



Say it ain't so. Green ketchup. Green KETCHUP, for crying out loud! "Did you get your green ketchup yet?," joked my mom last week, during a quick family lunch on the deck one lovely afternoon last week.

We like to think we embrace most new ideas pretty quickly here. Green ketchup (or catsup, or whatever the spelling you're accustomed to of this tomato-based condiment) is the H.J. Heinz food company's latest innovative condiment creation to hit the supermarket shelves.

Or so we've read. None of us around here has actually seen any of it yet, so maybe it's just a marketing idea that was being floated in a sort of consumer trial balloon.

Green ketchup isn't aimed, though, at the taste of adults. This dramatic color change is targeted to kids, consumers who thrive on stuff that looks somewhat gross to adults. And, green ketchup might cause some reaction of that nature. Not because it looks or tastes or functions any differently, just because we veteran condiment users have this mental image of ketchup as a thick, reddish substance which hangs up in the bottom on the container.

Imagine french fries topped with a dollop of green. Or, a hot dog sporting squiggles of green catsup. (Hot dogs served with green ketchup and yellow mustard should play well at next winter's John Deere days open house events at area dealerships.)

So, how about orange pickle relish to go with that? And purple onions, which God has already created all by Himself with no need for help from food marketers, thank you very much.

Or maybe even yellow ketchup, to compete with the attention of the mustard set? That should be easy, given that yellow tomatoes — the base source product of ketchup makings — already come in a variety of yellow shades. (I have oodles of tiny little ones in the garden; anyone wishing to try this, they're yours for the picking.)

Actually, there are also orange tomatoes, and cream-colored tomatoes, and if you got to mixing all the potential shades together, you could almost have a rainbow of ketchup colors. If properly packaged — like those pens that write a bunch of colors at the same time — you could theoretically stripe your cheeseburger with a rainbow of ketchup at one swipe.

The possibilities are just mind boggling.

But if the sacred cow of red ketchup has gone by the wayside, why not look at a redo of some other familiar foods.

One of the seed catalogs that arrives every winter advertises blue potato seedstock. Together now, let's visualize the color of potato chips fried from blue potatoes. Topped with green ketchup, of course.

They'd probably turn the same shade of purple as the blue corn tortilla chips you can occasionally find in the supermarkets. First time I ever saw those was during a camping trip grocery-restocking stop in an Idaho supermarket. Our grown-up kids poked fun at me for getting them, but scarfed down the entire bagfull in short order.

We're almost making pigs of ourselves on the fresh sweet corn of the season, one of our very favorite August foods. Meanwhile, a small planting of Indian corn at the corner of the garden towers over my head, planted especially for the grandsons.

Wouldn't it be neat to have multi-colored Indian-sweet corn to pop on the grill in its husk and munch dripping with butter? That'd definitely get your guests' attention.

You could dazzle your friends with a summertime spread of picnic favorites, hot dogs and hamburgers lathered with green ketchup, red-speckled-and-striped corn-on-the-cob, purple potato chips, and for dessert, slices of crispy-sweet yellow watermelon (which we are harvesting and eating as we speak).

All served up beside the sparkling waters of your pink swimming pool.

Bon appetite.

# Dry Tomatoes?

According to Martha Filipic of Ohio extension, you can dry garden tomatoes.

The best tomatoes to use are the meaty type, such as Roma tomatoes. From 14 pounds of fresh tomatoes, you can expect to end up with about a half-pound of dried tomatoes, or 2.5 to 3 pints.

Use fully ripe tomatoes, and cut away any bruised spots before beginning the process.

As with any vegetable, picking a tomato off the vine activates certain enzymes that causes changes in color, flavor, texture, sugars and nutrients. So, its always best to process tomatoes as quickly as possible after being harvested.

Before you begin the drying process, pretreat the tomato by rinsing it off and dipping it in boiling water for one minute. Peel the tomato and remove the stem end. Cut the tomato in slices from an eighth to a half of an inch thick. With Roma tomatoes, you can also just cut them down the middle.

A food dehydrator is the best appliance to use to dry tomatoes — follow the manufacturers directions. Drying in the oven is possible, too. Use the lowest oven setting possible, about 140 degrees. Once it's preheated, leave the oven door open a few inches, with a fan blowing across the opening to assure good air circulation and to allow moist air to escape. Adjust the temper-

ature setting and use an oven thermometer to be sure the oven remains at about 140 degrees.

Place the tomatoes on a cookie tray or put them on a cooling rack that's set on top of a tray. They should be dried for several hours, perhaps as many as 10 hours, depending on the thickness of the slice and the moisture content of the tomato. They'll be crisp when they're done. Watch carefully, as they can scorch easily near the end of the drying time. Store the dried tomatoes in an enclosed container in a cool, dry dark place.

To make dried tomatoes in olive oil, cut Roma tomatoes in half and dry them until they've shrunk to about one-quarter their original size, are dark red, shriveled and dry but not hard. Let them cool for an hour, then pack into jars and cover with olive oil. Let the tomatoes marinate at least six weeks before using. These tomatoes must be refrigerated, because the combination of fruit and oil in an airtight container could cause botulism. Remember, the tomatoes must be dry and the tomato mixture must be refrigerated to ensure this product is safe.

Chow Line is a service of The Ohio State University. Send questions to Chow Line, c/o Martha Filipic, 2021 Coffey Road, Columbus, OH 43210-1044, or filipic.3@osu.edu.-30-

## Tour Trial Gardens

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co) — Backyard gardeners, gourmets, and any person with an interest in vegetables can find out how to produce, cook, and serve great produce by attending

Penn State's All-American Selection Vegetable Tour, Aug. 24. The Penn State Trial Gardens, corner of Bigler Road and Park Avenue, University Park, are test plots for new vegetable varieties to see if they are reliable, vigorous, productive, and show distinct improvements over other varieties in use.

Participants will get a chance to tour, sample and photograph vegetables, ask questions. A \$25 registration fee includes materials and catered lunch. For more information, call Peter Ferretti at (814) 863-2313.

# Home Dry Cleaning Kits — Do They Work?

Dry cleaning products are becoming more and more popular as consumers seek the convenience and cost savings of doing dry cleaning at home.

Now that they have been on the market for awhile, what's the score?

According to Maytag, the primary benefit of using these kits is for freshening dry-cleaning-only garments in home automatic dryers. The kits may remove some stains from garments. Professional dry cleaners have stain removal tools for a wider variety of stains.

How they work: After a colorfastness test, treat spots with the special stain removal solution. Once the stain is treated, the garment is ready to be freshened. This is done in a specially designed

dryer bag and a pre-moistened dryer-activated cloth. More than one garment can be treated. The bag goes into the dryer. The bag protects the garments from heat while releasing moisture from the cloth to freshen the garments. After the end of the recommended time, remove garments from

the bag and hang immediately.

Pitfalls: If crisp creases in pants, skirts, or shirts are important, home dry cleaning is not a good alternative. Some fabrics such as silk or rayon can develop water rings when used with the home dry cleaning kits. (These rings can be re-

moved in some instances.)

Home dry cleaning kits are not recommended for use with leather, velvet, suede, or fur.

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