

Consuming Thoughts

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There's something about summer harvest of fruits and vegetables that brings out the wonderful creative urge to "put foods by," or "put up some foods," as the old-fashioned expressions go.

The exciting produce available today, including new and exotic fare from around the world, is further incentive to preserve, can and freeze. Stirring up a batch or two of conserves, relishes and sauces is fun, a welcome change-of-pace from everyday meal preparation. In fact, it's an art form for those who like to cook the way

quitting is for those who like to sew.

Along with the satisfaction and pride that come from making your own pickles and relishes, you reap the rewards of having something very special to serve friends and family in other less bountiful seasons.

And certainly not to be overlooked is that homemade preserves make thoughtful gifts for the holidays, for hosts or hostesses, teachers gifts and for other occasions. Dressing up the containers with ribbons, calico or lace, at-

taching original labels and packaging the jars in baskets makes them picture-pretty and even more of a treat to receive.

And while you're making preserves or relishes, etc., why not make several extra jars and enter them in your local county or state fair. Fair entries must meet all the criteria or guidelines for a top quality product such as using the boiling-water-bath method of processing, using a two piece lid and screwband and also use the standard canning jars which are available in pints and half pints. Request a premium book from your local fair and carefully read entry information and eligibility requirements.

Here are the general canning procedures for making jelly, jams and spreads.

All products should be filled hot into sterile half-pint or pint canning jars, leaving 1/4-inch headspace. To sterilize empty jars, put them open side up on a rack in a boiling-water canner. Fill the canner and jars with hot (not boiling) water to 1 inch above top of jars. Boil jars 10 minutes. Remove

and drain hot sterilized jars one at a time and fill with food. Food residue should be removed from the jar sealing edge with a clean, damp paper towel. New two-piece canning lids prepared according to manufacturer's directions should be added. After screwbands are tightened, jars should be processed in a boiling water canner.

Penn State Cooperative Extension has a pamphlet on "Let's Preserve Jelly, Jam, Spreads." It has a variety of recipes including Peach-Pineapple Spread, Pear-apple Jam and Grape-Plum Jelly.

In addition most Penn State Cooperative Extension Offices will have a flyer on Low Calorie Jams & Jellies. The recipes are equally tempting and include Peach-Plum Jam, Blackberry Jam and assorted recipes for grape and apple jelly.

Contact your local county Penn State Cooperative Extension Office or request these from my office by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope with 52¢ affixed to: Jelly, Jam, Spreads, Berks County Cooperative Extension, Berks County Ag Center, PO Box 520, Leesport, PA 19533-0520.

4H HAPPENINGS

Equestrians 4-H

The 4-H Equestrians met on June 15 at the Lebanon Ag Center, with 12 people attending.

At the meeting, conducted by Jenny Hain, 4-H camp for the end of the month, in addition to the Equestrian Horse Show at the Lebanon Fairgrounds, were discussed.

The members were reminded that all horses must have their rabies shots by August 1.

The committee listed those who will help out for work detail and the people helping at the horse show.

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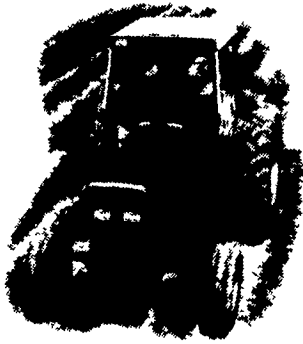
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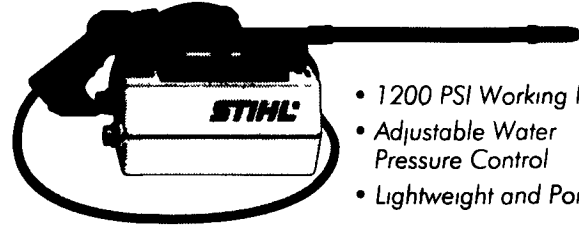
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