

Well Preserved

The Well Preserved news column is prepared by Lancaster County Cooperative Extension. It includes food preservation information and questions.

Winter Canning

Part 1 — Pressure Canning

Just because the growing season is over, it doesn't mean that you need to put the canner away. The more leisurely days of winter is a good time to try some new canning recipes and make some specialty items.

Many of these items are a convenience for meal preparation. This week we will look at some pressure canning ideas. The next article will share some boiling water bath ideas.

Canned boneless, skinless chicken can be the basis of many dishes. The soft meat breaks up easily to layer with refried beans, cheese, shredded lettuce, and salsa for a tasty taco. Top with sour cream if desired. Roll these same ingredients in a soft tortilla for a delicious fajita. In fact, the canned chicken is suitable for many Mexican dishes. Thicken the canned chicken and its broth with a little flour or cornstarch, add some minced dried onion, celery and/or parsley flakes, and

a few cooked or canned peas for a hearty creamed dish to serve over waffles, toast, or pancakes. Adding dry milk powder to the broth will give the gravy a richer taste.

Because the meat has been cooked so long in the canning process, it is very soft. To use it in cold dishes such as chicken salad, chill the meat first before cutting it into cubes. If you want large cubes of meat in dishes such as chicken pot pie, add the chilled meat just before serving and only cook enough to heat through. Substitute canned chicken for tuna in a noodle casserole; top with buttered bread crumbs and slivered almonds; bake until golden brown and you have a dish suitable to serve company.

How to can chicken: Chicken can be canned with the bone in or boneless. It can be raw packed or hot packed. Hot packed chicken has a clearer broth because the liquid can be skimmed before packing it into jars. To hot pack boneless chicken, boil, steam, or bake the chicken until about 3/4 done. Remove skin and bones. Pack hot chicken into hot jars, leaving 1-inch headspace. If desired, add teaspoon salt to each



pint, or 1 teaspoon salt to each quart, if desired. Ladle hot cooking liquid, water or chicken broth over chicken, leaving 1-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Adjust two-piece caps. Process pints 1 hour and 15 minutes, quarts 1 hour and 30 minutes at 11 pounds pressure in a dial gauge canner and 10 pounds pressure in a weighted gauge canner. Adjust times for higher altitudes.

Beef, pork, lamb, and venison can be canned and used in similar creative ways. Combining meat and vegetables with a starch product makes a hearty winter meal. Top a vegetable or beef stew with dumplings. If desired, thicken canned stew with a little cornstarch before adding the next toppings. Homemade biscuit dough can be placed on stew in a flat casserole or 9x13-inch baking dish and baked

at 400F until golden brown. A pastry crust can be added for a traditional meat pie. Spice up the pastry with mixed minced herbs—parsley, basil, and thyme.

USDA does not recommend adding noodles, milk or thickening agents to home canned soups and stews. Avoid adding thickeners to dishes such as chicken a la king unless using a tested recipe for home canning because the starch may prevent adequate heat transfer inside the jar. If thickening is desired, add it to the product just before serving.

Ingredients in recipes such as bean soup, beef stew with vegetables, chicken a la king, and goulash are available year round. Carrots, celery, potatoes, onions are reasonably priced for winter canning. Hearty bean soup and split pea soup have cold weather appeal. See the Ball Blue Book for tested recipes.

Orange flavored glazed carrots

might have special appeal to those on a low sodium diet. Heat 2 cups brown sugar, 2 cups water, and 1 cup orange juice in a saucepot stirring to dissolve sugar. Keep syrup hot while preparing 7 pounds carrots. Wash, peel, and cut carrots into 3-inch pieces. Thicker pieces will need to be cut in half-lengthwise. Pack carrots tightly into hot jars, leaving 1-inch headspace. Ladle hot syrup over carrots, leave 1-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Adjust two-piece caps. Process pints and quarts 30 minutes at 10 pounds pressure. Yields about 6 pints. Source: Ball Blue Book.

If you have food preservation questions, a home economist is available to answer questions on Wednesdays 10:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m., call (717) 394-6851 or write Penn State Cooperative Extension, Lancaster County, 1383 Arcadia Rd., Rm.1, Lancaster, PA, 17601.

Pa. 4-H Team 2nd At Forestry Event

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — A team from Pennsylvania finished second in the 24th annual National 4-H Forestry Invitational which took place near Weston, W.Va., July 27-31.

The team competed against teams from 15 other states at the event, sponsored by the International Paper Company Founda-

tion and the Cooperative Extension Service.

Representing Pennsylvania were Carissa Ganong of Millerton, Kristin Johnson of Warren, Luke Petre of Lewisburg, and Kyle Wilson of Russell.

The team was coached by David Miller of Warren. Assistant coaches/chaperones were Robert Domville of Warren, and Debbie and Ray Beisel of Clymer.

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"Being inducted into the VFW Hall of Fame was the greatest honor in my lifetime."

— Cristy Lane

POW's and MIA's... We Should Never Forget.

Amidst their hardships and tribulations, America's fighting men and women have always taken comfort in their favorite songs of faith. These songs have helped to keep strong their belief in their God, and their love for their country, which has asked of them great sacrifices for the sake of their fellow Americans. To serve these wonderful men and women Cristy Lane worked more than 120 shows in Vietnam during the Vietnam War. It was Cristy's way of keeping faith with the troops, at a time when many Americans were turning their backs on them. As long as she lives, she will never forget the faces of these young men and women. On August 27, 2003 the VFW formally inducted Cristy into the VFW Hall of Fame in San Antonio at their National Convention. And now Cristy Lane is proud to present a special CD of songs of faith to our Veterans of Foreign Wars, many of whom she met in the jungles of Southeast Asia.

These are the most requested songs of faith of all time, including Cristy's #1 country hit from 1980, the timeless classic, "One Day At A Time." These songs have been selected especially for you, America's veterans, who know so well the meaning of faith, and the value of a great song of faith.

God bless and take it one day at a time.

—Cristy

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