

Get Out Your Kettles, Roll Your Sleeves — Can

This is the season of the year when all the goodness of summer fruits and the surplus vegetables from your garden can go into jars for winter menus.

There is nothing so satisfying to most homemakers than pantry shelves full of jewel-colored jams and jells, a variety of pickles, relishes and sauces.

Err on the side of canning too much, rather than too little. Home-canned products are so much better than factory canned.

Spend a little time during the summer making jelly to be used on breakfast toast, hot biscuits, between-meal sandwiches for the children, and for a sizeable food expense item from your grocery bill!

Excellent jelly is easily made from the juice of tart apples, grapes, currants, blackberries and several other fruits and berries. They contain enough pectin, the substance in fruits which makes jelly "set". But, some fruits are low in pectin, notably cherries, peaches, strawberries and sweet apples, and the amount of pectin in a fruit may vary from season to season. It is also influenced by the degree of ripeness.

You may mix fruit juices known to be low in pectin cup for cup with those known to contain a great deal of pectin, but it's usually better to add pectin—the kind you buy in liquid or powdered form—when making jelly of low-pectin fruits. It is also faster. A one-minute boil is enough for jelly-making when you use the well-known brands of natural fruit pectin.

You may even make jelly from canned or frozen fruits and juices by using pectin. This is one of the easiest ways of making jelly because it eliminates preparation of the fruit and permits you to make jelly any day of the year in about 15 minutes time.

Pectin may be bought at the food store in either liquid or powdered form. Be sure to follow the directions which come with the bottle or package when you make your PEACHES

When you can peaches, get everything ready you will need and examine your fruit jars, being sure that there are no nicked edges on the tops to prevent perfect sealing. Follow directions for getting jars and lids ready for use.

If fruit is not juicy, make sirup by boiling 1 or 2 cups sugar with 2 cups water for 5 minutes. For juicy fruit use just enough water to melt sugar and boil until sugar dissolves.

Wash, rinse and drain firm, sound, ripe, full flavored fruit. Dip 5 or 10 evenly ripened peaches in boiling water 1 or 2 minutes, then dip into cold water and drain. Cut peach in half, remove pit and skin and drop fruit into water containing 2 tablespoons each vinegar and salt to the gallon. (Do not allow the fruit to stay in this water over 20 minutes.)

Drain fruit, then cook it in sirup until boiling hot, to the center. (Note: Peaches may be packed without heating but they are more likely to float and discolor when packed raw. Unevenly ripened fruit should be peeled with sharp knife.)

Pack hot fruit, cut side down, into hot fruit jars. Leave one-half inch space at top of jar. Cover fruit with sirup in which heated. Run a knife between peaches and side of jar to bring air bubbles to the surface. More sirup may be

needed to cover fruit after air bubbles are removed. The top layer of peaches is likely to darken if not covered with liquid. Seal.

Stand jars on rack in canner of steaming, not boiling, water. Water should cover tops of jars. Put lid on canner. Start counting processing time when water reaches a rolling boil. Process pints and quarts of hot packed freestone peaches 20 minutes, cling 5 minutes. It takes 5 to 10 minutes longer for fruit packed raw. When processing time is up, take jars out of canner. Stand them out of a draft and several inches apart to cool.

After jars have cooled about 10 hours, take off the bands and test seal by pressing on lid. If the lid is down or goes down and stays down when pressed with the finger, the jar is sealed.

Bartlett's are the best pears for home canning, but a number of other varieties are good. When home-canned pears are hard and gritty, it is because the variety used wasn't meant for canning. Or it may be that the pears were not removed from the tree and spread in a cool place until tender and full flavored. This takes from 2 to 6 weeks depending upon the variety of fruit and the temperature of storage.

When canned pears have untidy centers, it is because somebody dug with a knife instead of scooping with a spoon. The work goes faster with a regular ware-coring spoon, but an aluminum measuring spoon will do a good job of lifting the gritty core and seed.

Use a knife to cut out the "string" that runs from stem to stem. But don't start cutting until the pears have been carefully washed and rinsed, and everything else needed is ready. The core should come out before the peeling comes.

Cut each pear in half and finish it up before cutting another pear. Drop the prepared fruit into weak salt water (2 tablespoons salt to 1 gallon water) until there is enough to fill 3 or 4 jars. Then take pears out of the salt water, rinse and drop into boiling hot sirup (1 cup sugar to 2 or 3 cups water). Cook until pears are boiling hot throughout. This takes 5 or 10 minutes.

Put hot pears into hot fruit jars and cover with boiling sirup in which they were heated. Run knife between fruit and jar to remove air bubbles. Add more sirup if needed to cover fruit. Adjust lids and bands according to directions on the box. Process pints and quarts 25 minutes in a boiling water bath canner; it takes a little longer at high altitudes. Sea level or mountain top, home-canned pears can and should be of a quality that wins prizes and prizes.

Wine tops and threads of jars clean. Then apply lids and bands according to instructions printed on the box. Process tomatoes in a boiling water bath, 35 minutes for whole tomatoes and 45 minutes for a utility pack.

Regardless of how you are going to pack tomatoes, use only clean, fresh, sound, firm, red-ripe tomatoes for canning. Every tomato should be washed, rinsed, and drained before scalding. To scald tomatoes without over-cooking, put 6 or 8 in a square cheesecloth or wire basket and hold in boiling water about one-half minute. Dip in cold water and drain before cutting out the core. (Cut deep enough to get it all.)

After the core is out, slip off the skin and drop tomato into a hot fruit jar. If whole tomatoes are wanted, pack them closely without crushing and add hot tomato juice or water to cover. If using utility pack, press the tomatoes down tight until juice runs from them. One teaspoon salt is usually added to each quart of tomatoes, although tomatoes keep as well without salt.

Don't forget to leave almost 1/2 inch of headspace when filling the jar. Run a knife down between the tomatoes and the jar to bring up air bubbles. More liquid may be needed to fill space left when the bubbles are removed from jars of whole packed tomatoes. Don't bother to add more to the utility pack.

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