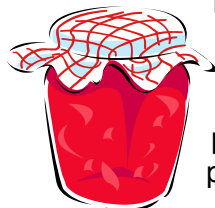


Make Jam This Summer with Your Bounty of Fruit



Ripe, juicy berries, fresh peaches, apples, pears and other fruits can be deliciously preserved to enjoy all year long. Whether you are making fruit jams, jellies, preserves, or conserves, these products all provide a good way to use fruits not suitable for canning or freezing. And while the type and proportion of ingredients varies for each product, they are all preserved by the presence of sugar in the product.

The four main ingredients needed to make jam or other jellied fruit products are: fruit, pectin, acid and sugar.

- **Fruit** gives each product its characteristic color and flavor. Use at least some flavorful, just-ripe fruit in each recipe.
- **Pectin** is the natural plant substance that causes fruit to gel. Fruits such as apples, cranberries, crabapples, currants, grapes and some plums contain enough natural pectin to form a gel; others require added pectin. Pectin is sold as a liquid or powder. Be sure to follow a recipe developed specifically for the type of pectin that you are using as two types can not be interchanged.
- **Acid** is essential in jellied fruit products for both gel formation and flavor. Acid content varies among fruits, and is higher in under-ripe fruits. Follow the recipe carefully and add acid if required.
- **Sugar** is another essential ingredient in jellied fruit products. Added sugar preserves fruit, helps the gel form, and contributes to flavor. Use the amount of sugar a recipe calls for, or the product will not form a gel. Sugar substitutes, also referred to as artificial sweeteners, cannot replace sugar in regular recipes. If you wish to use less sugar, choose a low-sugar or no-sugar-added pectin designed for this purpose.

Here are some **special hints** for making a successful batch of homemade jam or jelly:

- ❖ Make one batch at a time. Double batches do not always gel properly.
- ❖ Sterilize jars by boiling them for 10 minutes. Pretreat lids as directed.
- ❖ Remove bubbles and wipe jar rims and threads with a clean, damp cloth. Jam that sticks to the jar rim or threads can prevent the lid from sealing.
- ❖ Process filled jars in a boiling water canner. University of Wisconsin-Extension does not recommend sealing jars with paraffin, or inverting sealed jars as a final step as these steps will not guarantee a good seal.
- ❖ Store all opened jellied fruit products in the refrigerator.
- ❖ If your product fails to gel, consider using it as syrup instead! (Or follow directions for remaking the product in small batches.)

Get Started with Peach or Strawberry Jam

The University of Wisconsin-Extension bulletin *Making Jams, Jellies and Fruit Preserves* B2909 contains nearly 60 recipes for jams, jellies, fruit butters and syrups. Here are a few family-favorite recipes to get you started:

Peach Jam

Sterilize half-pint home canning jars and pretreat two-piece canning lids. Sort and wash ripe peaches. Remove the stems, peel and pits, and crush the fruit. Measure out **4 cups of crushed peaches** into a large kettle. Stir **one box of powdered pectin** into prepared fruit. Add **2 Tablespoons bottled lemon juice**, and **¼ teaspoon of butter or**

margarine, if desired to reduce foaming. Quickly bring fruit-pectin mixture to a full rolling boil, stirring constantly. At once, stir in **5 cups of sugar**. Continue stirring and bring back to a full boil. Boil hard for 1 minute stirring constantly. Remove from heat and skim off foam. Stir gently for 5 minutes to prevent fruit from floating. Quickly ladle hot fruit mixture into hot sterilized half-pint jars, leaving ¼-inch headspace. Remove bubbles, wipe rim and jar threads and seal with pretreated lids. **Process in a boiling water canner for 5 minutes**. Adjust time for elevation, if necessary. Yield: 6 to 7 (½ pints)

Strawberry Freezer Jam

Wash 1-quart strawberries and crush with a spoon or pastry blender. Measure **2 cups of crushed strawberries**. Measure **4 cups sugar** into a separate bowl and stir into strawberries. **Mix well** and let stand for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. In a small bowl, stir **2 Tablespoons of bottled lemon juice** into **one pouch of liquid pectin**. Add pectin mixture to prepared strawberries. Stir constantly until sugar is completely dissolved. Pour into clean, plastic freezer containers or glass canning jars, leaving 1/2-inch headspace for expansion during freezing. Let stand at room temp for 24 hours or until set. **Refrigerate for up to 3 weeks, or freeze up to 1 year**. Thaw in the refrigerator, then store refrigerated for up to 1 month. Yield: 4 (½ pints)

Re-Cook with Powdered Pectin

Sometimes, despite your best efforts, jellied fruit products refuse to set. At this point, you can resign yourself to using the product for pancake or ice cream topping, or follow these directions for re-cooking with powdered pectin.

Measure the jam to be re-cooked. For each quart (4 cups) of jam measure:

- ¼ cup of sugar
- ¼ cup water
- 4 teaspoons powdered pectin

Mix the pectin and water and bring to a boil, stirring constantly to prevent scorching. Add the soft jam and sugar. Stir well. Bring to a full rolling boil over high heat, stirring constantly. Boil mixture hard for 30 seconds. Remove jam from heat and skim off foam. Pour into hot sterilized half-pint jars, leaving ¼-inch headspace. Remove bubbles, wipe jar rims clean and cap with pretreated lids.* **Process in a boiling water canner for 5 minutes**. *Remember to use new pretreated lids when you reprocess jam or jelly.

Resources

USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning

http://www.uga.edu/nchfp/publications/publications_usda.html

Making Jams, Jellies and Fruit Preserves. 2002. B2909 Wisconsin Safe Food

Preservation Series by Barbara H. Ingham. On-line: <http://www1.uwex.edu/ces/pubs/>

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