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U. S. Department of Agriculture

HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

TUESDAY, June 20, 1933.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "Canning Suggestions." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics,  
U.S.D.A.

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We used to hear a lot about the importance of preparedness in war times. Preparedness is quite as important in peace times, especially if you're engaged in such a business as putting up the family's winter food supply. Prepare your canning equipment ahead of time. Then it will be all ready to use when the garden products are just right for canning.

All canning containers need to be clean. Those empty jars on the top shelf have probably accumulated some dust during the months and need a thorough washing. Wash in soapy water all jars, glass lids, and rubbers, or all tin cans, if you're canning in tin. But don't wet the gasket-lined tin covers. Why wash new jar rubbers? Perhaps you've noticed that these rubbers usually come with a little powder clinging to them. If you don't remove this powder, it may get in the canned food and give it a rubbery taste. Jars that have had spoiled food in them should receive special attention. If possible after washing them thoroughly, put both the jars and lids into a pressure cooker at fifteen pounds pressure for fifteen minutes. That will kill any spoilage organisms that might be left on them. Or boil the jars and lids for two hours in enough water to cover them.

Next, test all jars, both old and new, for leaks. Examine the glass jars and covers to see that they have no nicks, cracks or uneven places where the seal is made. Then test each jar. Partially fill it with hot water. Place the wet rubber and lid in position and completely seal the jar. Now turn it upside down and let it stand that way for at least five minutes. If it leaks, try the cover on another jar which you are sure is good. Also try another good cover on the jar just tested to determine whether the jar or the cover is faulty. If the jar has a metal-clamp glass top, another possible cure is to tighten the wire, bending it so that it will be more nearly straight across the top. Never use for canning any jars or covers which prove themselves defective in this test. Have enough new, good rubbers to fit the jars. If you are canning in tin, fill one or two cans with water and seal to make certain that the tin can sealer is in working order.

These careful tests take a little extra time, to be sure. But that time is well worth while. No use taking a chance on spoilage from leaky containers. That just means a lot of time, work and good material wasted.

Still another way to be prepared for canning is to have the right containers for the food you plan to put up. Many housekeepers are canning in tin these days. Tin cans have certain advantages over glass. With them you don't have to worry about breakage, either during canning or afterwards. And tin cans are easier



6/20/33

to handle than glass when you are processing under pressure. They heat through more quickly and you can plunge them directly into cold water after processing. The rapid cooling checks the cooking and gives a better product. The large opening of the cans also makes packing easier, especially if you are packing large pieces like meat or halves of peaches or pears.

If you are using tin, be sure you have the right kind of tin can for the product you are putting up. Certain garden products won't can successfully in ordinary tin cans. They require special enamel linings. Red color products lose their color when heated in contact with tin. Red beets belong in this list. So do raspberries, blackberries, cherries, currants, plums, and so on. If you are planning to can any of these red fruits or vegetables, use cans with a special enamel lining, bright gold in color. Such cans are called R or sanitary enamel. Can squash or pumpkin also in sanitary enamel.

If foods high in protein are in contact with plain tin during canning, both the food and the can turn dark. This darkening does not make the food harmful but it does make it unattractive looking. So for such foods as, lima beans and corn you need specially lined cans to prevent this darkening. Cans for these products are called C enamel. This lining is dull gold in color. In case you're interested in scientific reasons why this happens, the specialists explain that the dark color is due to the formation of metallic sulphide from the protein of the food during processing.

Not only kind, but size of container is important when you're putting up food for the family. Certain foods like tomatoes, which most families use often and in quantity, may go in two-quart jars or No. 3 cans. On the other hand, food that you will only use in small amounts is more convenient canned in small containers. The problem of spoilage comes in on this question, too. Certain foods are very difficult for heat to penetrate in canning. Corn and greens are good examples of such foods. So, for safety in canning, never put these up in large containers. Use quart or pint jars or No. 2 cans--nothing larger. If you are canning vegetable puree for the baby in the family, you'll probably want to put this up in even smaller containers.

Tomorrow: "Summer Fruit Salads."

