Agar Agar and Glycerine:

(low fibrosity, transparent, medium flexibility, strong, glossy)

1 L of base recipe pulp

+

2 tsp agar agar

3 tsp glycerine

50 mL of hot water

Make base recipe.

In a small dish, combine the agar agar, glycerine, and hot water thoroughly until it creates a thick liquid. Add mixture to the base pulp and mix until the agar agar and glycerine are evenly combined.

Spread and dehydrate as described in base recipe

=====

Fruit leather made with agar agar and glycerine is balanced between strong and flexible. The agar agar acts as a binding agent, creating structural integrity, while the glycerine maintains flexibility and gloss. The quantities of the both additives can be adjusted depending on the desired result.



Apple Fruit Leather



All measurements are approximate. Different sizes and varieties of apples will yield a different texture of pulp and varying amounts! My base recipe is a recommended amount to make to be able to experiment with the pulp by splitting it into three 1 L batches. Depending on the size of your oven/dehydrator, you can also dry multiple sheets of leather at once, reducing the amount of energy used during the dehydration process.

This recipe can be halved, doubled, quadrupled and more!

=====



Lucy Gill (she/they) is an emerging interdisciplinary artist from unceded Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh territories (Vancouver), now based in Tiohtià:ke/Mooniyang (Montréal). They use organic materials to create sculptures that embrace reuse, transformation, and decay. Gill has participated in numerous group exhibitions in Montréal, most recently in *Au Seuil du Corps Sensible* at CIRCA Art Actuel (2026), *CORED*, a duo-exhibition with Josh Jensen at *Produit Rien* (2026), *Art Volt Collection Exhibition* at FoFA Gallery (2025) and *Ground Level, First Floor, Emporium Builders Supplies* (2025). They will be the Artist in Residence with collaborator Josh Jensen in the fall of 2026 at the Klondike Institute of Art and Culture in Dawson City, Yukon.

on the left :

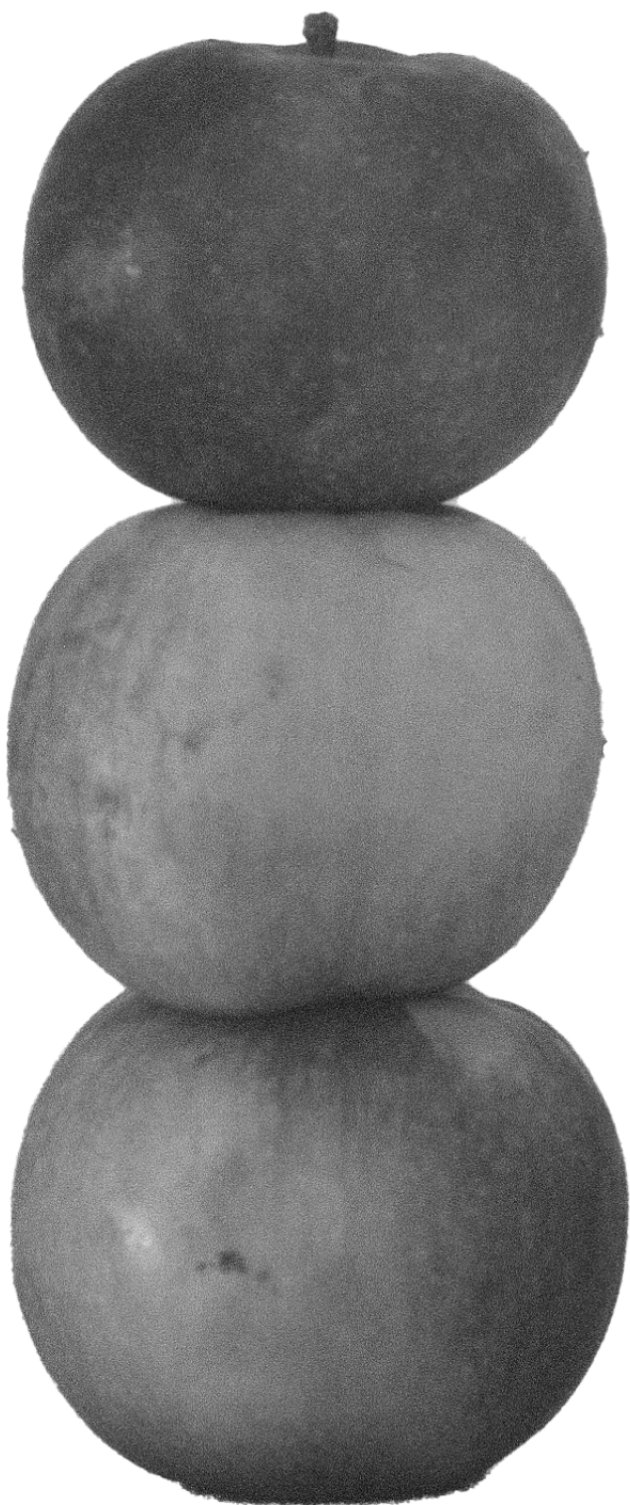
Pall
fruit leather
2025

Design credit:
Joé Côté-R

Photo credits:

Josh Jensen :
pages 1-2, 12, 18, backcover

Thomas Alexandre :
pages 7-8



This publication was produced by the FOFA Gallery as part of its Exploring Sustainability Across the Arts initiative, a research and outreach program aimed at developing material and eco-friendly practices in cultural venues. Each publication in this series is the result of research conducted by the initiative's collaborators.



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des arts
du Canada

