

# PANHANDLE PATH TO HEALTHY LIVING



## **August, Enjoy the Last Days of Summer!**

August gardens are full of produce. This is a wonderful time to enjoy the fruits of your labor. Be sure to enjoy the late summer bounty of watermelon, corn, tomatoes, and squash. They are all in abundant supply so why not preserve some to enjoy later. I have included some great recipes to help you with your canning and preserving goals. Let's continue to go outside and stay physical active and sign up for the Walk Across Texas 25th Anniversary Community Walk! Lastly, I have included a back to school snack recipe to keep the kids healthy and energized-Enjoy!

***Lizabeth Gresham***

# Path to Preservation ...

## How Canning Preserves Foods

The high percentage of water in most fresh foods makes them very perishable. They spoil or lose their quality for several reasons:

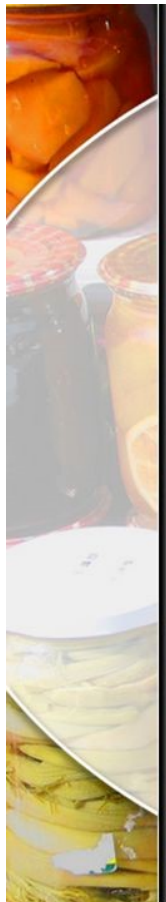
- growth of undesirable microorganisms-bacteria, molds, and yeasts,
- activity of food enzymes,
- reactions with oxygen, moisture loss.

Microorganisms live and multiply quickly on the surfaces of fresh food and on the inside of bruised, insect-damaged, and diseased food. Oxygen and enzymes are present throughout fresh food tissues.

Proper canning practices include:

- carefully selecting and washing fresh food, peeling some fresh foods,
- hot packing many foods,
- adding acids (lemon juice or vinegar) to some foods,
- using acceptable jars and self-sealing lids,
- processing jars in a boiling-water or pressure canner for the correct period of time.

Collectively, these practices remove oxygen; destroy enzymes; prevent the growth of undesirable bacteria, yeasts, and molds; and help form a high vacuum in jars. Good vacuums form tight seals which keep liquid in and air and microorganisms out.



## The pH of food decides which canning method to use

pH = $\leq$ 4.6 High Acid Foods		pH > 4.6 Low Acid Foods		
Pickles	Apricots	Okra	Beans	Hominy
Apples	Raspberries	Squash	Potatoes	Olives
Apricots	Strawberries	Pumpkins	Spinach	Shrimp
Oranges	Blueberries	Carrots	Peas	Clams
Grapefruit	Blackberries	Turnips	Corn	Meat
Peaches	Pineapple	Cabbage	Poultry	Asparagus
Grapefruit	Kraut	Onions		
Plums	Pears			
Figs				
WATER BATH CANNER		PRESSURE CANNER		

Source: *So Easy to Preserve*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, University of Georgia,

### NOTE:

Although tomatoes usually are considered an acid food, some are now known to have pH values slightly above 4.6. Therefore, if they are to be canned as acid foods, these products must be acidified to a pH of 4.6 or lower with lemon juice or citric acid. Properly acidified tomatoes are acid foods and can

Resources: Univ. Of Georgia-So Easy To Preserve, Ball and Kerr

# Canning Tomatoes...

## CRUSHED TOMATOES

**PRESERVING METHOD:** Water bath Preserving

**YOU WILL NEED:** • 2-3/4 lbs tomatoes per quart jar  
• ½ tsp citric acid or 2 T lemon juice to each hot quart jar or ¼ tsp citric acid or 1 T lemon juice to each hot pint jar • Salt, 1 tsp salt to each quart jar or 1/2 tsp salt to each pint jar (if desired) • Glass preserving jars with lids and bands



### DIRECTIONS:

1. **PREPARE** boiling water canner. Heat jars and lids in simmering water until ready for use. Do not boil. Set bands aside.
2. **WASH** tomatoes. Dip in boiling water 30 to 60 sec. Immediately dip in cold water. Slip off skins. Trim away any green areas and cut out core. Leave tomatoes whole or cut into halves or quarters.
3. **CUT** tomatoes into quarters to measure about 2 cups. Transfer to a large stainless steel saucepan and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Using a potato masher, crush tomatoes to release juices. While maintaining a gentle boil and stirring to prevent scorching, quarter additional tomatoes and add to the saucepan as you work. The remaining tomatoes do not need to be crushed, as they will soften with heating and stirring. Continue until all tomatoes are added, then boil for 5 minutes.
4. **ADD** ½ tsp Ball citric acid or 2 Tbsp bottled lemon juice to each hot quart jar. Add ¼ tsp citric acid or 1 Tbsp bottled lemon juice to each hot pint jar.
5. **PACK** hot tomatoes into hot jars to within 1/2 inch of top of jar. Press tomatoes into the jar until the spaces between them fill with juice, leaving 1/2 inch headspace. Add 1 teaspoon salt to each quart jar, 1/2 teaspoon to each pint jar, if desired. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace, if necessary, by adding hot tomatoes. Wipe rim. Center hot lid on jar. Apply band and adjust until fit is fingertip tight.
6. **PROCESS** filled jars in a boiling water canner for 35 minutes for pints and 45 minutes for quarts, adjusting for altitude. Remove jars and cool. Check lids for seal after 24 hours. Lid should not flex up and down when center is pressed.

# Canning Pickles...



## Ball Dill Pickle Spears

- 4 pounds (3- to 5-inch) pickling cucumbers
- 1 gallon plus 1 quart water
- 10 tablespoons Ball® Salt for Pickling and Preserving
- 3 cups white vinegar (5% acidity)
- **2 tablespoons** sugar
- **1 tablespoon** pickling spice
- **12** dill sprigs
- **2 tablespoons** mustard seeds

## Preparation

- Rinse the cucumbers under cold running water, and trim any that are longer than 5 inches so that they'll fit comfortably in the jar. Cut each cucumber lengthwise into quarters. Place the spears in a large, clean container (such as a 12- to 18-quart food-safe plastic pail or basin). Combine 1 gallon of the water and 6 tablespoons of the salt in a large pitcher, stirring until the salt dissolves. Pour over the cucumbers; cover and let stand at room temperature 24 hours. Drain; rinse under cold running water, and drain.
- Combine remaining 1 quart water, vinegar, next 2 ingredients, and remaining 1/4 cup salt in a stainless-steel or enameled saucepan. Bring to a boil, stirring until the salt and sugar dissolve.
- Place 2 of the dill sprigs and 1 teaspoon of the mustard seeds into a hot jar, and pack tightly with the cucumber spears. Ladle the hot pickling liquid over the spears, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Add 1/8 teaspoon Ball® Pickle Crisp® Granules to jar, if desired. Remove air bubbles. Wipe the jar rim. Center the lid on the jar. Apply the band, and adjust to fingertip-tight. Place the jar in the boiling water canner. Repeat until all the jars are filled.
- Process the jars 10 minutes, adjusting for altitude. Turn off heat; remove the lid, and let the jars stand 5 minutes. Remove the jars and cool. Source: Ball®



# Freezing Squash..

## Freezing Summer Squash (Cocozelle, Crookneck, Pattypan, Straightneck, White Scallop, Zucchini)

**Preparation** – Choose young squash with tender skin. Wash and cut in 1/2-inch slices. Water [blanch](#) 3 minutes. Cool promptly, drain and package, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Seal and freeze.

**Grated Zucchini** (for Baking) – Choose young tender zucchini. Wash and grate. Steam [blanch](#) in small quantities 1 to 2 minutes until translucent. Pack in measured amounts into containers, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Cool by placing the containers in cold water. Seal and freeze.

If watery when thawed, discard the liquid before using squash

## Gluten Free Zucchini Muffins



### Ingredients

3 eggs  
1 cup vegetable oil  
2 cups loosely packed, coarsely grated zucchini, and drained  
1 1/2 cup sugar , 1 tbsp Vanilla  
2 cups all purpose gluten-free flour  
1 tbsp cinnamon  
¼ tsp baking powder  
1 tsp salt  
2 tsp baking soda  
1 cup chopped walnuts

### Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees grease and flour and/ or line the pan with muffin liners.

In a bowl, beat the eggs until frothy, Add and beat in sugar, oil and vanilla until the mixture is thick and lemon-colored

Stir in the zucchini, sift cinnamon, baking soda, salt and baking powder into the flour.

Add flour and other sifted ingredients into the mix, fold in the chopped nuts.

Fill ¾ of the cup or ½ the cup depending on how big you want the muffins.

Bake in a preheated 350 degree oven for 30 mins (insert tooth pick and it should come out clean) Cool for ten minutes, Enjoy!



## Easy Watermelon Fun...

### Easy Watermelon Salsa

Mix ingredients and enjoy!!



### Easy Watermelon Cucumber Balsamic Salad

#### Ingredients:

- 4 cups watermelon cubed
- 2 cups fresh cucumbers cubed
- 1/2 cup red onion sliced
- 1/4 cup basil chopped
- 2 tablespoon olive oil
- 1/2 cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 ounces Fat Free feta cheese crumbled

Mix together all vegetables. Mix together olive oil, balsamic and pour on watermelon mix. Toss and add feta . Chill and Enjoy!

### Watermelon Cucumber Balsamic Salad





Walk Across Texas 25th Anniversary!...

**Let's Keep Moving!**



# LET'S FINISH STRONG IN 2021! JOIN THE POTTER WALK ACROSS TEXAS 25TH ANNIVERSARY WALK

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September 3rd thru October 28th

Let's Finish Strong and be part of the 25th Anniversary Walk!



[www.HowdyHealth.org](http://www.HowdyHealth.org)

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To Sign up & Contact:

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## TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION

**Lizbeth Gresham** is a Family and Community Health Agent with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension **Potter** County. Family and Community Health helps Texans better their lives through science-based educational programs designed to improve the overall health and wellness of individuals, families, and communities. FCH focuses on topics such as child and adult health, nutrition, child care, financial management, and community safety, and building strong families. Our goal is to encourage lifelong health and well-being for every person, every family, and every community. <https://Potter.agrilife.org>

*Lizbeth Gresham*

TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION SERVICE

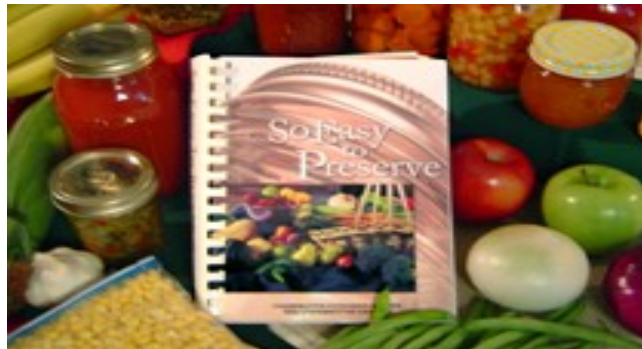
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**DINNER  
TONIGHT**  
HEALTHY COOKING SCHOOL  
TEXAS A&M AGRILIFE EXTENSION



**To Order So Easy To Preserve**

**<https://setp.uga.edu/>**

**For Healthy Recipes Visit!**

**[dinnertonight.tamu.edu](http://dinnertonight.tamu.edu)**

## Path To The Plate...After School Snacks

### Apple Sail Boats

**You will need:**

**Apples – each apple makes two boats**

**Your favorite spread – almond butter, peanut butter, honey, sun butter**

**Puffed rice , crushed cereal or granola**

**Hard Cheese**

**Toothpicks**

**To make:**

**Cut the apple in half, removing the core.**

**Spread the top with nut butter.**

**Sprinkle with puffed rice.**

**Cut a sail for your apple boat from a thick slice of cheese and attach with a toothpick. Enjoy!**



KIDS SNACK IDEAS: CRUNCHY APPLE BOATS