

Reduced And No-Sugar Jams And Jellies

LOU ANN GOOD
Lancaster Farming Staff

LEBANON (Lebanon Co.) — Growing health concerns have caused many consumers to take a new approach to canning and freezing, especially with jams and jellies.

Alletta Schadler, Lebanon County home economist, held a workshop on reduced and no-sugar jam and jelly making recently.

At one time, it was thought impossible to make jams and jellies without sugar since most jams and jellies are made using commercial pectin preparations. In most recipes in order for the gel to form the proper ratio of acid, sugar and pectin must be present. Some pectin is provided by the fruit itself, the balance by the commercial pectin with added sugar.

Although reducing sugar in standard recipes almost always results in a soft, runny product, there are several new developments with improved reduced-sugar preservation now on the market.

Alletta told workshop participants about the new products and prepared several varieties for taste testing.

The taste-testing favorite was the new product Garden Fare Freezer Jam Gelling Powder by McCormick and Co., Inc. 1-800-632-5847. It uses carrageenan as the thickener to make uncooked freezer jam. If you can't find it in the supermarket, call 1-800-632-5847 and order direct. Cost is \$15 for 12 packets including shipping.

Low methoxyl pectin such as Mrs. Wages Light Home-Jell does not depend on the same ratio of sugar and acid for gel formation as other pectins do. Some people are not satisfied with the taste, but, Lettie said, "You should taste it to decide as each person's likes and dislikes vary greatly."

Another low methoxyl pectin product is Ball 100% natural Fruit Jell No Sugar Needed Pectin. Both cooked and uncooked freezer varieties can be made with 1 to 3 cups sugar or with non-sugar sweetener. Clarity, texture, and flavor are acceptable although it is different from the sugar varieties. It can be purchased wherever Ball brand canning supplies are sold.

You can make jam or jelly without any sugar, but it will taste different. Some people do not like the taste and it will not keep as well during long storage. The color and flavor fades due to lack of sugar. Usually grape juice or other fruit juices are used to sweeten the flavor.

Fruit spread using Sure-Jell Light Fruit Pectin uses fruit juice concentrate instead of sugar. It is a long cook procedure that results in a dark thick spread. Lettie cautions that it is important to use the recommended-pan size to allow the proper amount of evaporation to take place. The jam splashes as it cooks so it is a good idea to put a rug or newspaper on the floor in front of the range as you work.

Aspartame sweetener is not heat tolerant so it must be added at the end of cooking and after the fruit is cooled.

Remember artificial sweeteners do have some calories, these should be considered by calorie-counting individuals.

Artificial sweeteners should be added to canned or frozen fruit just before serving. Do not use artificial sweeteners containing aspartame in canning syrups as the heat processing causes it to lose

sweetening power and may cause an unpleasant after taste or flavor.

Fructose is a sweet tasting sugar found naturally in fruit, juices, and honey. While it tastes twice as sweet as sugar and you need to use less, it must be considered as a sugar by diabetics.

NutraSweet is a brand name for the sweetener aspartame, which is used as the sweetening ingredient in Equal, NutraSweet, Spoonful, Equal Measure, and other products. NutraSweet may lose its sweetness if a product is kept hot for a long period of time. To obtain desirable sweetness, add the sweetener after the recipe has been removed from the heat.

To keep peaches and other fruits from darkening, add ascorbic acid to the fruit. The most inexpensive source of ascorbic acid is a generic brand of Vitamin C tablets. Buy the 500 mg. size tablets and crush and dissolve six tablets in one gallon water or juice. As you peel the fruit place it in this solution until ready to prepare jams or process. Although other fruit treatment powders to prevent darkening are available, some contain sugar, avoid them if you are watching your sugar intake.

Additional recipes and information are available from the following companies, which are eager to answer questions and may even send free samples of their products.

Sure-Jell, General Foods Corp., White Plains, NY 10625 (1-800-431-1001).

Mrs. Wages - Dacus Inc., Tupelo, MS 38803 (1-800-431-1001).

Ball Consumer Affairs — PO Box 2749, Muncie, IN 47307-0729.

Equal-NutraSweet Brand — (1-800-323-5316).

Sweet One with Sunette - (1-800-544-8610).

APPLE JELLY

2 packages or 2 tablespoons unflavored gelatin

1 quart unsweetened apple juice
2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 tablespoons liquid artificial sweetener

Food coloring, if desired

In a saucepan, soften gelatin in apple juice and lemon juice. Bring to a rolling boil, dissolving gelatin; boil 1 minute. Remove from heat. Stir in liquid artificial sweetener and food coloring. Pour hot into hot jars. Adjust caps. Store in refrigerator up to three weeks. Yield: about 2 pints. 1 tablespoon equals 8 calories.

GRAPE JELLY

2 packages or 2 tablespoons unflavored gelatin

24 ounces unsweetened grape juice

2 tablespoons lemon juice
2 tablespoons liquid artificial sweetener

In a saucepan, soften gelatin in grape juice and lemon juice. Bring to a rolling boil, dissolving gelatin; boil 1 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in liquid artificial sweetener. Pour hot into hot jars. Adjust caps. Store in refrigerator up to three weeks. Yield: about 1 pint. 1 tablespoon equals 11 calories.

BLACKBERRY JAM

4 cups crushed blackberries
8 tablespoons liquid artificial sweetener

Measure crushed blackberries into a saucepot. Add sweetener and stir well. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly until the mixture thickens. Pour hot into hot jars, leaving ¼ -inch head space. Adjust



Penn State Home Economist Alletta Schadler shows the new artificial sweeteners available for making jams and jellies with lower or reduced sugar content.



Participants at the workshop taste test various jams and jellies made with no or reduced sugar.

caps. Process 15 minutes in boiling water bath. Yield: about 1 pint. 1 tablespoon equals 10 calories.

RASPBERRY JAM

1 quart cleaned raspberries
3 to 4 teaspoons liquid artificial sweetener

1 package powdered pectin
1 tablespoon lemon juice

Crush raspberries in saucepan. Stir in artificial sweetener, pectin, and lemon juice. Bring to a boil; boil 1 minute. Remove from heat. Continue to stir 2 minutes. Pour into can or freeze jars. Adjust caps. Freeze. Yield: about 2½ cups. 1 tablespoon = 5 calories.

FREEZER PEACH JAM

4 cups peeled peaches
3-4 teaspoon liquid artificial sweetener

1 tablespoon unsweetened lemon juice
½ teaspoon ascorbic acid
1½ ounce package powdered fruit pectin

Crush fruit in saucepan. Stir in sweetener, fruit pectin, lemon juice and ascorbic acid. Bring to boil and boil for one minute. Remove from heat. Continue to stir 2 minutes, pour into freezer containers, cover, freeze. Thaw before serving. store in refrigerator after thawing.

BLACKBERRY JAM

4 cups crushed blackberries
8 tablespoons liquid artificial sweetener

Measure crushed blackberries into a saucepot. Add sweetener and stir well. Bring to a boil, stirring constantly until the mixture thickens. Pour hot into hot jars, leaving ¼ -inch head space. Adjust caps. Process 15 minutes in boiling water bath. Yield: about 1 pint. 1 tablespoon = 10 calories.

GRAPE JAM

2 cups unsweetened grape juice
1 cup water
½ cup quick tapioca
Sugar substitute equal to 3 cups sugar

Combine juice, water, and tapioca in saucepan. Let stand 5 minutes. Bring to a boil and boil hard 1 minute. Stir in sweetener. Pour into clean jars. Seal and store in refrigerator.

Yield: 2½ cups.

APPLE CINNAMON CONSERVE

4 cups unsweetened applesauce
1 cup dried apples, chopped
20-ounces unsweetened crushed pineapple, drained
¼ teaspoon cinnamon
2 tablespoons lemon juice
¾ cup raisins

Combine all ingredients in a large sauce pot. Simmer for 30 minutes, stirring frequently. Pour hot into hot jars, leaving ¼ -inch headspace. Adjust caps. Process 10 minutes in boiling water bath. Yield: about 6 half pints. 1 tablespoon equals 14 calories.

FUZZY NAVEL PEACH JAM

¾ cups chopped peaches
1 teaspoon grated orange rind
1½ cups granulated sugar
1 package freezer jam gelling powder

Combine first 3 ingredients and allow to stand 15 minutes. Add gelling powder package.



MILK. IT DOES A BODY GOOD.
MIDDLE ATLANTIC MILK MARKETING ASSOCIATION, INC.