

What's the dill, pickle? making your own is easy!

Although supermarkets offer a wide variety of pickles and relishes, many homemakers prefer to make their own when garden produce is in abundant supply.

Although pickling is one of the world's oldest methods of food preservation, it's important to have up-to-date recipes and to use good quality ingredients if the pickles are to be high in quality and safe to eat, stresses Marilyn Lunner, Clackamas County Extension agent.

Choose only top quality vegetables and fruits for whatever kind of pickle is to be made. Select fresh, firm and undecayed vegetables. If pickling fruit, it should be slightly under-ripe. It's best to pickle produce within 24 hours of picking.

Cucumbers are the most popular vegetable for pickling. Select the size of cucumber that fits the recipe such as a 4-6 inch cuke for sweet icicle pickles or a 2-3 inch cuke for sweet gherkins. Cucumbers should be unwaxed so that the brine can penetrate.

Carefully wash the cucumbers and cut off the blossom end. Blossoms contain an enzyme that may cause pickles to soften. Remove cu-

cumbers that float or feel soft when washing. These may be hollow. A few blossom ends or bad cucumbers can ruin a whole batch of pickles, warns Marilyn.

A cider or white distilled vinegar of 4 to 5 percent acidity (40 to 60 grain) should be used for pickling, adds Carolyn Raab, Oregon State University Extension foods and nutrition specialist. Avoid using homemade vinegars or vinegars of unknown acidity.

Cider vinegar has a mellow acid taste and gives a nice blend of flavors. However, it may darken white or light colored fruits and vegetables. White distilled vinegar has a sharp, pungent, acetic acid taste and is desirable when light color is important.

Never dilute the vinegar unless it is specified in the recipe, warns Ms. Raab. If a less sour product is preferred, add sugar instead of diluting the vinegar.

It's best to use soft water for pickle-making. Hard water usually contains minerals like iron that can cause pickles to darken and sometimes spoil. If using hard water, boil it for 10 minutes and then let it stand for 24 hours. Remove the

scum and slowly dip the water from the top into another container leaving the undisturbed sediment on the bottom of the pan.

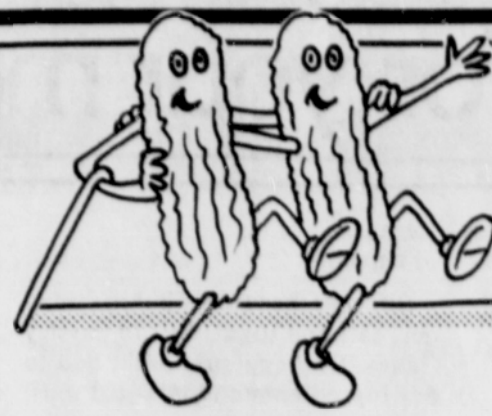
An alternative is to purchase distilled water at a local store, the specialist notes.

Fresh spices should be used for pickling. Salt should be iodized as iodized salt can cause pickles to darken.

Using the right kind of equipment is important also, Ms. Raab stresses. Because of the corrosiveness of the brine and vinegar, it's important to use enamelware, glass, aluminum, stainless steel or stone-ware utensils. Brass, iron or galvanized utensils will discolor the pickles and may make them unsafe to eat, the specialist stresses.

In order to assure a quality pickle and one safe to eat, use up-to-date recipes. Reliable recipes will have an adequate amount of vinegar to prevent spoilage. Processing in a boiling water bath is now recommended to seal the jars and to kill microorganisms.

More information about making pickles is available from the county office of the OSU Extension Service at 655-8634.



Pickles are a burger's best friend.

Hamburgers are among the most popular and versatile foods, and kids of all ages never seem to tire of them. But a hamburger without a pickle is like Romeo without Juliet. The pickle gives the hamburger a special flavor and pleasing texture that turns it into "The Burger Beautiful." For instance, how about these pickle-perky, south-of-the-border-style Mexicali Mini Meat Loaves. They can double as a delicious, low-cost main course, hot or cold, or served on a bun, as a luncheon sandwich. And for another budget-stretching pickle and hamburger combination, try the Pickle Picadillo Ranchero. Both dishes are bound to become meal-time favorites and show you why the Hamburger and the Pickle go so well together. Enjoy!

MEXICALI MINI MEAT LOAVES

1 egg
2 pounds ground beef

1 cup dry bread crumbs
1 medium onion, chopped
¼ cup catsup
¼ cup milk
½ cup finely chopped dill pickles
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
2 teaspoons salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
Guacamole sauce* (optional)

Beat egg in large bowl until fluffy. Add all remaining ingredients except Guacamole Sauce and mix lightly with 2 forks. Divide into 8 parts and shape into individual loaves. Place in shallow baking pan and bake in 350° oven for 30 minutes. Serve hot or cold over bed of shredded lettuce, with Guacamole Sauce. (Makes 8 servings.)

* Guacamole Sauce: Meanwhile make sauce. Place 1 clove garlic, 3 tablespoons dill pickle liquid, 2 tablespoons olive oil, 2 to 3 dashes tabasco and 1 ripe avocado (peeled and chopped) in electric blender container. Blend at high speed, stir-

ring occasionally, until all ingredients are blended and smooth. Salt to taste. Cover and chill until serving time.

PICKLE PICADILLO RANCHERO

1 medium onion, chopped
2 small cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoons salad oil
1 pound ground beef
¼ cup dark seedless raisins
1 tablespoon capers
1 can (16 oz.) tomatoes (undrained)
½ cup sweet pickle relish
½ teaspoon salt
Dash pepper

Saute onion and garlic in oil until crisp-tender. Add beef and brown over medium heat. Add remaining ingredients; cover and bring to boil. Reduce heat, simmer 1 hour; if desired, remove cover during last 10 minutes to reduce liquid. Serve with rice. (Makes 4 servings, double or triple recipe at will.)

Pork: A lean and inexpensive way to eat high off the hog.

According to the FDA, pork will be a good buy throughout much of 1982. This versatile meat is high in the B vitamins. And now, with pork being fed and bred to be leaner, it compares favorably calorie-wise to lean beef.

Plan ahead by stocking up on good recipes using pork — then stock up on pork when your grocer or meat market has a special.

Here are a few suggestions for storing pork from the National Live Stock and Meat Board:

- Freeze pork while it is fresh and in top condition.
- Pork may be kept frozen three to six months.
- Trim excess fat and remove bones, when practical. Don't bother to salt, as salting shortens the length of time meat can be kept safely frozen.
- Cut large pieces of pork and wrap in packages containing quantities convenient to use in your household. Wrap chops by slipping a double piece of freezer wrap or waxed paper between pieces of meat for easy separation during thawing.
- Wrap meat tightly in aluminum foil or freezer wrap to keep air and moisture out.
- Seal the package and indicate the kind of meat, its weight and the date the piece is placed in the freezer.

To add to your recipe cards, here are three suggestions for hearty main dishes using pork. Two recipes rely on condensed soups as a flavor and moisture base. A third idea uses pork & beans in tomato sauce to stretch a half pound of pork sausage to feed four.

Sausage and Apple Skillet amply serves four to six depending on the size of appetites and the number of sausages cooked. What makes this skillet entree appealing is its time- and money-saving assets. Economical and savory pork & beans in tomato sauce teams with all-time favorite sausage links to create this robust dish.

Long-simmering *Country Pork Hocks and Pinto Beans* make another appealing main dish. Rich in flavor yet low in price, this meal in a pot includes condensed tomato soup, pinto beans, smoked pork hocks, onion, parsley, garlic and cayenne pepper.

Rosy Pork Chops and Lima Beans is one more example of the versatility and economy of pork. The chops cook to moist and succulent perfection in a sauce that consists of tomato soup, onion, lemon juice, brown sugar, mustard and Tabasco.

With a freezer stocked with vari-

ous pork cuts and ingenious ways to prepare this flavor meat, you won't be at a loss for delicious dinners.

SAUSAGE & APPLE SKILLET

½ pound pork sausage links (7 to 9 links)
½ cup diced apple
2 cans (16 ounces each) pork & beans in tomato sauce
2 tablespoons dark molasses
1 tablespoon Worcestershire
¼ teaspoon hot pepper sauce

In skillet, cook sausage; pour off all but 2 tablespoons drippings. Add apple; cook in drippings until tender. Add remaining ingredients. Heat; stir occasionally. Makes 4 servings.

COUNTRY PORK HOCKS & PINTO BEANS

1 cup dried pinto beans
1 teaspoon salt
2 cups water
3 smoked pork hocks (about ¼ pound each)
1 large onion, thickly sliced
1 teaspoon marjoram leaves, crushed
1 can (10½ ounces) tomato soup
¼ cup chopped parsley
1 medium clove garlic, minced
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper

Combine beans, salt and water; soak overnight. Drain. In large heavy pan, cover pork hocks with water; add onion and marjoram leaves. Bring to boil; reduce heat. Simmer 1 hour 30 minutes. Drain, reserving liquid. Add 3 cups reserved liquid, beans and remaining ingredients. Cover; cook over low heat 2 hours or until done. Stir occasionally. Add more reserved liquid if necessary. Makes 3 servings.

ROSY PORK CHOPS & LIMA BEANS

4 pork chops (1 pound)
1 can (10½ ounces) tomato soup
½ cup water
½ cup chopped onion
2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1 tablespoon prepared mustard
4 dashes Tabasco sauce
1 package (10 ounces) frozen Fordhook lima beans

In skillet, brown chops; pour off fat. Stir in soup, water, onion, lemon juice, sugar, mustard and Tabasco sauce. Cover; cook over low heat 20 minutes. Add lima beans. Cover; cook 25 minutes more or until tender. Stir occasionally. Makes 4 servings.

For real refreshment
Coke is it!