

Summer Canning at Peak

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By MISS MARJORIE BLACK, Noted Western Home Economist

Possessing the "know-how" of canning can mean the difference between success and failure. Home canning can be pleasant and satisfying, as well as useful, if you have the right material at your fingertips. Even if you have already taken a "first" at your local fair or if you have a desire to try your hand at home canning for the first time, read over these helpful methods of canning and the thoroughly tested recipes below. I know they will simplify this important phase of cooking for you.

Careful Planning Essential

First of all decide just what fruits and vegetables you want to can. Think about the favorites of your family—what foods will make your winter menu planning easier, and make your meals more appetizing and nourishing for your family.

Consider the equipment you already have on hand. Perhaps you may want to buy a new piece of equipment to have for use in future years. Some equipment you might find easier to borrow from a neighbor. Many

women plan an equipment rotation system or do a lot of their home canning cooperatively.

Check all available jars and glasses for cracks and nicks, especially around the opening. By doing this first, you will eliminate washing any that are not suitable for use. Thoroughly wash all jars and glasses in hot soapy water, rinse well and seal with boiling water. Place them, inverted, on a clean towel on trays for easy moving.

Have your pressure cooker and water bath canner in top condition. A good kitchen clock or timer will be a great help, too, for correct timing is particularly important. Be sure to use fresh lids and rubbers.

Another thing to remember is that your homemade products will only be as good as the fruits and vegetables that you use to make them. When you select the fruits and vegetables, do so personally, and be sure that they are absolutely fresh, firm and just ripe. Carefully packed and handled fruits and vegetables are free from brown spots and bruises. Bargains at the fruit stand usually end up

making inferior canned products. True value and wise buying are of utmost importance. Instead of buying overripe fruit, buy first grade produce at the height of the season when the prices are reasonable.

Also, remember to select your recipes with care. Choose recipes that come from reliable sources. All modern cook books contain up-to-date directions and timetables that are developed and perfected with you, the homemaker, in mind. By all means follow these recipes to the letter—experimenting can mean a great disappointment.

PRESSURE COOKERS IDEAL FOR CANNING

Pressure cookers are recommended by leading food authorities as a safe method of canning non-acid food—vegetables, meat, fowl and fish. Successful canning must arrest or destroy the action of spoilage organisms.

There are four specific agents that produce food spoilage. They are enzymes, molds, yeasts and bacteria. Luckily the first three are easily destroyed by heat during the processing. Bacteria, however, especially botulinus, can be destroyed only with temperatures above boiling.

Fundamentally, the purpose of a pressure cooker is to process foods by heating them above the boiling point of water. This is achieved by utilizing steam under pressure. First some of the water in the bottom of the cooker is converted into steam, and all the air is forced out through the pet cock in the cover. When the air is exhausted, this outlet is closed. The expanding steam creates pressure and there is an accompanying rise in temperature. This higher temperature is essential in destroying spoilage organisms in food.



Up-To-Date Tips On Canning

- Q. Is there ever a possibility of overloading your pressure cooker?
- A. Yes—Never crowd in more jars than recommended in the recipe.
- Q. Is there a danger of filling jars too full?
- A. Yes—Never fill jars too full. There should be at least 1/2 inch head space after liquid is poured in. Some foods require more head space as expansion is greater. Consult your cook book for definite instructions.
- Q. When should one start to count time of processing?
- A. From the minute the hand on the pressure gauge reaches the required pressure.
- Q. How much cane sugar syrup should be used in a jar?
- A. Fill syrup to within 1 1/2 inches of top of jar if fruit is packed cold—or to 1/2 inch of top of jar when fruit is packed hot.
- Q. What are the different syrups used in canning and how are they made?
- A. There are three syrups: Thin, medium and heavy. Thin syrup—one part pure cane sugar, three parts water or fruit juice; bring to a boil.

- Medium syrup—one part pure cane sugar, two parts water or fruit juice; bring to a boil.
- Heavy syrup—One part pure cane sugar, one part water or fruit juice; bring to a boil.
- Q. What are the three essentials of jelly and jam making?
- A. They are pectin (the jellying substance in fruit), sugar and fruit acid. These ingredients, properly balanced, turn the fruit or fruit juice into jam or jelly. Jelly making is not for the woman who cooks "by instinct," for a jam or jelly recipe is really a scientific development.
- Q. Can you substitute bottled pectin in a recipe that calls for powdered fruit pectin?
- A. No—Each recipe is individually tested and does not allow for a substitution. Follow the recipe leaflet that comes with the pectin.
- Q. How should jams and jellies be stored?
- A. Store jams and jellies covered in a cool, dry place. If it's stored in the kitchen, keep away from the range or radiator; choose the lowest shelves, as warm air rises.

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Try These Selected Recipes

Grape Jelly
5 cups juice
6 1/2 cups cane sugar
1 box powdered fruit pectin

To Prepare the Jelly. Stem about 3 1/2 pounds fully ripe grapes and crush thoroughly. (Concord grapes give best color and flavor.) Add 1 1/2 cups of water; bring to a boil and simmer, covered, 10 minutes. Place in jelly cloth or bag and squeeze out juice. Measure 5 cups juice into a large saucepan.

To Make the Jelly. Measure cane sugar and set aside. Place saucepan holding juice over high heat. Add powdered fruit pectin and stir until mixture comes to a hard boil. At once stir in sugar. Bring to a full rolling boil and boil hard 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat, skim, pour quickly into glasses. Paraffin at once. Makes about 11 six-ounce glasses.

Spiced Pears or Peaches
5 cups brown sugar
2 cups vinegar
2 cinnamon sticks
2 tablespoons whole cloves
4 quarts pears or peaches

Cook sugar, vinegar, and spices 20 minutes. Drop in fruit, a few at a time, and cook until tender. Pack into hot, sterilized jars, adding syrup to within 1/2 inch of top. Seal. Makes six pints.

Grape and Pear Jam
4 cups prepared fruit
7 cups cane sugar
1 bottle fruit pectin

To Prepare the Fruit. Slip skins from about 2 pounds fully ripe Concord or other loose-skinned grapes. Bring pulp to a boil and simmer, covered, 5 minutes. Then sieve to remove seeds. Chop or grind skins and add to pulp. Peel and core about 1 pound fully ripe pears. Grind or chop very fine. Combine fruits and measure 4 cups into a very large saucepan.

To Make the Jam. Add cane sugar to fruit in saucepan and mix well. Place over high heat, bring to a full rolling boil, and boil hard, 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and at once stir in bottled fruit pectin. Then stir and skim by turns for 5 minutes to cool slightly, to prevent floating fruit. Ladle quickly into glasses. Paraffin at once. Makes about 11 six-ounce glasses.

Canned Pears

Pare and core pears. Place in a salt bath and rinse. Cook pears in boiling medium syrup 3-5 minutes. Pack hot pears in hot sterilized jars to within 1/2 inch of top. Cover with boiling syrup, leaving 1/2 inch space at top. Adjust lids. Process in boiling water bath 20 minutes.

Canned Peaches

Scald peaches and dip them in cold water and peel. Place in a salt bath and rinse. Boil in a medium syrup 5 minutes. (1 cup cane sugar added to 2 cups water or fruit juice, and boiled 1 minutes). Pack hot peaches in hot sterilized jars to within 1/2 inch of top. Cover with boiling syrup, leaving 1/2 inch space at top. Adjust lids. Process in boiling water bath 10 minutes.

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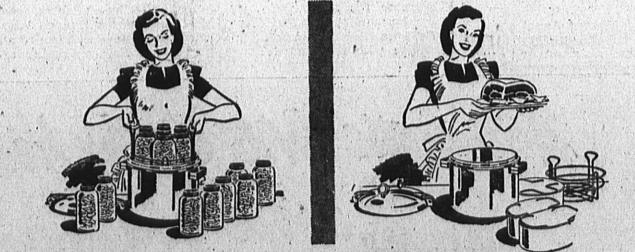
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