

# Cook's Question

(Continued from Page B8)

**ANSWER** — E. Beaver, Ringtown, wanted to know if fresh asparagus is better frozen or canned. She wanted tips on how to freeze and can asparagus. Here is some information from the Pennsylvania Vegetable Marketing and Research Program and the Penn State Cooperative Extension. For best results, fresh asparagus should be prepared immediately after purchase, as its delicate flavor deteriorates quickly at room temperature. If asparagus must be stored, place the stalks in the coldest part of the refrigerator wrapped at the base with a damp paper towel.

To can, an average of 24½ pounds are needed per canner load of 7 quarts. Use tender, tight-tipped spears, 4 to 6 inches long.

Wash asparagus and trim off tough scales. Break off tough stems and wash again. Cut into 1-inch pieces or can whole.

**How pack**—Cover asparagus with boiling water. Boil 2 to 3 minutes. Loosely fill jars with hot asparagus, leaving 1-inch headspace.

Add 1 teaspoon salt per quart to the jars, if desired. Add boiling water; leaving 1-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process in a dial-gauge pressure canner at 11 pounds for 30 minutes for pints or 40 minutes for quarts.

To freeze, wash asparagus in cold water, trim, discard tough parts of stalks, leave whole or cut to desired length, blanch small spears for 2 minutes in boiling water bath or 4 minutes for large spears. Cool, drain, and fill freezer container.

# Old Tyme Peach Festival

MIDDLETOWN, Del. — The Peach Festival is held annually to celebrate the community spirit of the past century when the Middletown, Odessa, and Townsend area was a major peach producing region. The MOT area, as it is called, was ideally suited for peach growing, and with the railroad's arrival in

1856, increased the distance the area growers could ship peaches up and down the eastern seaboard. The entire community was focused on peaches! Unfortunately, a serious disease wiped out all the peach trees in the late 19th century, and commercial peach production never resumed.

The annual Olde-Tyme Peach Festival helps to rekindle the community spirit through a day-long event starting with a parade at 9:30 a.m. The event will have arts and crafts, antique dealers and other vendors offering their special blend of "peach festival" products. Organized activities include the Peach Pie Contest (where all the pies are consumed after judging), a raffle of a special Peach Festival quilt made by the community members, along with games for children, entertainment throughout the day by local and regional groups, and much more. Food and drink of all types and descriptions will be available all day long.

Come out and relive the community spirit of more than 100 years ago on August 15 at the fifth annual Olde-Tyme Peach Festival! Located on Main Street in historic Middletown, with plenty of parking nearby. Make it a day to remember. The festival is sponsored by "Merchants of Historic Middletown" & "Middletown Historical Society"



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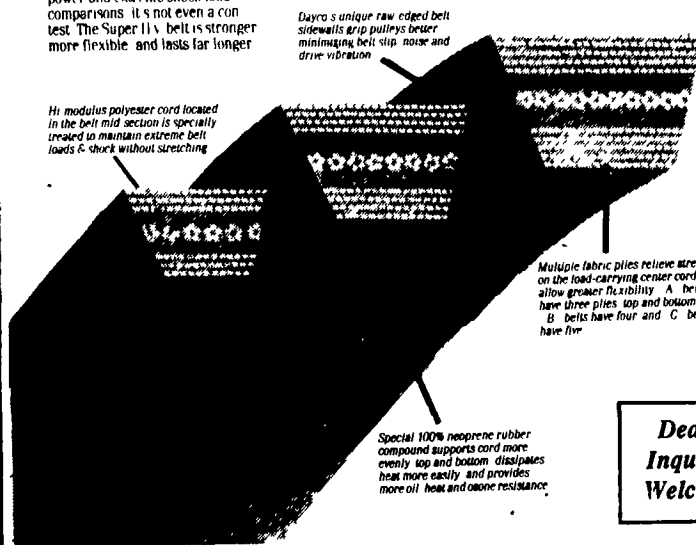
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