

## Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Wednesday, July 12, 1933

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

3Hh  
Subject: "Making Jelly from Summer Fruits." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

--oOo--

As the canning season advances, the pantry shelves are piling up their promise for the winter. Homemade fruit sweets like jellies and jams are taking their place beside the canned or dried fruits and vegetables that will be the main supply. These sweets are not an expensive luxury. If you have no garden or orchard, make them of fruits that may be had for the gathering--wild berries or cherries, for example. Many a lone plum tree or currant bush in a small backyard does its useful part. Apples and crabapples are usually cheap and very often free for the asking. And they make delicious jelly.

Success in jelly-making depends a great deal on the fruit you use. Jellying occurs only when you combine acid, pectin and sugar. Of course, you know that pectin is a substance which forms in the pulp of many fruits as they ripen and causes the thickening or jellying. The best fruits for jelly-making are those that have a tart flavor and are rich in pectin--fruits like currants, red and black raspberries, blackberries, gooseberries, wild goose plums, wild grapes, Concord grapes, crabapples, winter apples like winesaps and Ben Davis, quinces and cranberries.

Now here are a few suggestions from experts that may help in the success of your jelly-making this season.

They suggest first that firm fruit which is slightly underripe makes the best jelly.

To prepare any fruit, first wash it thoroughly and discard any damaged parts. Be very careful when you wash berries. They are delicate and easily damaged. Leave currants on their stems for cooking. And leave the skins on grapes and plums. But remove the stems and blossom ends from apples and quinces. Cut the fruit into pieces, but don't remove cores or skins.

For best results, plan to make only a few glasses of jelly at a time -- perhaps 12 or 14. Prepare just a small lot of fruit and carry through the process promptly.

Use a broad, flat-bottomed kettle. Why? Because this offers a wide surface for evaporation and you can get concentrated juice quickly. How much water you put in with the fruit or whether you pit in any at all depends on whether the fruit is firm and solid or soft and juicy. Always be careful not to add too much water. Excess water has to cook off and this means overcooking the fruit. Apples, crabapples, quinces and wild grapes take 1 cup of water to 1 pound of fruit, or "water to cover." But currants and Concord grapes need only a quarter of a cup of water to 1 pound of fruit. In fact, if they're very juicy, you can sometimes get along with no water at all. Again about a quarter of a cup is enough for each pound of gooseberries. Blackberries and black



raspberries the same, if the fruit is firm. If it is soft, you can cook them with no water at all. Red raspberries need no water.

How firm the fruit is also determines the length of time for cooking. Crush soft fruits to start the flow of juice. After the juice begins to boil, cook the soft and juicy fruits like berries, currants and grapes from five to ten minutes. Apples and quinces need from twenty-five to thirty minutes.

Now pour the hot cooked fruit at once into your jelly bag. Let the juice drip from it. You may be tempted to hasten this dripping process by squeezing the bag. But don't give in to temptation. Squeezing the bag makes the jelly cloudy.

Some fruits, like currants and crabapples are so rich in jelly-making substances that you can extract the juice twice in this way. As soon as the juice ceases to drip from the fruit after the first cooking, turn the fruit back to the kettle, barely cover with water, boil again and extract the juice just as you did the first time.

Now to cook the juice and sugar. Cook only six or eight cups of juice into jelly at a time--enough to make twelve or fourteen glasses of jelly. This is a convenient quantity to handle and boils down quickly to the jelling stage. Because of the short cooking, it holds the fresh fruit flavor and color and makes jelly of the best texture. Measure the sugar and juice very carefully. What are the proportions? Again, that depends on the kind of fruit. For crabapples, currants, gooseberries and wild grapes, use 1 cup of sugar to each cup of juice. For apples and quinces, blackberries, red and black raspberries and wild goose plums use three-fourths cup of sugar to each cup of juice.

Heat the fruit juice and white granulated sugar together. Then boil down for the jelly test. Again use a large flat-bottomed kettle for rapid evaporation. Stir only until the sugar dissolves, no more. Boil rapidly. How to tell when the jelling stage has arrived? Well, test by dipping up a large spoonful of the boiling sirup and then letting the sirup run down the side. As the sirup cooks down, it reaches a stage when it no longer runs off the spoon in a steady stream, but separates into two distinct lines of drips which "sheet" together. Stop cooking the sirup the minute it gives this "sheeting off" test.

During the cooking of the fruit juice, of course, you've had your clean jelly glasses waiting in boiling water. Let the hot sirup stand in the kettle while you lift out the jelly glasses. Skim off the film from the hot jelly. Then pour it into the hot glasses carefully so that the jelly won't splash nor drip on the rim. Let the glasses of jelly stand until set-- twelve hours or longer then seal with paraffin, label and store in a cool, dry place.

You can use the fruit pomace left after the juice was extracted for jelly to make fruit butter. Press the pomace through a fine sieve, add sugar and spice to taste, cook until thick and stir constantly. Seal and store in sterilized jars.

Tomorrow: "How to Treat Your Summer Clothes."

