For added zest and flavor, include pickled products as an ingredient or garnish. Although frequently expensive when purchased, the ingredients are fairly basic and sometimes plentiful to gardeners.

The addition of vinegar (acid) to low-acid vegetables during pickling allows some vegetables, that would otherwise have to be pressure canned, to be safely preserved in a water bath canner.

Vegetables are lower in acid than fruits, so vegetables must be either pressure canned, or pickled with plenty of acid, to be safely water bath processed.

Most fruits are naturally acidic, and do not need to be pressure canned to destroy deadly Clostridium Botulinum bacterium. Clostridium Botulinum cannot survive in a non-acidic environment.

Some cucumber pickles and sauerkraut are made by using brine and fermenting for approximately six weeks. Keep food in a brine solution, and add salt each week to maintain the brine solution at 10% salt. Remove scum each day to maintain the acidity and prevent spoilage of the vegetables.

Use only pickling or canning salt to prevent cloudiness in the brine. Measure salt and other ingredients exactly. The right amount of salt is necessary in fermented pickles and sauerkraut to prevent spoilage.

Use only 5% vinegar in pickles to get the proper acidity. Do not use homemade vinegar, since the acidity may not be 5%. White or cider vinegar may be used. To avoid discoloration, white vinegar is preferred for white or light colored vegetables. Cider vinegar offers more flavor and aroma, and is preferred if discoloration is not a factor.

White sugar is used for pickles, unless brown sugar is specified. Use artificial sweeteners like Splenda® and Equal® only in recipes designed to use less sugar. Artificial sweeteners may not be substituted for sugar in pickle recipes.
Cucumber pickles are the most popular pickled food, but other vegetables and fruits can also be pickled.

USDA approved recipes can be found at the National Center for Home Food Preservation web site at: http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/ or Extension publications such as: http://extension.missouri.edu/publications/DisplayPub.aspx?P=GH1457 or http://extension.usu.edu/utah/htm/fcs/food-preservation-canning/usda_home_canning/.

Recipes are also in the “So Easy to Preserve” canning book or the “USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning”.

Prepare unique pickled products to include in gift baskets, offer as hostess gifts, or add pizzazz to homemade casseroles, snacks, or sandwiches.

Check out the following list for using foods other than cucumbers for pickling:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruit or Vegetable</th>
<th>Pickling Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apples</td>
<td>sweet apple relish, apple chutney, tomato apple chutney, spiced apple rings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artichokes</td>
<td>jerusalem artichoke relish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asparagus</td>
<td>pickled asparagus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans</td>
<td>green beans, three bean salad, chow chow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beets</td>
<td>beets, no-sugar-added pickled beets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brussel Sprouts</td>
<td>pickled brussels sprouts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantaloupe</td>
<td>cantaloupe pickles, no-sugar-added cantaloupe pickles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td>piccalilli, sauerkraut, fall garden relish, dixie relish, chow chow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots</td>
<td>pickled carrots, pickled baby carrots, chow chow, mixed vegetable pickles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cauliflower</td>
<td>pickled cauliflower, fall garden relish, mixed vegetable pickle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chayote</td>
<td>chayote and jicama slaw, chayote and pear relish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn</td>
<td>corn relish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crabapples</td>
<td>spiced crabapples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cranberry</td>
<td>cranberry orange chutney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cucumbers</td>
<td>quick fresh pack dill pickles, fermented dill pickles, kosher dills, bread and butter pickle slices, quick sour pickles, ice water pickles, sweet pickle rings, sweet cucumber pickles, sweet gherkins, quick sweet pickle slices or strips, 14-day sweet pickles, pickle relish, sweet pickle relish, chow chow, mixed vegetable pickles, reduced-sodium sliced sweet pickles, reduced-sodium sliced dill pickles, no-sugar-added sweet pickled cucumber slices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figs</td>
<td>fig pickles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapes</td>
<td>spiced red grapes, spiced muscadines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseradish</td>
<td>horseradish relish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jicama</td>
<td>spicy jicama relish, chayote and jicama slaw, tangy tomatillo relish, bread and butter pickled jicama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mango</td>
<td>mango chutney</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Food Preservation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruit or Vegetable</th>
<th>Pickling Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mushrooms</td>
<td>marinated whole mushrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okra</td>
<td>okra dill pickles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onions</td>
<td>pickled onions, pickled pearl onions, onion relish, Vidalia onion relish, Oscar relish, mixed vegetable pickles, bread and butter pickle slices, piccalilli, pickle relish, sweet pickle relish, fall garden relish, pickled green tomato relish, spicy jicama relish, dixie relish, corn relish, chayote and pear relish, tangy tomatillo relish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peaches</td>
<td>peach pickles, peach chutney, oscar relish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pears</td>
<td>pear pickles, spiced pears, pear relish, chayote and pear relish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peppers</td>
<td>marinated peppers, pickled bell peppers, pickled peppers, pickled peppers II, pickled jalepeno peppers, pickled jalapeno pepper rings, pickled yellow pepper rings, pepper relish, oscar relish, piccalilli, pickle relish, sweet pickle relish, pear relish, fall garden relish, pickled green tomato relish, tangy tomatillo relish, spicy jicama relish, dixie relish, corn relish, chow chow, chayote and pear Relish, mixed vegetable pickles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plums</td>
<td>spiced plums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squash</td>
<td>squash bread and butter pickles, pickled bread and butter zucchini, squash pickles I, squash pickles II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomatillo</td>
<td>tangy tomatillo relish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomatoes (green)</td>
<td>kosher style dill green tomato pickles, spiced green tomatoes, piccalilli, pickled green tomato relish, chow chow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tomatoes (ripe)</td>
<td>tangy tomatillo relish, tomato apple chutney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watermelon</td>
<td>watermelon rind pickles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


## Avoid pesky pickle problems

The most frequent complaint received from home-canners concerns soft pickles. Common causes of soft or slippery pickles include:

- a weak brine or vinegar
- pickles not being kept covered in brine
- scum not being removed daily
- insufficient processing
- blossom ends left on cucumbers
- pickles were over-processed
- pickles were stored in an area that was too warm.

Pickles that are not as crisp as usual may be a sensory issue, but excessively soft or slippery pickles are probably spoiled and should be discarded, so they are not eaten by people or animals. Pickles may turn dark if there is iron in the water, the wrong type of utensils were used (brass, iron, copper, or zinc), ground spices or iodized salt were used, whole spices were left in the liquid during processing, or dark colored vinegar was used.

White sediment in the bottom is usually caused by using salt with an anti-caking agent or by fermenting bacteria. Unless there are signs of spoilage, the white sediment is not a reason for concern.

If the cucumbers are not fresh, or are of poor quality, the resulting pickles may be hollow, shriveled, have poor coloring, or have a bitter flavor.

Pickle problems may also occur if the weather during growing season was excessively hot or wet, if the wrong types of cucumbers were used, or if the produce was not handled properly. Use only top quality produce and follow the recipe exactly to yield a quality pickle.

Source: [http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/how/can_06/pickleproblems.html](http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/how/can_06/pickleproblems.html)
Kosher Style Dill Green Tomato Pickles

- small green firm tomatoes
- 6 stalks celery, cut in 2-inch lengths
- 6 sweet green peppers, seeded and quartered
- 6 cloves garlic
- 2 quarts water
- 1 quart distilled white vinegar (5%)
- 1 cup canning or pickling salt
- fresh dill to taste

Yield: About 6 quart jars

Procedure: Remove stems and cores from green peppers; quarter and remove seeds. Wash and drain all vegetables. Pack washed tomatoes in hot jars. Add to each quart jar: 1 clove of garlic, 1 stalk of celery and 4 quarters of green pepper. Combine water, vinegar and salt. Boil with dill for 5 minutes, pour hot brine over vegetables in jars, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace. Wipe rims of jars with a dampened clean paper towel; adjust two-piece lids.

Process in a boiling water canner. Raw pack. In quart jars, process for 15 minutes at altitudes of 0-1,000 ft., 20 minutes at 1,000-6,000 ft., or 25 minutes above 6,000 ft. altitude.