

## SWEET SPREADS

Sweet spreads, such as jams and jellies, are some of the easiest products for home canners to prepare. **Jams** are mixtures of about 45% fruit and 55% sugar that are cooked to a thick consistency with the fruit pieces being soft and nearly formless. Pectin and an acid source (such as lemon juice) are often used in jams to improve gel formation. **Jellies** also contain pectin and an acid source, but are prepared from fruit juice only with no fruit pulp present in the product. **Preserves** are similar to jams, but generally contain large chunks or whole pieces of fruit. **Marmalades** typically contain fruit rind, most often from citrus fruits such as lemons and oranges. **Butters** are smooth, thick mixtures of one or more fruits and often contain spices.

One advantage to preparing sweet spreads at home is the ability to combine unusual ingredients into products not available at the local grocery store. One such ingredient is green chile. Green chile is naturally low in acidity and should be pressure processed when canned alone. However, combining green chile with acidic ingredients like fruits and juices to make sweet spreads yields products that are safe for water-bath canning.

**NOTE:** This publication is intended for use by individuals with a basic understanding of canning procedures. For more detailed information, consult the *USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning*, which is available through your local county Extension office or can be accessed online at [www.uga.edu/nchfp/publications/publications\\_USDA.html](http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/publications/publications_USDA.html).

## GENERAL DIRECTIONS

Make sure all equipment is available and in proper working order before beginning. A water-bath canner with a tight fitting cover and an interior rack (called a bale) that holds the jars upright and separate during processing should be used. All recipes in this guide require 1/2-pint Mason jars with self-sealing lids and screw-on metal bands. Check jars for cracks or chips and check screw-on bands for rust and dents; discard any jars and bands that are faulty. Self-sealing lids are designed to be used once only, so use only new lids; check for dents or abnormalities in the lids and discard any that are faulty. Other equipment needed to prepare the sweet spreads in this guide includes a candy thermometer, an egg timer or other timekeeping device, a food processor or food mill, a sieve, a non-stick 6- to 8-quart pan with lid, a large spoon appropriate for use in a non-stick pan, a ladle, a canning funnel, jar lifters, tongs, hot pads, dish towels, and clean dish cloths.

Before beginning the sweet spread preparation, wash the jars in hot, soapy water and rinse thoroughly. Air dry the jars and place them in an oven at about 180°F for at least 30 minutes before using. Fill the water-bath canner about one-half full with hot water and place over very low heat. The water in the canner should be hot but not boiling when the filled jars are being placed in the canner. Lids and bands should be placed in a separate pan of hot water for about 1 minute before using. An easy way to do this is to bring a pan of water to a boil, then remove the pan from the heat and add the rings and lids just before they are needed. Do

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not let lids sit in hot water for long periods because this will destroy the rubber gasket that seals the lid to the jar.

Fill only one jar at a time, leaving about a 1/4-inch headspace. Wipe the jar rim with a damp cloth, place the lid and band on the jar, and tighten the band. Use the jar lifters to place the filled jar into the canner before filling the next jar. The jars should be sitting in the hot water, but they do not need to be covered with water while the remaining jars are being filled. Once all of the jars are filled and in the canner, add enough additional hot water to bring the water level about 1 inch above the top of the jars. Place the lid tightly on the canner and bring the water to a boil before starting your timer.

The specific time needed for processing depends on elevation. These recipes were developed and tested in Las Cruces, NM (elevation 3,900 ft), and were therefore processed for 14 minutes. To determine the correct processing time for your elevation, start with a base of 10 minutes. Add 1 minute of processing time for each 1,000 feet or portion of 1,000 feet above sea level. In Roswell, NM (elev. 3,600 ft), for example, processing time would be 14 minutes, while in Cloudcroft, NM (elev. 8,650 ft), processing time would be 19 minutes. Table 1 lists the altitudes for many New Mexico cities and towns.

Additionally, the boiling point of water decreases as elevation increases. To adjust boiling temperatures for elevation, subtract one degree Fahrenheit for every 500 ft of elevation above sea level.

After processing, place the jars on a clean towel with at least 1 inch of space separating them. Allow to cool for 24 hours, then test jar seals. Store sweet spreads in a cool, dark, dry place until ready to use. After opening, store jars in the refrigerator. Proper storage is essential for maintaining a safe product.

Prepare products as specified in the following recipes. Make only one batch at a time; doubling or tripling the recipe could result in a product that does not gel or is unsafe. Pay particular attention to the quantities and types of ingredients listed—any adjustments could result in a lower quality or unsafe spread. All recipes in this guide were developed using frozen chopped green chile; the chile was thawed for 24 hours in a home refrigerator at 38°F and drained well before being used in the spreads.

**Table 1. Elevations of Cities and Towns in New Mexico**

City/Town	Elevation (ft)	City/Town	Elevation (ft)
Alamogordo	4,350	Las Vegas	6,450
Albuquerque	5,000	Logan	3,830
Artesia	3,350	Lordsburg	4,250
Aztec	5,650	Los Alamos	7,400
Bayard	5,800	Los Ranchos de Albuquerque	4,950
Belen	4,800	Lovington	3,900
Bernalillo	5,050	Magdalena	6,556
Bosque Farms	4,864	Melrose	4,599
Carlsbad	3,100	Mora	7,200
Carrizozo	5,450	Mosquero	5,550
Chama	7,900	Mountainair	6,500
Cimarron	6,450	Portales	4,010
Clayton	5,050	Raton	6,650
Cloudcroft	8,650	Reserve	5,749
Clovis	4,300	Rio Rancho	5,290
Columbus	4,020	Roswell	3,600
Corona	6,664	Roy	5,900
Corrales	5,005	Ruidoso	7,000
Cuba	7,000	San Jon	4,200
Deming	4,300	Santa Fe	7,000
Dexter	3,500	Santa Rita	6,300
Eagle Nest	8,250	Santa Rosa	4,600
Elida	4,345	Silver City	5,900
Española	5,600	Socorro	4,600
Estancia	6,100	Springer	5,800
Farmington	5,400	Taos	7,000
Fort Sumner	4,050	Texico	4,150
Gallup	6,500	Tierra Amarilla	7,460
Grants	6,450	Truth or Consequences	4,250
Hobbs	3,650	Tucumcari	4,100
Hurley	5,700	Tularosa	4,500
Jemez Springs	6,200	Vaughn	5,950
Las Cruces	3,900	Wagon Mound	6,200

## RECIPES

### Apple Green Chile Butter

*Yield:* 6 half-pints

4 lb golden delicious apples, cored but unpeeled	2 c packed brown sugar
3 c frozen chopped green chile (mild, medium, or hot), thawed and drained	2 c granulated sugar
2 c bottled apple juice or apple cider	2 tsp ground cinnamon
	1 tsp ground allspice

Cut the apples into quarters. Combine apples, green chile, and apple juice or cider in a 6- to 8-quart non-stick pan. Bring mixture to a boil; reduce heat and simmer until apples are soft, about 20 minutes. Remove from heat. Ladle mixture into food processor in batches, processing until smooth. Strain mixture by pressing through a sieve and return the purée to pan. Add both types of sugar, the cinnamon, and allspice. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat if necessary to prevent boiling over. Cover pan and boil mixture until thick enough to round on a spoon, about 45 minutes, stirring occasionally at the beginning and constantly toward the end of the cooking period to prevent sticking and burning. Remove from heat. Ladle hot butter into hot jars, leaving a 1/4-inch headspace. Attach two-piece lids. Process in a boiling water bath for 10 minutes, adjusting processing time for elevation as necessary.

### Pineapple Green Chile Marmalade

*Yield:* 8 half-pints

2 medium lemons	2 c canned crushed pineapple in juice
2 c shredded carrots	1 c refrigerated orange juice
2 c frozen chopped green chile (mild, medium, or hot), thawed and drained	6 c granulated sugar

Scrub lemons. Cut a 1/4-inch slice off each end of each lemon and discard these end pieces. Slice lemons crosswise as thinly as possible, removing any seeds. Combine carrots, green chile, pineapple

in juice, and lemon slices in an 8-quart non-stick pan. Stir in orange juice. Bring mixture to a boil over medium heat; reduce heat and simmer 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Do not cover the pan while simmering. Stir in granulated sugar. Return mixture to a boil, stirring constantly. Clip a candy thermometer to the side of the pan, making sure the bulb is completely submerged. Boil the marmalade until thick and the temperature reaches 218°F (adjust for elevation as needed), stirring often at the beginning and constantly toward the end of the cooking period to prevent sticking and burning. Remove from heat. Ladle hot marmalade into hot jars, leaving a 1/4-inch headspace. Attach two-piece lids. Process in a boiling water bath for 10 minutes, adjusting processing time for elevation as necessary.

### Tomato Green Chile Pineapple Preserves

*Yield:* 6 half-pints

1 lb ripe slicing-type tomatoes	1 1.75-oz package powdered pectin
2 c frozen chopped green chile (mild, medium, or hot), thawed and drained	6 c granulated sugar
1 20-oz can crushed pineapple in juice, not drained	

Wash tomatoes. Immerse tomatoes in boiling water for 30 seconds. Remove and plunge into cold water. Slip off skins. Process peeled tomatoes in a food processor for 1 minute. Combine puréed tomatoes, green chile, pineapple, and pectin in an 8-quart non-stick pan. Bring mixture to a full boil over medium-high heat, stirring constantly. Add sugar all at once. Return mixture to a boil, stirring constantly. Boil hard for 1 minute. Remove from heat. Skim off foam if necessary. Ladle hot preserves into hot jars, leaving a 1/4-inch headspace. Attach two-piece lids. Process in a boiling water bath for 10 minutes, adjusting processing time for elevation as necessary.

## Raspberry Green Chile Jam

*Yield:* 7 half-pints

4 c frozen raspberries	1 c water
3 c frozen chopped green chile (mild, medium, or hot), thawed and drained	1 tbsp bottled lemon juice
1 1.75-oz package powdered pectin	6 c granulated sugar

Combine raspberries, green chile, pectin, water, and lemon juice in an 8-quart non-stick pan. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring constantly. Add sugar all at once. Return mixture to a boil, stirring constantly. Boil hard for 1 minute. Remove from heat. Ladle hot jam into hot jars, leaving a 1/4-inch headspace. Attach two-piece lids. Process in a boiling water bath for 10 minutes, adjusting processing time for elevation as necessary.

While these sweet spreads are excellent in traditional uses (try an apple green chile butter and peanut butter sandwich!), they are also great as ingredients in other dishes. Try this recipe for sweet and sour pork made with tomato green chile pineapple preserves.

## Sweet and Sour Pork with Tomato Green Chile Pineapple Preserves

*Serves 4.*

1/2 c all-purpose flour	2 tbsp cold water
1/2 tsp salt	1 c pineapple chunks, drained
1 lb pork, cut into 3/4-inch cubes	1/2 medium green bell pepper, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
1 egg, well beaten	hot cooked rice
2 c tomato green chile pineapple preserves (see recipe, p. 3)	
2 tbsp cornstarch	

Combine flour and salt in a flat dish. Dip pork cubes into beaten egg, then in flour mixture, coating each piece thoroughly. Fry pork cubes in hot oil until browned on all sides, about 6 to 8 minutes. Drain on paper towel; keep warm. In deep non-stick skillet, bring preserves to a boil. Blend cornstarch with cold water in a small bowl; gradually stir into preserves. Continue cooking, stirring constantly, until mixture is thickened and bubbly. Stir warm pork cubes, drained pineapple chunks, and bell pepper into thickened sauce. Heat, stirring constantly, until pork, pineapple, and pepper are heated through. Serve over hot cooked rice.

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