



CRITICAL CANNING STEPS

Products Requiring Acidification

Tomatoes

Selection

Select firm, ripe tomatoes.

Over ripe tomatoes and those from frost killed and dead vines could have lower acidity levels. Freeze them instead.

Acidification

Because tomatoes are naturally low in acid, they should be acidified with bottled lemon juice or citric acid.

Bottled Lemon Juice: 1 Tbsp/pint; 2 Tbsp/quart

Citric Acid: ¼ tsp/pint; ½ tsp/quart

Packing

Tomato Options

- Crushed (Packed hot with no added liquid)
- Whole or halved packed in water (hot or raw pack)
- Whole or halved packed in tomato juice (hot or raw pack)
- Whole or halved packed raw without added liquid

Processing

Either a boiling water canner or a pressure canner may be used. Follow processing instructions for the style of pack used.

Pressure Canning

Gauge

Dial gauge should be tested once per year. If the gauge is inaccurate by more than 2 pounds, buy a new one. Weighted gauges do not need to be tested.

Venting

Canners must be vented for 10 minutes before closing the petcock or putting on weighted gauge. This venting step is very important to exhaust trapped air which keeps the canner temperature too low for adequate processing.

Processing Time and Pressure

Start timing when the pressure reaches 10 pounds for weighted gauge; 11 pounds for dial gauge canners.

Adjust pressure for altitudes over 1,000 feet (for weighted gauge canners) and 2,000 feet (for dial gauge canners).

Boiling Water Canning

Processing Time

Start timing as soon as water returns to boil. Adjust processing time for altitudes over 1,000 feet.

Unsafe methods

Open kettle canning is not safe. This is the method where hot food is poured into hot sterilized jars and sealed without processing.

Steam canning, oven canning and microwave canning are also not safe. Food will be under processed.

Cooling

Boiling water canner- After processing, take canner off heat. Remove lid. Wait 5 minutes before removing jars.

Pressure Canner- At the end of the processing time, remove the canner from the heat. Do not cool the canner with water or cold towels. When pressure returns to zero, slowly open the petcock or remove the weighted gauge. Wait 10 minutes, then unfasten the cover and tilt the lid away from you to avoid steam burns. Immediately remove jars from the canner. If jars are allowed to stand in the closed warm canner, spoilage could occur and the lid could seal on to the canner.

Put jars on rack or cloth so air can circulate freely around them. There should not be a cold draft or fan blowing on the jars. Don't cover jars with towels.

Sealing

When jars have cooled, check to see if lid has popped down in the center and does not move when pressed down.

If jars fail to seal, repack and reprocess for the full length of time within 24 hours. Or refrigerate or freeze for later use.