

plastic bags. Fermenting sauerkraut in jars is no longer recommended.

- Suitable covers and weights: Shredded cabbage must be kept submerged in brine while fermenting. Sufficient weight must be used to keep brine 1 to 2 inches above shredded cabbage. There are two ways to do this:

- Put one food-grade plastic bag inside another. Make brine by adding 1-1/2 tablespoons of salt per quart of boiling water and pour into double bag and tie it shut securely. At least 3 quarts of brine are needed to keep the cabbage under the brine in a 5 gallon crock.

- Use a dinner plate that just fits inside top of crock. Weigh it down with two sealed quart jars filled with sterilized water.

- Cleanliness and good procedures are essential: Cocks or other containers (except plastic bags) must be washed carefully in hot, sudsy water, rinsed well, and scalded with boiling water. If a plate and jars of water are used, they also must be washed, rinsed and scalded each time any scum forms on the liquid surface.

Fermenting kraut should be checked several times each week, and any scum that forms should be skimmed off. The cabbage must be covered with 1 to 2 inches of liquid. If more liquid is needed,

use 1-1/2 tablespoons of salt per quart of boiling water.

At temperatures of 70 to 75 degrees F., kraut will be fully fermented in about 3 to 4 weeks; at 60 to 65 degrees F. it may take 5 to 6 weeks. At temperatures lower than 60 degrees F. kraut may not ferment at about 75 degrees F. kraut may become soft.

To make nine quarts of kraut use 25 pounds cabbage. Work with about five pounds of cabbage at a time. Discard outer leaves. Rise heads under cold running water and drain. Cut heads in quarters and remove cores. Shred or slice so that pieces are no thicker than a dime. Put cabbage in a large clean container and add three tablespoon of salt. Mix thoroughly with clean hands. Transfer to scalded crock or other suitable container and pack firmly until salt draws juices from cabbage. Repeat shredding, salting, and packing until all cabbage is in crock. Be sure crock is deep enough that its rim is at least four or five inches above the cabbage. If juice does not cover cabbage, add more boiled and cooled brine (1-1/2 tablespoons salt per quart

of water). Weigh down cabbage by one of the recommended methods and store at ideal temperature of 70 to 75 degrees F. Cover crock with plastic film and clean terry cloth towel.

If you weigh the cabbage down with a brine-filled bag, do not disturb the crock until normal fermentation is completed, when bubbling ceases.

If you use a plate and jar as a weight, you will have to check the kraut at least every other day and remove scum if it forms.

Fully fermented kraut can be kept covered in the refrigerator for several months or it can be canned as follows:

**Hot Pack** - Bring kraut and liquid slowly to a boil in a large kettle, stirring frequently. Remove from heat and pack rather firmly in clean jars, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Process pints 10 minutes and quarts 15 minutes in boiling water canner.

**Raw Pack** - Pack firmly in clean jars leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Cover with brine. Adjust lids and process pints 20 minutes and quarts 25 minutes in boiling water canner.



## Have You Heard?

By Doris Thomas  
Lancaster Extension  
Home Economist

### Now Is The Time To Make Sauerkraut

The month of September usually provides us with ideal temperatures and humidity for fermenting cabbage into sauerkraut.

Sauerkraut with its sharp flavor adds a pleasing change of pace to winter meals. And it is truly a convenience food — ready to serve cold in salads or appetizers or to heat in a few minutes with frankfurters for a delicious main dish.

Good cooks like to serve sauerkraut cold with a dash of celery or caraway seeds, a few chunks of chilled, drained, canned pineapple or a little pineapple juice added, for an appetizer. They know that the sharpness of its flavor, when hot, depends on how long it has been cooked. For the most tang and greatest crispness,

they only heat it. They cook it longer for a milder flavor and softer texture.

Always use pure granulated canning salt to make sauerkraut, and be sure to measure it accurately. The cabbage will not ferment properly if you add too much salt. Try the following method for making sauerkraut for delicious results!

For the best sauerkraut, use firm heads of fresh cabbage. Shred cabbage and start kraut between 24 and 48 hours after harvest.

#### Facts you should know:

- Suitable containers: 5 gallon stoneware crock or container or similar size, lined with heavy food-grade plastic bag; or two stoneware crocks, about 3 gallons each; or two containers of similar size, lined with large turkey size



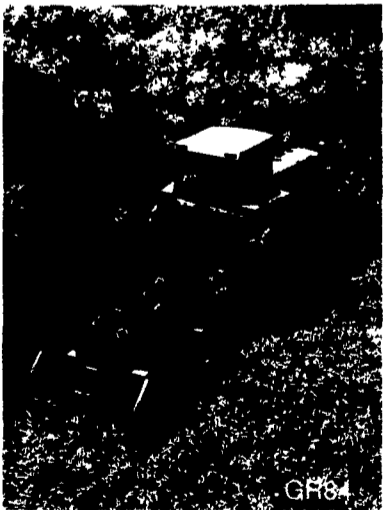
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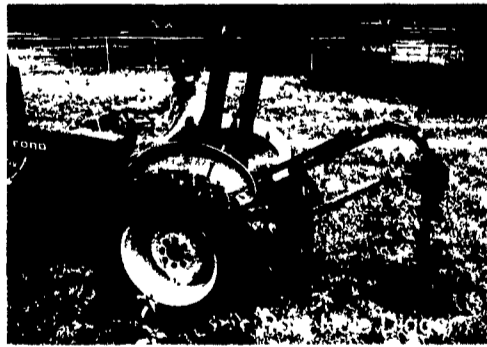
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