



The Delicious Taste of Summer in Home-Canned Vegetables

Canning vegetables is not only fun to do, but what could be more delicious than winter-time meals prepared with vegetables preserved from your summer garden. Add home-canned meat to those vegetables, and you have a hearty stew prepared from items on your pantry shelf.

Canning low-acid foods like green beans, carrots or corn requires special care. Low-acid foods can support the production of the deadly botulism toxin if these foods are not properly processed in a pressure canner. A pressure canner heats food to high temperatures, 240° to 250°F or higher, and destroys the spores that produce botulism toxin. A boiling water canner, such as might be used for canning pickles or fruit, heats food only to 212°F, not high enough to ensure safety while maintaining quality.

For high quality canned products, use fresh vegetables at the peak of eating quality. Ideally, vegetables grown in home gardens should be canned on the same day they are harvested. If this is not possible, refrigerate the vegetables until you are ready to can. Refrigeration will slow the rate of quality loss. Green beans, sweet corn, peas and green leafy vegetables can lose quality very rapidly. Carrots, beets, potatoes or winter squash can be stored for a relatively long time without significant quality change.

Wash all vegetables thoroughly and trim, peel or chop as directed. Blanch, if necessary, and fill into hot, clean home canning jars. Pickling or canning salt can be added for flavor, but are not required. Spices or herbs may be added in small amounts, but butter, fat, flour, rice, barley or pasta should never be added unless the recipe directs you to do so. Adding ingredients that are not called for in the recipe may result in an unsafe product. After filling the jars, wipe the jar rims, remove air bubbles and seal with pretreated two-piece lids. Process as directed.

Successful processing in a pressure canner requires attention to several details:

-- Vent pressure canners for 10 minutes at the start of processing. Venting drives air from the canner. If air remains trapped in the canner, the canner will not reach pressure, or pressurization will take a long time. A poor quality, unsafe product will result.

-- Adjust for elevation. When pressure canning meats and vegetables, it is important to adjust processing pressure for elevation. Unless otherwise specified, operate:

- *Dial gauge canners* at 11 pounds pressure (11 psi)
- *Weighted gauge canners* at 10 psi at elevations up to 1,000 feet above sea level, or 15 psi above 1,000 feet.

-- Keep an eye on pressure. Start counting processing time when the correct pressure is reached, and regulate heat to maintain a steady pressure. Fluctuating pressures can cause jars to lose liquid and damage seals or lead to under-processing and unsafe food. If at any time the pressure drops below the process level, bring the pressure back up and retime the entire process.

-- Allow time for pressure drop. Let the pressure drop on its own. Do not force-cool the canner.

-- Reprocess within 24 hours, if necessary. If jars fail to seal properly, meats and vegetables can be reprocessed within 24 hours. Repack clean, hot jars with food, top with pretreated lids and process again at the time and pressure specified. Or, refrigerate the jars and use within two or three days; or freeze the jars for later use.

For more information, see the UW-Extension publication *Canning Vegetables Safely* (B1159) that is part of The Wisconsin Safe Food Preservation Series by Barbara Ingham. The series also includes: *Canning Fruits Safely* (B0430), *Freezing Fruits and Vegetables* (B3278), *Homemade Pickles and Relishes* (B2267), *Making Jams, Jellies and Fruit Preserves* (B2909), *Tomatoes Tart and Tasty* (B2605), *Canning Salsa Safely* (B3570). The publications are available from Outagamie County UW-Extension office or from Cooperative Extension Publications (877-947-7827) and online at <http://learningstore.uwex.edu>. There is a fee for the publications; some are printable online free of charge.

Recipes for Canning Vegetables:

Canned green beans

Green, wax or Italian Beans; raw pack

Wash and trim. Leave whole or cut into 1- or 2-inch pieces. Pack tightly into hot jars, leaving 1-inch headspace. Add salt*. Cover with boiling water, leaving 1-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rims. Adjust lids and process. Pints: 20 minutes, Quarts: 25 minutes.

Green, wax or Italian; hot pack

Wash, trim and cut as above. Cover with boiling water and boil 5 minutes. Pack hot beans into hot jars, leaving 1-inch headspace. Add salt*. Cover with boiling cooking liquid, leaving 1-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rims. Adjust lids and process. Pints: 20 minutes, Quarts: 25 minutes.

Home-style baked beans

Add 3 cups water for each cup of dry beans in a large pot. Soak overnight, or cover with water and boil 2 minutes, remove from heat and soak 1 hour. Drain, cover with fresh water, and boil for 30 minutes. Drain and save liquid for sauce. Prepare tomato OR molasses sauce (see below) and heat to boiling. Fill hot jars 3/4 full of hot beans and cover with boiling sauce, leaving 1-inch headspace. **Do not overfill with beans, an unsafe product may result.** Add a 3/4-inch cube of pork, ham or bacon to each jar, if desired. Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rims. Adjust lids and process. Pints: 65 minutes, Quarts: 75 minutes.

Tomato sauce

3 cups tomato juice

1 cup tomato catsup

3 tablespoons sugar

2 teaspoons salt

1 tablespoon chopped onion

1/4-teaspoon ground cloves

Molasses sauce

4 cups cooking liquid

3 tablespoons molasses or sorghum

1 tablespoon vinegar

2 teaspoons salt

3/4-teaspoon dry mustard

Canned corn

Corn, whole kernel; raw pack

Husk, remove silks, and wash. Blanch 3 minutes in boiling water. Cut kernels from cob 3/4 the depth of the kernels. Do not scrape cob. Pack corn loosely into hot jars, leaving 1-inch headspace. Add salt*.

Cover with boiling water, leaving 1-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rims. Adjust lids and process. Pints: 55 minutes, Quarts: 85 minutes

Corn, whole kernel; hot pack

Prepare as above. In a saucepan, combine 1 cup boiling water for each 4 cups of corn. Heat to boiling; simmer 5 minutes. Pack hot corn loosely into hot jars, leaving 2-inch headspace. Add salt*. Cover with boiling hot cooking liquid, leaving 1-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rims. Adjust lids and process. Pints: 55 minutes, Quarts: 85 minutes

**Use canning or pickling salt. Add 1/2 tsp. salt to pints and 1 tsp. to quarts. You may use less salt or no salt in canned vegetables.*

***Canner pressure:*

Dial gauge, up to 2,000 ft. -- 11 pounds pressure

Weighted gauge, up to 1,000 ft. -- 10 pounds pressure

Weighted gauge, above 1,000 ft. -- 15 pounds pressure

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