

Innovative cooks use less sugar in canning

Sugar is an important ingredient in many food preservation recipes. But, for a number of reasons, some people would like to use less sugar in preserving foods than recipes call for.

It isn't always possible to reduce the amount of sugar in a favorite recipe.

In fact, a specific amount of sugar is often essential to obtain the desired characteristics of some preserved foods.

In jams and jellies, for instance, sugar promotes gel formation and serves as a preservative. If sugar is decreased in recipes that rely on pectin for thickening, the product will have the consistency of syrup.

The correct proportions of fruit, pectin, acid and sugar are needed to make these products thicken.

Special recipes must be used for low sugar jellied products. Gelatin or vegetable gums can be substituted for pectin. One such product can be

found in the canning supply section at most supermarkets.

Although jams and jellies made from this product look traditional, their keeping quality is changed. Thus, low sugar jams and jellies should be kept refrigerated or frozen to prevent the growth of molds.

Sugar is used in pickling to balance the flavor of the vinegar. Although sugar can be eliminated from a pickle recipe, the pickles are likely to be too sour.

Under no circumstances should the amount of vinegar be decreased or diluted to compensate for less sugar. Vinegar is necessary for a certain level of acidity that is essential for safe pickling.

In frozen and canned fruits, sugar contributes to the flavor. If desired, the amount of sugar can be reduced, or sugar can be left out, without changing the keeping quality of the product. However, there is a trade-off for using less sugar in frozen and

canned fruits; the fruit won't hold its shape as well.

Some people substitute honey in place of sugar in food preservation recipes. This does not reduce the sugar content of preserved foods. Two types of sugar—glucose and fructose—are the major components of honey.

Honey can be substituted for sugar in canned or frozen fruit. However, because honey is sweeter and stronger in flavor, it is advisable to

use less than the amount of sugar specified in the recipe.

In jelly recipes without added pectin, honey can replace up to one-half of the granulated sugar. With added pectin, two cups of honey can replace two cups of sugar in most recipes. But in recipes that yield small batches of five to six glasses, one cup of sugar can be replaced by honey.

Light, mild-flavored honey is the best kind to use.



"Sandwich in" delicious nutrition at snacktime. Enjoy Apple Spicewiches.

Spicewiches easy snack

Apple Spicewiches are a delicious after school or coffee time snack. They feature an easy-to-prepare oat crumble layer which "sandwiches in" a nutritious applesauce, raisin and nut filling.

Apple Spicewiches have a flavor reminiscent of the ever-popular apple crisp dessert. Quick or old fashioned oats, brown sugar, butter and spices are combined and pressed into the bottom of a greased 13x9-inch baking pan and spread with the fruit and nut filling.

Wholegrain oats contribute a delicious nut-like flavor and supply precious vitamins and minerals to this nutritious snack. Oats are a wholegrain because the grain still contains its original bran, germ and endosperm, and essentially all its nutrition.

These tender squares are perfect with a glass of milk as an afternoon snack for the kids or with a cup of coffee as an adult favorite. In other words, their old fashioned goodness reaches everyone!

APPLE SPICEWICHES

Oat Crumble:
2 cups oats (quick or old fashioned, uncooked)
1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup butter or margarine
1 cup firmly packed brown sugar
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon soda
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
1/8 teaspoon cloves

Filling:
1 cup applesauce
1/2 cup raisins
1/2 cup chopped nuts

For oat crumble, beat together all ingredients in large mixing bowl at low speed on electric mixer until mixture is crumbly. Reserve 2 cups. Press remaining oat crumble onto bottom of greased 13x9-inch baking pan.

For filling, spread combined applesauce, raisins and nuts over base; sprinkle with reserved oat crumble. Bake at 400°F. about 30 minutes. Cool; cut into squares. Makes 13x9-inch pan of squares.

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