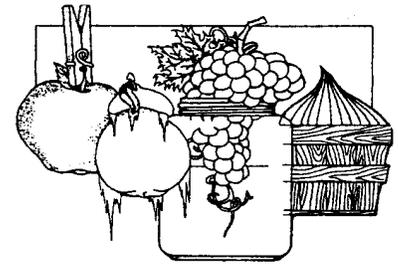


Quality for Keeps



Information for those who produce and preserve food

Don't let one bad apple ruin your harvest

Fresh picked apples are great for munching, but sometimes there are just too many apples to eat before they lose their appeal.

To preserve the bounty, start with fresh, crisp apples. The preserved product is only as good as the initial product.

Before apple season begins, gather all the ingredients and supplies needed to make a high quality canned, frozen, or dried apple product.

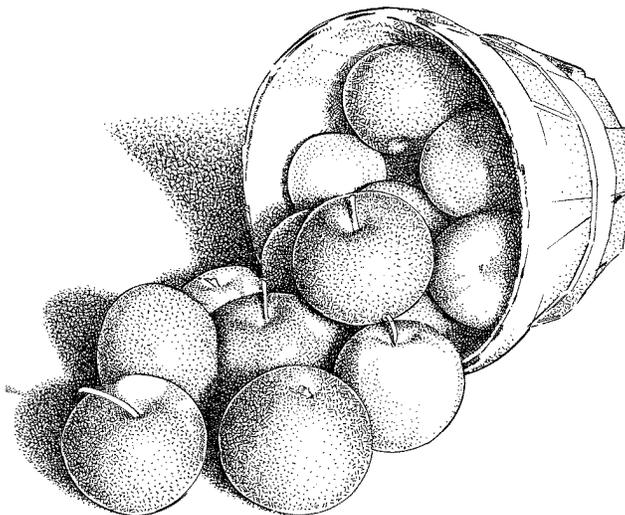
Anti-darkening Agents.

Apples tend to turn dark quickly after they are cut. To prevent darkening of sliced apples and produce a more attractive product, pre-treat with an ascorbic acid dip. Use a commercial ascorbic acid solution mixed as directed, or one teaspoon ascorbic acid, (or 3,000mg of vitamin C tablets), dissolved in one gallon of water.

When drying apple slices or rings, prepare a pre-drying dip by combining the amount of ascorbic acid listed above with two cups of water. Alternative pre-treatments include dipping in fruit juice or a honey dip, or blanching the apples before drying to prevent darkening.

When freezing apples, use ascorbic acid, citric acid or lemon juice to prevent darkening. Add anti-darkening agents to the syrup, sprinkle on the fruit before sugar is used, or add to the crushed fruit to prevent darkening during freezing.

Canning. To can apple or other fruit pie filling at home, order



Clear Jel[®], (**not Instant Clear Jel[®]**), before starting. This is a corn starch that is adapted for use in canning, so it keeps the correct thickening properties. Since Clear Jel[®] is not found in most grocery stores, allow time for the order to arrive before apples are ready for harvest. Clear Jel[®] is also available at canning supply web sites and specialty cooking stores.

Clear Jel[®] can be used for canned fruit pie fillings because it does not break down in the acid food mixtures, and does not prevent heat from killing bacteria during canning.

Selection. Match the apple with the product. Tart apples are best for chutney, jelly, and spiced rings. A mixture of tart and sweet varieties of apples are best for juice, applesauce, and pie filling. Sweet apple varieties make the best applesauce.

Apple relish, preserves and apple butter can be made of either sweet or tart apples.

Apple jelly, or apple butter made with artificial sweeteners, is not usually processed and must be stored in the refrigerator.

Since apple products are acidic, they may be processed in a water bath canner.

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Drying. To prepare dried apple slices, rings, or fruit leather, peel and core apples. Cut into 1/8-inch slices and pretreat to prevent darkening before drying. Dry about 6 to 12 hours in a dehydrator. Applesauce can be dried or added to other fruit puree for drying into fruit leather. Pour the applesauce 1/8-inch thick, and then dry 6 to 8 hours in a dehydrator, or about 18 hours in the oven at about 140°F.

Freezing. When using apples in uncooked desserts or fruit cocktail, the syrup-pack method is preferred. A sugar or unsweetened pack is best for freezing apples used in pies.

Selection. Select full-flavored apples that are crisp and firm, not mealy in texture. Wash, peel and core. Slice medium apples into twelve sections, large ones into sixteen.

Applesauce and baked apples can also be frozen.

Syrup pack. The apples are peeled, cored, and sliced directly into the pack that contains syrup. A syrup of 3 cups of sugar to 4 cups of water will make 5-½ cups of syrup. Adding ½ teaspoon crystalline ascorbic acid to each quart of syrup will prevent darkening. Put ½ cup of syrup in a pint container, then slice and pack apples into the syrup. Leave a 1/2-inch head space, seal, label and freeze.

Water or juice pack. Apples can also be frozen in water, unsweetened fruit juice, or pectin syrup, but the product will not be as high quality. Allow 1/2 to 1-inch headspace in containers.

Dry pack. Dissolve 1/2 teaspoon (1,500mg) ascorbic acid in 3 tablespoons water and sprinkle on the

apples, or steam blanch the apple slices for 1-½ to 2 minutes. The apple slices can then be frozen on a tray until just barely frozen, then package, leaving 1/2-inch headspace and label for the freezer.

Sugar pack. To sugar pack the apples, mix ½ cup of sugar with 1 quart (1-¼ pounds) of apple slices, after pretreating. Put fruit in a container and press fruit down, leave 1/2-inch headspace, seal, and freeze.

Source: GH1502, Quality for Keeps: Freezing Fruits <http://extension.missouri.edu/publications/DisplayPub.aspx?P=GH1502>

Note: Trade and brand names are used only for information. Use of a trade name or brand name does not imply approval of the product to the exclusion of others which may also be suitable.

Relishes add pizzazz to fall foods

As fall approaches, simmer a batch of vegetable relish, or try a new fruit relish.

Relishes traditionally contain vinegar, salt, sugar, and spices added to chopped vegetables or fruit. Although relishes are often a combination of fruits or vegetables, relishes based on a single food, such as apples, provide new options.

Once limited to use as a condiment for hot dogs and hamburgers, relishes can add interest to sandwiches, meat salads, potato salads, dips, grilled meats, beans, cooked greens, egg dishes, and as a topping for crackers or small toast pieces. Stir relish into softened cream cheese or mayonnaise to create zesty dips or sauces.

Always follow a safe recipe to insure that there is enough vinegar to make a product that is acidic enough to be safely canned in a water bath canner.

Relishes are made by cooking chopped vegetables and/or fruits in a spicy vinegar solution. Use commercial vinegar of at least 5% acidity. **Do not use home-made vinegar.** Choose a white vinegar rather than cider vinegar to preserve the color of the lighter colored vegetables and fruits.

Selection. Select high quality fruits and vegetables, free from mold. Vegetables and fruits are best preserved within 24 hours after harvest.

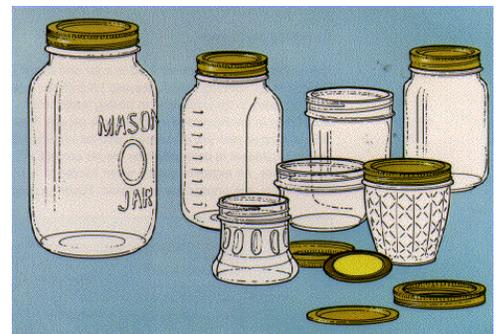
Preparation. Wash the produce well to remove all soil. Use canning or pickling salt to prevent cloudiness in the liquid. Opt for white sugar, unless the recipe specifies another sweetener. When possible, use whole spices, which prevents cloudiness of the liquid.

The acid and salt in pickled products, such as relishes, may react with some metals. To prevent unpleasant flavors, use stainless steel, glass, or

unchipped enamelware to heat the relish.

Process relishes in a boiling water canner, following recommended directions provided with approved recipes. Tested recipes can be found at:

<http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/>, any University Extension website, The Ball Blue Book, or the “So Easy to Preserve” canning guide.



Can soup now for fall warmth

A plentiful supply of vegetables can be turned into home prepared soups with very little fuss.

Processed soups are fairly expensive and high in sodium, so now may be a good time to can or freeze a few jars of soup. For soup success, follow a few simple rules.

Freezing. When freezing soup, omit the potatoes; add diced potatoes when the soup is reheated for serving. Frozen potatoes crumble and become mushy. Potato cubes in canned soup is fine.

Use less liquid when preparing soup to freeze.

Cool the soup quickly in a prepared ice bath by filling a sink with 4 to 5 inches of cold water, add several trays of ice cubes, placing the soup pot, (not glass containers), in the ice bath and stirring the soup frequently until cool. Add more ice to the ice bath as needed. After cooling, package soup in freezer containers leaving 1-inch headspace. Seal and label the containers.

Freeze broth or cream soups in ice cube trays before packaging to provide flexible serving sizes. Reheat the soup without thawing. To prevent scorching, reheat cream soups over boiling water and stir to keep them smooth.

For best quality, the suggested soup storage time is 4 to 6 months.

Canned soups. Beef and chicken broth, vegetable, seafood, dried bean or pea soup is convenient and easy to use. For safety, **all soups must be processed in a pressure canner.**

Rehydrate dried beans or peas fully before using them to make soups. To rehydrate, add 3 cups of water to each cup of dried beans or peas, boil 2 minutes, remove from heat, soak one hour, heat to boiling, then drain.

Select and prepare vegetables according to canning directions. Cover meats with water and cook until tender; cool meat and remove bones.

Do not add any thickeners or flour to canned soups, and leave out noodles, pasta, rice, cream and milk. Add these ingredients when the canned soup is opened and heated to serve.

Combine the vegetables and meat, if desired, and cover with meat broth, tomatoes, or water and boil 5 minutes. Fill the jars half full with solids, then finish filling with liquid, until there is 1-inch of headspace.

Adjust lids and process following the recommendations according to the method of canning used.

When canning meat or poultry stock, without added vegetables or meat, (other than the small bits that cooked off the bones), the processing time is less than the time required for the soup mixture.

Process meat or poultry both in a dial gauge pressure canner at 11 pounds of pressure, or 10 pounds of pressure in a weighted gauge canner. Process pints for 20 minutes and quarts for 25 minutes.

For all other soups, in a dial gauge pressure canner, at 0-2,000 feet in altitude, process pints for 60 minutes, quarts for 75 minutes at 11 pounds of pressure. Process for 100 minutes if soups contain seafoods.

In a weighted gauge canner at 1-1,000 feet in altitude, process pints for 60 minutes and quarts for 75 minutes at 10 pounds of pressure.

In a weighted gauge canner above 1,000 feet in altitude, process pints for 60 minutes and quarts for 75 minutes at 15 pounds of pressure.

Source: "Complete Guide to Home Canning," Agriculture Information Bulletin No. 539, USDA, revised 2006.



Food Preservation Workshops St. Louis Metro Region

August 11, 2009

6:30 - 8:30pm

Home Canning Techniques

Whole Foods Market

1160 Town & Country Crossing Dr.

Town & Country, MO 63017

For fees & registration contact:

636-527-1160

August 11, 2009

6:30 - 8:30pm

Freezing Basics

St. Paul Lutheran Church

204 Jones Street

Jonesburg, MO

For fees & registration contact:

573-564-3733

August 18, 2009

6:30 - 9:00pm

Making Pickles and Jelly

St. Andrew's United Methodist Church

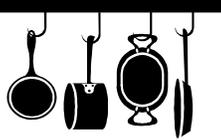
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DeSoto, MO 63020

For fees & registration contact:

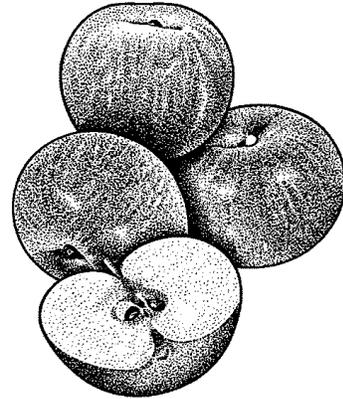
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THE RECIPE BOX



Sweet apple relish

- 4 pounds apples, peeled, cored and sliced thin
- 1¼ cups distilled white vinegar (5%)
- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup light corn syrup
- 2/3 cup water
- 1-1/2 teaspoon whole cloves
- 2 sticks cinnamon (3-inch pieces), broken up
- 1 teaspoon whole allspice



Yield: About 4 pints

Procedure: Wash apples, peel, core and slice thin. Immerse cut apples in a solution of ½ teaspoon ascorbic acid and 2 quarts of water to prevent browning.

Combine vinegar, sugar, corn syrup, water, cloves, cinnamon and allspice; bring to a boil. Drain apples and add to syrup. Simmer 3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Bring to a boil.

Pack hot apple slices into hot jars, leaving ½ inch headspace. Fill jars with boiling hot syrup, leaving ½ inch headspace, making sure apples are completely covered. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace if needed. Wipe rims of jars with a dampened clean paper towel; adjust two-piece metal canning lids.

Process in a **boiling water canner**. Process pints for 10 minutes. If you are located in an area over 1,000 feet, process for 15 minutes.

*Source: "So Easy to Preserve", 5th ed. 2006. Bulletin 989, Cooperative Extension Service, The University of Georgia, Athens.
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Quality for Keeps, published monthly, April through October, is made available to residents of East Central and Southeast Missouri by their Extension Councils. Contact your county Extension office to subscribe or visit our website <http://missouri.extension.edu/franklin>. Questions may be directed to:

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