

Fruit Pie Fillings

General

The following fruit fillings are excellent and safe products. Each canned quart makes one 8- to 9-inch pie. Fillings may be used as toppings on desserts or pastries. ClearJel® is a starch modified to produce excellent sauce consistency even after fillings are canned and baked. Other available household starches break down, causing a runny sauce consistency when used in these pie fillings. ClearJel® is available only through a few supply outlets and is not currently available in grocery stores. Find out about its availability prior to gathering other ingredients to make these pie fillings. If you cannot find it, ask your Penn State Extension family living educator about sources for ClearJel®.*

Because the variety of fruit may alter the flavor of the fruit pie, you should first make a single quart, make a pie with it, and serve. Then adjust the sugar and spices in the recipe to suit your personal preferences. *The amount of lemon juice should not be altered because it aids in ensuring the safety and storage stability of the fillings.* When using frozen cherries and blueberries, select unsweetened fruit. If sugar has been added, rinse it off while fruit is frozen. Collect, measure, and use juice from thawing fruit to partially replace the water specified in the recipe and use only ¼ cup of ClearJel® per quart, or 1¾ cups for 7 quarts.

Canning Procedure for All Fillings

Wash jars. Prepare lids according to manufacturer's instructions. Fill fruit mixtures into jars, leaving 1 inch of headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe sealing surface of jars with a clean, damp paper towel. Add lids, tighten screw bands, and process.

CAUTION: The amount of lemon juice should not be altered because it aids in ensuring the safety and storage stability of the fillings.



To Process in a Boiling Water Canner

Preheat canner half filled with water to 180°F. Load sealed jars into the canner rack and lower with handles, or load one jar at a time with a jar lifter onto rack in canner. Add water, if needed, to 1 inch above jars and cover. When water boils vigorously, lower heat to maintain a gentle boil and process for recommended time.

After processing is complete, remove jars from canner with a jar lifter and place them on a towel or rack. Do not retighten screw bands. Air-cool jars for 12 to 24 hours. Remove screw bands and check lid seals. A jar is sealed if the center of its lid is indented or concave. Wash, dry, label, and store sealed jars in a clean, cool, dark place. If a jar is unsealed, examine and replace it if defective, use a new lid, and reprocess as before. Wash screw bands and store separately. Fillings are best if used within one year and are safe as long as lids remain vacuum sealed.



Apple Pie Filling

QUALITY. Use firm, crisp apples. Stayman, Golden Delicious, Rome, and other varieties of similar quality are suitable. If apples lack tartness, use an additional $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of lemon juice for each 6 quarts of slices.

PROCEDURE. Wash, peel, and core apples. Prepare slices $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide and place in water containing 1 teaspoon of ascorbic acid crystals or six 500-milligram vitamin C tablets in 1 gallon of water to prevent browning.

For fresh fruit, place 6 cups at a time in 1 gallon of boiling water. Boil each batch for 1 minute after the water returns to a boil. Drain but keep heated fruit in a covered bowl or pot. Combine sugar, ClearJel®, cinnamon, and nutmeg in a large kettle with water, apple juice, and food coloring. Stir and cook on medium-high heat until mixture thickens and begins to bubble. Add lemon juice and boil sauce for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Fold in drained apple slices, immediately fill jars with mixture, leaving 1 inch of headspace, and process without delay.

Blueberry Pie Filling

QUALITY. Select sweet, very ripe but firm, deep-blue fruit.

PROCEDURE. Wash and drain blueberries. For fresh fruit, place 6 cups at a time in 1 gallon of boiling water. Boil each batch for 1 minute after the water returns to a boil. Drain but keep heated fruit in a covered bowl or pot. Combine sugar and ClearJel® in a large kettle. Stir. Add water and, if desired, food coloring. Cook on medium-high heat until mixture thickens and begins to bubble. Add lemon juice and boil for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Fold in undrained berries, fill jars immediately with mixture, leaving 1 inch of headspace, and process without delay.

Cherry Pie Filling

QUALITY. Select very ripe, firm, tart cherries.

PROCEDURE. Rinse and pit cherries and hold them in cold water. To prevent stem end browning, hold pitted cherries in water containing 1 teaspoon of ascorbic acid crystals or six 500-milligram vitamin C tablets in 1 gallon of water. For fresh fruit, place 6 cups at a time in 1 gallon of boiling water. Boil each batch for 1 minute after the water returns to a boil. Drain but keep heated fruit in a covered bowl or pot. Combine sugar and ClearJel® in a large saucepan. Add water and, if desired, cinnamon, food coloring, and almond extract. Stir mixture and cook over medium-high heat until mixture thickens and begins to bubble. Add lemon juice and boil for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Fold in drained cherries, fill jars immediately with mixture, leaving 1 inch of headspace, and process without delay.

Peach Pie Filling

QUALITY. Select ripe but firm peaches. Red Haven, Redskin, Sun High, and other varieties of similar quality are suitable.

PROCEDURE. Peel peaches. To loosen skins, submerge peaches in boiling water for 30 to 60 seconds and then place them in cold water for 20 seconds. Slip off skins and prepare slices $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide. Place slices in water containing 1 teaspoon of ascorbic acid crystals or six 500-milligram vitamin C tablets in 1 gallon of water to prevent browning. For fresh fruit, place 6 cups at a time in 1 gallon of boiling water. Boil each batch for 1 minute after the water returns to a boil. Drain but keep heated fruit in a covered bowl or pot. Combine sugar, ClearJel®, water, and cinnamon or almond extract in a large kettle. Stir and cook on medium-high heat until mixture thickens and begins to bubble. Add lemon juice and boil sauce for 1 minute more, stirring constantly. Fold in drained peach slices and continue to heat for 3 minutes, then fill jars with mixture, leaving 1 inch of headspace, and process without delay.

*About ClearJel®

There are about 3 cups in 1 pound of ClearJel®. Penn State Extension pie filling recipes take about $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $2\frac{1}{4}$ cups per 6–7 quarts of pie filling. Some bulk food stores or cooperatives may carry ClearJel®; be sure you are getting cook-type ClearJel®.

Sources for ClearJel®

Kitchen Krafts
PO Box 442
Waukon, IA 52172
Phone: 1-800-776-0575
www.kitchenkrafts.com

Kauffman's Fruit Farm
3097 Old Philadelphia Pike
Bird-in-Hand, PA 17505
Phone: 717-768-7112
www.kauffmansfruitfarm.com



► **Table 1.** Apple pie filling.

Ingredient	Quantities of ingredients needed for	
	1 quart	7 quarts
Blanched sliced apples	3½ cups	6 quarts
Granulated sugar	¾ cup + 2 Tbsp	5½ cups
ClearJel®	¼ cup	1½ cups
Cinnamon	½ tsp	1 Tbsp
Cold water	½ cup	2½ cups
Apple juice, unsweetened	¾ cup	5 cups
Bottled lemon juice	2 Tbsp	¾ cup
Nutmeg (optional)	⅛ tsp	1 tsp
Yellow food coloring (optional)	1 drop	7 drops

► **Table 2.** Blueberry pie filling.

Ingredient	Quantities of ingredients needed for	
	1 quart	7 quarts
Fresh or thawed blueberries	3½ cups	6 quarts
Granulated sugar	¾ cup + 2 Tbsp	6 cups
ClearJel®	¼ cup + 1 Tbsp	2¼ cups
Cold water	1 cup	7 cups
Bottled lemon juice	3½ tsp	½ cup
Blue food coloring (optional)	3 drops	20 drops
Red food coloring (optional)	1 drop	7 drops

► **Table 3.** Cherry pie filling.

Ingredient	Quantities of ingredients needed for	
	1 quart	7 quarts
Fresh or thawed sour cherries	3½ cups	6 quarts
Granulated sugar	1 cup	7 cups
ClearJel®	¼ cup + 1 Tbsp	1¾ cups
Cold water	1⅓ cups	9½ cups
Bottled lemon juice	1 Tbsp + 1 tsp	½ cup
Cinnamon (optional)	⅛ tsp	1 tsp
Almond extract (optional)	¼ tsp	2 tsp
Red food coloring (optional)	6 drops	¼ tsp

Table 4. Peach pie filling.

Ingredient	Quantities of ingredients needed for	
	1 quart	7 quarts
Fresh sliced peaches	3½ cups	6 quarts
Granulated sugar	1 cup	7 cups
ClearJel®	¼ cup +1 Tbsp	2 cups + 3 Tbsp
Cold water	¾ cup	5¼ cups
Cinnamon (optional)	⅛ tsp	1 tsp
Almond extract (optional)	⅛ tsp	2 tsp
Bottled lemon juice	¼ cup	1¾ cups

Table 5. Recommended process times for fruit pie fillings in a boiling water canner.

Fruit filling	Jar size	Process time (in minutes) at altitudes of			
		0–1,000 ft	1,001–3,000 ft	3,001–6,000 ft	Above 6,000 ft
Apple	Pints or quarts	25	30	35	40
Blueberry	Pints or quarts	30	35	40	45
Cherry	Pints or quarts	30	35	40	45
Peach	Pints or quarts	30	35	40	45

For additional information about food preservation, visit the Penn State Extension Home Food Preservation website at extension.psu.edu/food/preservation, or contact Penn State Extension in your county.

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extension.psu.edu

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