



Ladies Have You Heard?

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TIPS ON CANNING TOMATO SAUCE OR PUREE AND JUICE SEPARATION

Many home canners find it very practical to can tomato sauce or puree to use quickly in a variety of ways in family meals throughout the year. There are many different recipes for tomato sauce or tomato puree. Some have no seasoning except salt. Others are seasoned for spaghetti sauce or other special use.

SAUCE OR PUREE. All tomato sauce or puree that has no other vegetables and no meat added should be packed by the hot pack method of packing and processed in the boiling water canner. The length of processing time will depend on the consistency or thickness of the sauce. The thinner the sauce, the longer the processing time. Thin sauce should be processed as long as tomato juice - 35 minutes for pints and quarts. If you cook down the sauce until you have about half as much volume as you had when you started to cook and fill hot into jars, processing time in the boiling water canner need be only 20 minutes. When the sauce is this thick, it will round up on a spoon, rather than just remaining level with the top edge of the spoon.

For some tomato sauces or juice, you may want to add other vegetables such as onions and green pepper even though tomatoes make up the major part of the mixture. To do this, add these other vegetables to the tomatoes and cook them all together. Then press through a sieve to remove the seeds and skins. Pack hot and process in the pressure canner at 10 lbs. for 20 minutes for pints and 25 minutes for quarts. If such products are

cooked into sauces first, (reduced to about half the original volume of the pulp you began with) then pack hot in pints or half-pints and process 35 minutes in a boiling water canner.

If you add meat to the tomato sauce, it must be processed in the pressure canner as should all meat. To do this, pack the hot sauce in the jars and process at 10 pounds for 60 minutes for pints and 1 hour and 15 minutes for quarts.

Catsup is normally even more concentrated than tomato sauce or tomato puree. In addition, it has a larger amount of acid, as either vinegar or lemon juice is added. Sugar and spices are also added. Therefore, a much shorter processing time is needed - 15 minutes in the boiling water bath is recommended.

Remember, when you can tomato sauce or tomato puree, it's important to consider the thickness of the sauce as well as what, if any, additional ingredients have been added. It's also important to follow modern directions and timetables for home canning these products. And if you have any doubt about the length of processing needed, it's better to overprocess rather than to underprocess.

AVOID JUICE SEPARATION. Separation in tomato juice does not indicate spoilage, but does detract from the appearance of the product. When tomatoes are cut, crushed or bruised, and exposed to air, the enzymes contained in the tomatoes are activated. These activated enzymes break down the natural pectins in the tomatoes and cause the juice to separate. Enzymes are quickly destroyed by heat, so the shorter the heating time the more you can minimize

this action. It will also help to use firm, ripe tomatoes for making juice and fill the juice hot into jars.

To avoid excessive separation when making tomato juice, work with the amount of tomatoes you can process at one time. Start cooking after a few tomatoes have been cut into the kettle. Add other cut tomatoes to those cooking after a few tomatoes have been cut into the kettle. Add other cut tomatoes to those cooking and stir frequently until they are cooked - avoid overcooking. After putting cooked tomatoes through sieve, reheat the juice just to boiling before filling hot into jars.

Process tomato juice in boiling water 35 minutes for both pints and quarts.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD PACKED LUNCH?

School has already started in some areas, and most other districts will begin this coming week.

The cost of lunches jumped in many school districts last fall, and more families began packing lunches for their children. But what constitutes a well-balanced lunch, and what can you pack that your child will actually eat?

A good lunch should include protein, bread, a fruit or vegetable, and milk.

A sandwich of some kind is the school lunch classic, combining protein and bread in one neat package. Though many children prefer enriched or whole wheat sliced bread, you can try pita or "pocket bread" which is easy to fill and wrap, or vary the pace with a hamburger or hot dog roll stuffed with a favorite filling.

A change from the ever present sandwich might be a cold chicken drumstick or a thermos full of stew, soup or a mild chili. Be sure your child can purchase milk at school is the thermos is otherwise occupied. Add a roll or some crackers to go along with the chicken leg or stew.

Celery sticks stuffed with cream cheese or peanut butter; carrot sticks or sliced raw pepper travel

well, too. Some fruits such as bananas or peaches tend to bruise in transit, especially when the transporter is an active elementary schooler. If your child objects to mushy fruit, try packing applesauce or canned fruit packed in light syrup in one of those small plastic containers with a tight cover.

Prepacked puddings, cakes and other snacks are convenient, but they offer little nutritional value and are hard on the budget.

What should you pack the lunch in? A lunch box, especially an insulated one, is a good investment. It will keep the food cold better than a brown bag, and since it's not subject to easy crushing, will keep the lunch in better condition.



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