

Urban Harvest?

We've always felt that celebrating harvest in an urban context is a bit problematic. For years we have brought our tins and packets and a lump of coal (apparently an industrial tradition, as historically in our community the fruit of many people's labours, was coal) and donated them (the tins not the coal) to a local project that supports destitute refugees and asylum seekers. But there is still a disconnection between us as consumers and the actual act of growing our food. However, this was the first harvest after we had started cultivating our overgrown allotment and we were able to offer the real first fruits (well whatever was ripe and in glut at the particular time – I think it was marrows and French beans) of our labours. It was a really good urban harvest!

Grain swelling
swaying gently in the breeze
the combine harvester working by floodlight
the golden harvest brought safely in.

**God of the abundant harvest
we give you thanks.**

Apples and plums ripening
in the late summer sun
the allotment swelling with produce
a glut given out to family and friends.

**God of the abundant harvest
we give you thanks.**

Cress seeds sprouting
in the warmth of a kitchen windowsill
growing on soaked tissue
tended by tiny pairs of eager hands.

**God of the abundant harvest
we give you thanks.**

Market stalls groaning
fruit and veg spilling onto the street
recipe leaflets hand out their challenge
to try and cook something new.

**God of the abundant harvest
we give you thanks.**

Rows of regimented packets
mountains of shiny cans
boxes of our favourite varieties
bottles to add flavour to spice up our lives.

**God of the abundant harvest
we give you thanks.**

©Clare McBeath & Tim Presswood, 2008

