

Why use canning to preserve foods?

Canning is the process of sterilizing and sealing foods in airtight containers to preserve them. To retain nutrients and optimum quality, preserve fruits and vegetables when at their peak of freshness. Clean the food thoroughly before processing to reduce the number of microorganisms on the food. This is important for safety. Food is preserved by using methods that destroy or hinder the growth of microorganisms, such as molds, yeast and bacteria. These organisms may be present in the soil, on the food, in the air, on equipment or on work surfaces.

What recipes should I use for canning?

All recipes provided by the National Center for Home Food Preservation and the USDA are TESTED recipes. This means food scientists have tested the preservation process and ensured that the recipe kills microorganisms and will be safe to store as shelf stable. Be wary of social media recipes that have not been tested as it cannot be ensured that they are truly safe products.

Thank you for your visit

We would love to assist you with all of your food preservation needs at UT Extension. Contact your local county office for more information on workshops and resources.

More Info

 <https://fcs.tennessee.edu/>

*Find your
local office
and FCS
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Basics of Canning

These recommendations are an overview of the USDA-tested and evidence-based guidelines for food preservation.

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Water Bath Canning

Processing acid foods in a boiling water canner prevents spoilage from mold, yeast and enzymes while creating a vacuum seal. This process is recommended for:

- Fruits and fruit juices
- Jams and jellies
- Salsas
- Tomatoes
- Pickles and relishes
- Chutneys, sauces, pie fillings
- Vinegars
- Condiments

Pressure Canning

Pressure canning is the only processing method that reaches the high temperature (240°F) needed to safely preserve low-acid foods. It is the combination of time and temperature that will destroy food-borne bacteria, such as *Clostridium botulinum*, and create a vacuum seal necessary to prevent spoilage.

Use the pounds of pressure established for the process. Pressure canners are available in different designs, materials and sizes. Directions for use should accompany each canner. Follow these directions carefully.

This process is required to preserve foods and recipes like:

- Meats
- Poultry
- Seafood
- Some tomato products
- Vegetables
- Chili and soup

Canner Testing

Early spring is a great time to have your dial gauge pressure canner tested to ensure that it is reading correctly for your canning for the year. You should have this done annually. It is free at your local Extension office.

Please note that All American Canners cannot be tested at our offices as the manufacturer has indicated that these devices should not need dial gauge testing.

