

FALL CANNING MADE EASY

**12 RECIPES
EVERY HOMESTEADER
SHOULD KNOW**



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12 Fall Canning Recipes Every Homesteader Should Know

Fall is the time of plenty. It's when all of your hard work throughout the heat of the summer is paying off. If you had a fortunate year, fresh, delicious produce abounds and you're going to have plenty to can so that you know that your family is going to eat healthy, wholesome meals throughout the winter.

Now that you've taken a few minutes to just appreciate the cooling weather and the fact that all of your hard work has paid off, now it's time to gather the fruits of your labor, which is a ton of labor in its own right!

I used to love it when I had to pick the apples instead of the potatoes – I was usually in the shade, and it was fun using the apple picker. Plus, well, I wasn't digging potatoes. That's hard work.

While you're picking, you can be thinking about what you want to can first. Are you going to clean everything up and make some fresh vegetable soup? Or maybe you're eager to pull out Grandma's sweet pickle recipe and get started. Whatever you're going to do first, it's important that you know how to can and that you have some good recipes.

Before we get to the recipes, I'd like to take a few minutes to talk about the canning process: what you'll need and some important tips that you want to follow.

If you're an old hand at canning, feel free to skim over this part if you want. But if you're new to canning, stick with me. I'm going to share some tips that will save you a ton of heartache.



Pressure Canning vs Hot Water Baths

You're going to hear these two terms tossed around anytime you read about canning and it's important that you understand what both are, and the differences between the two.

You'll also hear the terms hot-packing vs raw, and all that means is exactly what it sounds like. You either cook the food, at least a little, before you can it, or you pack it in the jars raw.

Remember that the food is going to be cooked plenty during the canning process, so my general rule of thumb when canning straight fruits and veggies is to cold pack so they don't get mushy.

Pressure Canning

Pressure canning is similar to cooking any food in a pressure cooker. The only difference is that instead of pouring it out of the jar and into the pressure cooker, you're pouring it *into* the jar before you put it in the pressure cooker.

You absolutely *must* pressure can low-acid foods such as meat and all veggies except for tomatoes. Why? Because botulism isn't your friend. Botulism, or botulinum toxin, is released by a bacterium, *clostridium botulinum*. It just so happens that this is one of the few bacteria that survive and thrive in a low-oxygen, low-acid environment. You know, like the inside of a canning jar.

The botulinum bacterium is found in many places and it's mostly harmless because it's inactive, but give it the right environment, and watch it grow! It's a neurotoxin, so the symptoms – paralysis, inability to breath, muscle spasms, and muscle weakness – aren't a good time. And it can be lethal.

Fortunately, there aren't many cases of botulism reported annually, but you don't want to be one of the few.

A temperature of at least 240 degrees maintained for several minutes is required to kill the spores, but standard water boils at 212 degrees, but a pressure canner increases that temperature to 240.

So, the difference between pressure canning and water bath canning is that you can low-acid foods under pressure, but you may can high-acid foods in just a water bath. You can use your pressure canner without the lid if you don't want to buy separate canners.

Just so you know signs that your food may be contaminated with botulism include:

- Seeping
- bubbles at the top when the jar is sealed
- the jar seems as if it was pressurized when you open it
- the food inside is cloudy or slimy, or has an "off" smell

If you notice any of these, throw the food away; a wasted jar of green beans is much better than botulism.

Water Bath Canning

This method is perfectly acceptable for all acidic foods, which is most fruits, and tomatoes. All you need to do is process your packed jars for a set amount of time determined by your recipe.

This is the method that you'll use for making nearly all of your jams, jellies, and preserves. I have some quick tips for you regarding those.

Canning Jellies and Jams

There are two primary concerns when you're canning jellies and jams: getting them to seal, and getting them to thicken. The sealing part is an easy fix, though if you're a first-time canner, you want to be extra careful so that you don't ruin all of your hard work just to find that you didn't get a good seal.

Getting Canned Jams and Jellies to Seal

The first key is to use good quality jars that have no chips or cracks on the rim, or on any other part of the jar for that matter. You can check this off by visually inspecting the jars.

The second reason that your jars may not seal is because you didn't get all of the juice off of the rims of the jars before you put the seals on. This is a bit harder to fix, but you just need to be thorough.

Use a clean damp towel to wipe each rim well. I usually do this twice, with two different towels, to make sure that I get them clean, then I follow up with a dry towel. My mom, whose been canning for upwards of 50 years now, calls it overkill, but after one time of re-canning an entire batch of jam so that it wouldn't go bad, I'd rather take the extra steps.

Finally, to make sure that you get a good seal, heat your seals in warm water, if you're using the standard kind. This makes the seal a bit gummy so that it adheres and seals to the jar better. Make sure that the water that you heat them in is clean.



Note: Completely off topic, sort of, but I recently discovered how to make rose jelly, which is absolutely delicious as well as beautiful. I didn't even know that roses were edible until I stumbled upon the information via a friend.

How to Make Jams and Jellies Thicken Properly

This is another stumbling block for many new home canners. Nothing is more disappointing than to open up a beautifully sealed jar of jelly to find that it's more juice. You can also go the other direction and cook it too long so that it's more like taffy. There are two components to thickening: sugar thickens it and pectin gels it. Getting your jams and jellies just right is easy as long as you use the right amounts of sugar and pectin and you pay attention.

- Pectin is a natural fiber found in fruits and vegetables that give the cell walls structure. Some fruits, such as blueberries, cranberries, and apples have enough

pectin in them that you don't need to add extra. Low-pectin fruits such as strawberries and pears either need to be canned with high-pectin fruit or have pectin added to them so that they gel.

- Use the spoon method to tell when your jams and jellies are done. While you're cooking your jellies, do the spoon test. If your sauce runs off of your spoon easily, it's not done. If it drips slowly off and forms a drip off of the bottom of the spoon that drips off slowly, it's either done, or super close to being done.
- Use the freezer method. This isn't one of my favorite methods because if your jelly is done, you've overcooked it by the time the test is done, but here's how to do it. When you put your fruit on to cook, put a couple of saucers in the freezer.
- When you think that it's almost done, pull the plate from the freezer and put a blob of jelly on the plate. Stick it back in the freezer for a couple of minutes and if it's jelly consistency, it's done. Cut the heat on your jelly while you're waiting.
- Use a candy thermometer. This is my preferred method because it keeps me from overcooking my jams. Sugar is able to bind with pectin, both naturally present and added, at 220 degrees F. Use this in conjunction with the spoon method and you're much more likely to end up with a good consistency.
- Don't freak out if your jelly isn't firm as soon as it comes out of the canner. It can take a few days for it to set properly.
- Don't go the other direction and cook it too much either, remember, sugar is the main ingredient in candy and the last thing you want is strawberry candy instead of strawberry jam!



Tools and Knowledge You Need For Canning

Now that we've touched on how to avoid botulism, let's move on to the tools that you'll need for the process so that you don't get started and then need to run to the store.

- Jars – approved for canning only. Used pickle jars don't count. Make sure you sterilize them and there are no chips or cracks.
- Lids – there are actually reusable lids now, or you can use the standard ones that will be located with the jars
- Rings – to hold down the lids.
- Jar lifter/tongs – to lift the hot jars out of the canner
- Spatula – to get the air bubbles out of the jars

- Dish towels – to wipe down the mouths and to put your finished goods on to cool
- Canner – pressure canner for all meats and veggies, standard water bath canner if all of your foods are high-acid
- Sharpie – always date and label your canned goods so that you can keep track of when it was made so you can rotate your stock.
- Salt – needed for just about every non-sugar recipe as a preservative
- Pectin if you're making jellies or jams, except apple

That's not so terrible a list, but it's a royal pain to have to stop in the middle because you forgot something.

What to Avoid for the Perfect Autumn Canning

Now, let me give you a few tips about common mistakes made when canning, and then we'll be ready to move on with the recipes.

Not Wiping the Rims

This is one of those rookie mistakes that a person only makes large-scale once. It's common even for an experienced canner to have a jar or two not seal, especially when canning greasy foods like meat or sauces.

Having just one or two not seal is fine; you just throw it in the fridge and eat it soon. Losing a whole batch, or at least several jars, is a disaster. It's a waste of food, time, and money and is terribly discouraging.

But you can avoid it. My approach to canning is that you can't be too careful with any step. It's a precise process, sort of like baking. You need to complete each step properly if you want a successful end product.

In that vein, I wipe all of my rims with a clean, damp cloth, then go back and wipe them with a dry cloth just to make sure.

Not Sterilizing the Jars

While it's true that the food inside the jars boils, you run the risk of locking pathogens in the jar if you don't sterilize them first. Trust me – if there was a way to skip this step, I would. But there's not. As a matter of fact, you can't skip any of the steps in this article – that's why I'm emphasizing them.



All you need to do is scrub them well in hot, soapy water and rinse them well. Now you know that there are no pathogens and there are no traces of oils or any remnants of food left from whatever you used the jar for last. Even if it's new, you still need to wash it. I'd venture to say, *especially* if it's new!

Over-filling or Under-filling the Jars

It's important that you leave enough room – called head room – in a jar to allow for expansion and boiling, but it's also important that you fill it enough that the jar will seal properly. If you have a lot of air left in the jar, it may be tough to get the jar to seal or stay sealed. Usually a half-inch is about right.

Your recipe will tell you exactly how much space to leave, so follow that. If you have a little left over, instead of using a jar, throw it in the fridge.

Not Processing Correctly

If you don't take anything else away from this article, this is the one to hold on to. Non-acidic foods such as meat, some fruits and most vegetables **MUST** be pressure-canned. Unless of course you fancy a raging case of botulism, which attacks your neurological system and kills you and stuff. Personally, I'll use the pressure canner.

Seriously, though, the reason that this is necessary is because botulism is anaerobic, meaning that it thrives in low-oxygen environments. It doesn't do well in an acidic environment, but when you get a low-acid, low-oxygen environment, you've basically built it a beach house and rolled out the welcome mat.

Each recipe will call for a different time and pressure, so it depends on what you're making and what type of machine you have. Don't let this intimidate you; I know a lot of people that don't use pressure canners or pressure cookers because they're scared of them.

Follow the directions and you'll be fine. Plus, you can cook a roast in a pressure cooker in forty-five minutes or so. Bonus!

Signs that your canned goods are contaminated with botulism are bubbles at the top (after it's been sitting for a few weeks or months), a popping sound when you open it, a leaky lid, and a slimy white film on the food. If you have any of these, don't risk it – toss it. A jar of green beans is not worth dying for.

Not Releasing the Air Pockets

You need to use a spatula or wooden spoon to release the air pockets in the jar so that it will seal properly. There's actually a tool designed specifically for this if you want to buy it. You want all of the air out of the jar for a couple of reasons – first, it seals better when there's very little air.

Once you fill your jars, run the spatula or spoon down the sides of the inside of the jar and just wiggle it around a little so that all of the air pockets release. Do this right before you wipe your rims so that you can add more water or sauce if you need to.

Putting Cold Jars in Boiling Water, or Vice Versa

Canning jars are known for their durability, but be careful mixing temperatures. Even the best glass can only take so much. You need to be especially careful going from hot to cold. Never put a hot jar in cold water and be careful not to bump hot jars against the counter because until it cools, there's a lot of pressure from the inside.

You want them to cool slowly, too, so cover them with a towel when you take them out of the bath. That's not a requirement, but I've found that my stuff seals a little better if I set them on a towel, then put another towel over them.

Using Damaged or Non-Canning Jars

It's perfectly fine to reuse Ball or Mason (or whatever) jars that are made specifically for home canning, but using commercial jars like pickle jars that aren't meant for home canning aren't acceptable.

Now that you have the right jars, check them for cracks and run your fingers along the rim looking for chips. If there's even the smallest one, don't can with it.

Re-Using Lids

I know a few people who re-use their rubber-sealed lids and to be honest I've done it myself when I was in a pinch and was one shy of having enough. But don't. Seriously. There's no way to make sure that they're free of bacteria and the rubber is only made for one use so there's no way to guarantee that it will seal. If you have a thing about throwing stuff out like I do, keep it to use on jars that aren't going to be used for canning.

There are now reusable canning lids available though. They appeal to my sensibilities and in the long run are cheaper than single-use lids.

Using Over-Ripe Fruit

You want your produce to be ripe, but if it's too ripe, it'll cook to mush.

On the other side of the coin, if it's not ripe enough, the flavors won't be fully developed.

There are different guidelines for every fruit and vegetable, but in general, you don't want it to be so ripe that it's soft. At that point, it's either time to eat it or turn it into jelly or sauce.





The 12 Recipes You Can't Miss This Autumn

Now that I've shared some of the tips and information that may help your canning adventures be successful, let's move to the recipes!

Cabbage Soup

This is one of my absolute favorites – I've gotten in the habit of making it every year, plus I make it for myself at home when I'm trying to lose a few pounds. The beauty of this recipe is that you can add meat or any other veggies to it that you want. It's your soup!

- 2 lbs. ground chuck
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 tbsp. minced garlic
- 1 cup green pepper, chopped
- 1 medium cabbage, cored and chopped
- 1 cup julienned carrots
- 1/2 lb. mushrooms
- 4 cups chopped tomatoes
- 2 cups tomato sauce
- 1 cup water
- 2 tsp. salt
- 2 tsp. black pepper

Add all ingredients to your stock pot and bring to a boil. Cover and simmer for a few minutes until cabbage wilts, but just bring everything to boiling so that it doesn't cook to mush when you can it. Meanwhile, prepare canner and seals. Ladle soup into jars and clean rims. Add seals and rings. Process for 90 minutes at 10 pounds.

Apple Pie Filling

I make mine a little different than other people do because I don't like the gelatinous feeling that Clear Jel gives it. Instead, I use cornstarch. You can use tapioca or Clear Jel if you prefer.

Ingredients

- 4 1/2 cups white sugar
- 1 cup cornstarch
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 2 tsp. salt

- 10 cups water
- 3 tbsp. lemon juice
- 6 pounds apples – depending on what’s local to you – apples should be slightly tart, sweet, and have a firm flesh that won’t break down when you cook it.

Directions

In a large pan, mix sugar, cornstarch, cinnamon and nutmeg. Add salt and water and mix well. Bring to a boil and cook until thick and bubbly. Remove from heat and add lemon juice.

Sterilize canning jars, lids and rings by boiling them in a large pot of water. Peel, core, and slice apples, then pack them into hot canning jars, leaving a 1/2-inch headspace. Fill jars with hot syrup, and gently remove air bubbles with a knife. Put lids on and process in a water bath canner for 20 minutes.

Yields 7 quarts

Apple Butter

This is a recipe that brings back a lot of memories for me. We used to can it as a community when I was a kid; it was sort of like a fall get-together. About 10 families or so would all pitch in and peel the apples, then we’d cook them over open fires in huge copper kettles. This doesn’t require that much work, and the recipe isn’t quite the same, but the spirit is there. You can also double or triple the recipe.

Ingredients

- 4 lbs. of good cooking apples (I use Granny Smith)
- 1 cup apple cider vinegar
- 2 cups water
- Sugar (about 4 cups, see cooking instructions)
- Salt
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon

- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
- 1/2 teaspoon allspice
- Grated rind and juice of 1 lemon

Directions

Peel the apples and cut them into quarters, but don't throw the peels away because that's where a lot of the pectin is - cut out damaged parts.

Put the apples and the skins (at least the long pieces) into a large pot, add the vinegar and water, cover, bring to a boil, reduce heat to simmer, cook until apples are soft, about 20 minutes. Remove from heat.

Remove the skins from the pot. Next, you can either use a sieve, a food processor, or an emulsion blender to puree the apples, or you can just smash them. The first few ways yield a smoother "butter" and smashing them gives you a more rustic, chunky butter. I like both ways.

Measure how much puree you have. Add 1/2 cup of sugar for each cup of apple pulp. Stir to dissolve sugar. Add a dash of salt, and the cinnamon, ground cloves, allspice, lemon rind and juice. Taste and adjust seasonings if necessary.

Second Stage of Cooking

Cook uncovered in a large, wide, thick-bottomed pot on medium low heat, stirring constantly to prevent burning. Scrape the bottom of the pot while you stir to make sure a crust is not forming at the bottom.

Cook until thick and smooth (about 1 to 2 hours). A small bit spooned onto a chilled (in the freezer) plate will be thick, not runny. You can also cook the purée on low heat, stirring only occasionally, but this will take much longer as stirring encourages evaporation. (Note the wider the pan the better, as there is more surface for evaporation.)

Pour into hot, sterilized jars, then wipe the rims of the jars clean before applying the lids. Use a hot water bath for 10 minutes to ensure a good seal.

Yield depends on thickness and size of apples, but about 3 pints.

Bean and Meat Chili

There's nothing better than a good chili on a cold night, or a warm one when there's no power! And I'm not one that debates whether chili should have meat or beans – I use both! You can make this a vegetarian chili by leaving the meat out, obviously.

- 2 pounds ground chuck
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 2 tbsp. salt
- 1 tbsp. minced garlic
- 1 tsp. black pepper
- 1/2 tsp cumin
- 2 cups chopped tomatoes
- 2 lbs. dried kidney beans
- 2 quarts tomato juice
- 3 tbsp. chili powder

Rinse your beans and soak them overnight. Brown the hamburger and drain well. Bring the water to a boil and add all ingredients. Boil for 5 minutes. Meanwhile, heat your seals in hot water. Ladle chili into jars and clean the rims well. Place in the pressure canner and cover with hot water to the bottom of the rings. Process in a pressure canner for 90 minutes at 10 lbs.

Yields about 6 quarts.

Bourbon Citrus Cranberry Jam

Ingredients:

- 12 cups cranberries
- 1/4 cup orange zest
- 3 cups sugar
- 1/4 cup orange juice
- 1/4 cup water
- 2 tbsp. red wine vinegar
- 1 cup bourbon

Directions:

Combine sugar, water, juice, and vinegar in a tall-sided saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat. Stir until the sugar is dissolved, then add cranberries and zest. Return to a boil, then reduce heat and stir rapidly uncovered for 5 minutes until cranberries burst. Stir in bourbon and mash around to burst the berries a little more.

Ladle into hot jars leaving 1/2" of headspace. Process in a boiling water canner for 15 minutes for half-pint jars.

Makes 7-9 half-pint jars

Pickled Beets

I love these heated as a side dish or cold in a salad. They're also my base for pickled eggs. Yum.

Ingredients

- 10 pounds fresh small beets, stems removed
- 2 cups white sugar
- 1 tbsp. pickling salt
- 1-quart white vinegar
- 1/4 cup whole cloves

Directions

Place beets in a large stockpot with water to cover. Bring to a boil, and cook until tender, about 30 minutes depending on the size of the beets. If they're large, cut them into quarters. You can always slice them before you pack them, too. Drain, reserving 2 cups of the beet water. Cool and peel.



Sterilize jars and lids by immersing in boiling water for at least 10 minutes. Fill each jar with beets and add several whole cloves to each jar.

In a large saucepan, combine the sugar, beet water, vinegar, and pickling salt. Bring to a rapid boil. Pour the hot brine over the beets in the jars, clean the rims, and add the seals.

Place a rack in the bottom of a large stockpot and fill halfway with water. Bring to a boil over high heat, then carefully lower the jars into the pot using jar tongs. Leave a 2-inch space between the jars. Pour in more boiling water if necessary until the water level is at least 1 inch above the tops of the jars. Bring the water to a full boil, cover the pot, and process for 30 minutes.

Yields about 8 quarts

Spicy Peach Chutney

This is an interesting flavor combination that I personally like to use sort of as a salsa. I have a friend that says she loves it on her fish tacos, too.

Ingredients

- 6-1/2 lb. peaches, peeled, seeded and chopped
- 2 cups malt vinegar
- 2 cups lightly packed brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp. grated fresh gingerroot
- 2 medium onions, finely chopped
- 2 green peppers, seeded & finely chopped
- 1 hot banana pepper, seeded & finely chopped
- 1 cup each: dark raisins, golden raisins and mixed candied fruit peel (orange, lemon, etc.)
- 1 tbsp. pickling salt
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg
- 1/4 tsp. ground cloves

Directions

Prepare water bath. Heat jars in simmering water until ready for use. Do not boil. Wash lids in warm soapy water and set bands aside.

Combine peaches and vinegar in a large stainless-steel saucepan, stir in sugar and bring to a boil. Cook, stirring frequently, 10 minutes.

Add onions, peppers, raisins, mixed peel, ginger, salt and Spice Mixture to peaches. Return to a boil. Stirring frequently, lower heat and simmer until thick, about 45 minutes.

Ladle hot chutney into hot jars leaving 1/4-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe rims and add seals and rings. Place jars in boiling water bath.

Process for 10 minutes. Remove jars and cool. Check lids for seal after 24 hours. Lid should not flex up and down when center is pressed.

Yields 6-7 pints

Bread and Butter Pickles

Ingredients

- 4 pounds 4- to 6-inch cucumbers, cut into 1/4-inch slices
- 2 pounds onions, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup canning salt
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 tbsp. mustard seed
- 2 tsp. turmeric
- 2 tsp. celery seed
- 1 tsp. ginger
- 1 tsp. peppercorns
- 3 cups vinegar
- Ball Pickle Crisp Granules

Directions

Combine cucumber and onion slices in a large bowl, layering with salt: cover with ice cubes. Let stand 1 1/2 hours. Drain, rinse, drain again.

Combine remaining ingredients except Pickle Crisp in a large saucepot; bring to a boil. Add drained cucumbers and onions and return to a boil.

Pack hot pickles and liquid into hot jars, 1/2-inch headspace. Add rounded 1/8 tsp. Pickle Crisp Granules to each jar. Remove air bubbles. Adjust two-piece caps.

Process 10 minutes in a water bath.

Yields 7 quarts

Cranberry Pear Jam

The good thing about canning with cranberries is that they're packed with pectin so you don't have to use quite so much sugar. This is delicious as a jam, or as a salsa at a holiday party.

Ingredients

- 8 cups cored and chopped pears
- 8 cups fresh or frozen cranberries
- 6 cups sugar
- 2 lemons, juiced and zested

Instructions

Prepare a water bath and 8 half-pint jelly jars

Combine chopped pears, cranberries, sugar and one cup of water in a large, non-reactive pot. Stir to combine and then remove from heat and let the fruit and sugar sit until the sugar has begun to dissolve, about 10 minutes.

Once the sugar seems to be dissolving and the fruit has released some juice, place the pot over high heat and bring to a boil. When the fruit begins to boil, reduce the heat and keep the jam cooking at a simmer.

Cook the jam for 15-25 minutes, stirring regularly, until it has reduced and begins to look thick and sticky.

When the jam seems to be nearly done, stir in the lemon zest and juice.

When you've reached a texture you like, remove the jam from the heat and funnel into prepared jars. Wipe rims, apply lids and rings, and process in a boiling water bath for 10 minutes.

Any unsealed jars should be refrigerated and used promptly.

Makes 4 to 4 1/2 pints

Traditional Salsa

Ingredients

- 30 -40 tomatoes
- 2 lbs. onions, mixing yellow and red
- 5 assorted color bell peppers
- 3 -4 chili peppers
- 2 -3 jalapeno peppers
- 1 cup lemon juice
- 2 tsp. garlic powder
- 3 tbsp. salt
- 4 tsp. pepper
- 5 tbsp. chopped cilantro, to taste

Directions

*****Always wear gloves while preparing salsa!**

Blanch tomatoes for 2-3 minutes to split and loosen skins. Peel and chop, then drain excess juices off using a strainer or colander. Put in extra-large bowl. Half or quarter the tomatoes, then process briefly in a food processor before draining off juices if you like the tomatoes chunky.

Dice or cube onions and peppers and add to bowl. Add chopped cilantro. Once all the veggies are in the bowl, stir in the lemon juice, garlic powder, salt, and pepper. Taste to

see if it is as hot as you want it - if not add 1 or 2 more hot peppers, tasting after each addition. Keep in mind it will get a little bit hotter as it sits.

Bring all ingredients to a boil in large pot and simmer for 15 minutes. Stir often to prevent sticking. Fill jars leaving about 3/4 inch at the top. Wipe off tops of the jars before putting lids on. Screw lids tight then turn back about 1/4 turn. Process in a water bath for 15 minutes.



Cool jars. Before storing, test each jar to be sure it has sealed by pressing down on lid.

Yields 16 pints

Strawberry Vinaigrette Dressing

A refreshing addition to your fresh salads, this vinaigrette can be preserved through water bath canning so that you have a delicious, healthy dressing with no additives or chemicals.

Ingredients

- 5 quarts (25 cups) fresh whole strawberries, washed and stemmed
- 4 cups white distilled vinegar
- Sugar
- 6-quart jars

Directions

Place strawberries in a large stainless-steel sauce-pot or plastic container.

Pour vinegar over strawberries, then cover container tightly with plastic wrap and let stand overnight in a dark, cool place (70°F to 75°F).

Strain the liquid from strawberries, collecting in a large liquid measure. Liquid should be red and clear (no pulp). Measure liquid.

Place strawberry vinegar in a clean, large stainless-steel saucepan. Add an equal amount of sugar, stirring to combine. Bring mixture just to a boil. Remove from heat and skim foam if necessary.

Ladle hot vinaigrette into hot jars leaving 1/4-inch headspace. Wipe rim and apply seal and ring. Process in a hot water bath for 10 minutes. Remove jars and cool. Check lids for seal after 24 hours.

Makes about 6 half pints

Green Tomato Salsa Verde

This spicy green tomato salsa certainly isn't a traditional salsa verde, which is usually made with tomatillos, but we think it's every bit as delicious. Enjoy it with grilled meats and fish or straight from the jar as a dip for tortilla chips.

Ingredients

- 7 cups chopped cored peeled green tomatoes (about 12 medium)
- 5 to 10 jalapenos, Habanero or Scotch bonnet peppers, seeded and finely chopped (depending on how hot you like it!)

- 2 cups chopped red onion (about 2 large)
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup lime juice
- 1/2 cup loosely packed finely chopped cilantro
- 2 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper

Directions

Combine tomatoes, peppers, onion, garlic and lime juice in a large saucepan. Bring to a boil. Stir in cilantro, cumin, oregano, salt and pepper. Reduce heat and simmer 5 minutes.

Ladle hot salsa into hot jars leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe rim and add seals and rings. Process in a water bath for 20 minutes. Remove jars and cool. Check lids for seal after 24 hours.

Yields 6 half-pints or 3 pints

Spaghetti Sauce

This recipe delivers traditional, delicious Italian flavor with no oils and balances the quantity of low-acid vegetables with added acid (lemon juice) for water bath canning. If you decide to leave out the lemon juice or alter this in any way, you need to pressure can it.

Ingredients

- 8 cups fresh plum tomato purée
- 2/3 cup finely chopped onion
- 2/3 cup finely chopped celery
- 1/2 cup finely chopped carrot

- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 4 tbsp. bottled lemon juice
- 2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 tsp. hot pepper flakes

Directions

Combine 1 cup of tomato purée, onion, celery, carrot and garlic in a large stainless-steel saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring frequently. Reduce heat, cover and boil gently until vegetables are tender, about 5 minutes.

While maintaining a steady boil, add remaining tomato purée, 1 cup at a time, stirring frequently. Stir in lemon juice, salt, black pepper and hot pepper flakes. Increase heat to high and bring to a full rolling boil; boil hard, stirring frequently, until mixture is reduced by one third, about 15 minutes.

Ladle hot sauce into hot jars leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles and re-measure headspace. If needed, add more sauce to meet recommended headspace. Wipe rim and place seals and rings.

Process in a water bath for 35 minutes. Remove jars and cool. Check lids for seal after 24 hours.

Yields 3 pints