

Fruit Spreads: Butter, Honey, Sauce, Syrup

by Julie Cascio

Fruit spreads, such as butter, sauces and syrup made with fruit, add flavor and color to meals and snacks. Characteristics of the spread vary based on the type of fruit used, how it is prepared, the proportion of different ingredients and the methods of cooking the spread.

Fruit Butter is made by cooking fruit pulp with sugar to a thick consistency that will spread easily. Spices are often added.

Fruit Honey is made by cooking fruit juice with sugar to consistency of honey.

Fruit Sauce is made by cooking fruit to thickened consistency; purée or leave chunk-style. Sugar may be added.

Fruit Syrups are made by cooking fruit juice or pulp with sugar to a pourable syrup.

There are five steps to follow when making all varieties of fruit spreads: choose good quality fresh fruit, prepare the ingredients, cook according to the recipe, fill jars and process filled jars in a boiling water canner.

Choose high-quality fruit at proper maturity and free of diseases and bruises. Begin by washing the ingredients under cool running water. Drain and gently pat dry to remove excess moisture. Do not soak produce in water as this lets dirt, etc., return to it. It also lets berries and soft fruit absorb water.

To Prevent Darkening

Fruit has a tendency to oxidize when exposed to air, which causes darkening of the fruit. It must be treated as soon as it is cut to preserve the natural color. To prevent darkening of fruit, use one of these solutions:

- 1 teaspoon, or 3,000 mg, powdered ascorbic acid in 1 gallon of water

- 2 tablespoons of salt and 2 tablespoons vinegar in 1 gallon of cold water
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup lemon juice in 1 gallon water
- Commercial antidarkening solutions are mixes of citric and ascorbic acids. Read label for powder/water amounts.

Dip fruit in the solution as soon as it is cut. It can stay in the solution while you are preparing the jars for the boiling water canner.

Equipment/Containers

Large pot, 8 to 10 quarts capacity, is essential for making fruit spreads; the mixture will come to a full rolling boil without boiling over.

Spoon, cutting board, knife, measuring cups and spoons, etc. as needed for recipe used.

Clock or watch with a second hand for timing.

Boiling water canner with a rack and lid.

Canning jars, lids and bands, washed and rinsed.

To sterilize jars, place in the canner, bring to boil. Boil for 10 minutes. Keep jars in hot water until ready to fill. If the boiling water canner processing used is more than 10 minutes the jars do not need to be sterilized ahead as it occurs during processing.

To Process at High Altitudes

As altitudes increase, air becomes thinner which affects both pressures and boiling points in home canning. Using the boiling water canner process times for canning food at sea level may result in spoilage if you live at altitudes of 1,000 feet or more. Water boils at lower temperatures as altitude increases. Lower boiling temperatures are less effective for killing bacteria. Increasing the processing time compensates for lower boiling temperatures. Select the proper processing time for the altitude where you live.

To process in a boiling water canner at an altitude between 1,001 and 6,000 feet add 5 minutes to shown processing time; from 6,001 to 8,000 feet add 10 minutes to processing time.

Apple Butter

Use Jonathan, Winesap, Stayman, Golden Delicious, MacIntosh, or other tasty apple varieties for good results.

8 pounds apples
2 cups apple cider
2 cups vinegar

2¼ cups white sugar
2¼ cups packed brown sugar
2 Tbsp ground cinnamon
1 Tbsp ground cloves

Wash, remove stems, quarter and core fruit. Cook slowly in cider and vinegar until soft. Press fruit through a colander, food mill, or strainer. Cook fruit pulp with sugar and spices, stirring frequently. To test for doneness, remove a spoonful and hold it away from steam for 2 minutes. It is done if the butter remains mounded on the spoon. Another way to determine when the butter is cooked adequately is to spoon a small quantity onto a plate. When a rim of

Boiling Water Canning

A boiling water canner may be purchased, or it can be made from a large pot deep enough to permit water to cover jars 1 to 2 inches over the top with space above for boiling water to remain in the canner. The canner must have a rack to hold the jars at least ½ inch above the bottom of the canner. The rack must allow water to circulate under the jars. The canner should have a cover that keeps water at a good rolling boil during processing.

1. Before the preparation of the food begins, center the canner on the heat source. Heat the water in the canner to 180 degrees Fahrenheit while the fruit is being prepared.
2. Wash the jars; place in canner to preheat. Wash the lids and screwbands; set aside.
3. Prepare fruit spread according to directions given. Prepare only enough jars of food at one time to fill the canner. Work rapidly so as little time as possible will elapse between pre-cooking or packing the food and getting it into the canner.
4. Place fruit spread into hot jars; release air bubbles. Check for correct headspace. Clean the rim of the jar with a damp towel. Center a flat lid on top, then add metal screw band to fingertip-tight.
5. Place filled, lidded jars on the rack in the canner. Place apart to allow water to circulate

around entire jar. Hot water should be 1 or more inches above top of jars. If water does not cover jars at least 1 inch over the top, add boiling water to this depth. Place the cover on the canner.

6. Start counting processing time as soon as the water in the canner reaches a full rolling boil. Keep the water boiling during the entire processing time. If the water level goes down, add sufficient boiling water to keep it at the required height.
7. Process the required length of time. If the water stops boiling at any time during processing, bring water back to boil. Start timing from the beginning when boiling restarts.
8. When processing time is done, remove jars from the canner in upright position. Do not tighten screw bands again. Set jars 1 inch apart on a rack or thick towel at room temperature for 12 hours. Do not set hot jars in a draft or on a cold, wet surface. Do not cover them.
9. When jars are cool, test for seal. Press center of seal to determine it is concave. If so, remove screw bands. Wash and dry bands. Bands are unnecessary once jars are sealed. Wipe jars and lids. Label and store in a cool, dry, dark area.
10. If a jar did not seal, store it in the refrigerator and use within regular storage time, or freeze for longer storage.

liquid does not separate around the edge of the butter, it is ready for canning. Fill hot, sterile half-pint or pint jars, leaving ¼-inch headspace. Quart jars need not be pre-sterilized.

Yields 8 to 9 pints

Adjust lids and process in a boiling-water canner:

Half-pints or pints 5 minutes; 1,001-6,000 feet 10 minutes; above 6,000 feet 15 minutes

Quarts 10 minutes; 1,001-6,000 feet 15 minutes; above 6,000 feet 20 minutes

Applesauce

12 pounds apples

½ cup water

Select apples that are sweet, juicy and crisp. For a tart flavor, add 1 to 2 pounds of tart apples to each 3 pounds of sweeter fruit.

Wash, peel, and core apples. If desired, to prevent browning, slice apples into anti-darkening solution (page 1). Placed drained slices in an 8- to 10-quart pot. Add ½ cup water. Stirring occasionally to prevent burning, heat quickly until tender (5 to 20 minutes, depending on maturity and variety). Press through a sieve or food mill, or skip the pressing step if you prefer chunk-style sauce. Sauce may be packed without sugar. If desired, add 1/8 cup sugar per quart of sauce. Taste and add more, if preferred. Reheat sauce to boiling. Fill hot jars with hot sauce, leaving ½-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process in a boiling-water canner:

Pints 15 minutes; 1,001-6,000 feet 20 minutes; above 6,000 feet 25 minutes

Quarts 20 minutes; 1,001-3,000 feet 25 minutes; 3,000-6,000 feet 30 minutes; above 6,000 feet 35 minutes

Berry Syrup

Juices from fresh or frozen blueberries, cherries, grapes, raspberries (black or red), and strawberries can be made into toppings for use on ice cream and pastries. Use these directions only with the berries listed.

Select 6½ cups of fresh or frozen fruit of your choice from the list above. Wash, cap, and stem fresh fruit and crush in a saucepan. Heat to boiling and simmer until soft (5 to 10 minutes). Strain hot through a colander and drain until cool enough to handle. Strain the collected juice through a double layer of cheese-

cloth or jelly bag. Discard the dry pulp. The yield of the pressed juice should be about 4½ to 5 cups. Combine the juice with 6¾ cups of sugar in a large saucepan, bring to boil, and simmer 1 minute.

To make a syrup with whole berry pieces, save 1 or 2 cups of the fresh or frozen fruit, combine these with the pressed juice, sugar, and simmer as in making regular syrup. Remove from heat, skim off foam, and fill into clean half-pint or pint jars, leaving ½-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process half-pint or pint jars 10 minutes; 1,001-6,000 feet 15 minutes; above 6,000 feet 20 minutes

Yields 9 half-pints.

Cranberry Sauce

4 cups cranberries

1 cup water

2 cups sugar

Wash cranberries. Cook berries in water until soft. Press through a fine sieve, mash with a potato masher to desired consistency, or leave whole.

Add sugar, bring to boil stirring to dissolve sugar; boil 3 minutes. Pour into hot jars, leaving ½-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace if needed. Wipe rims of jars with a dampened clean paper towel; adjust two-piece metal canning lids. Process in a boiling water canner:

Half-pints or pints 15 minutes; 1,001-6,000 feet 20 minutes; above 6,000 feet 25 minutes

Yields 4 half-pints

Fruit Purees

Caution: These recommendations should not be used with bananas, dates, figs, Asian pears, tomatoes, cantaloupe and other melons, papaya, persimmons, ripe mango or coconut. There are no home canning recommendations available for purees of these products.

Stem, wash, drain, peel, and remove pits if necessary. Measure fruit into large saucepan, crushing slightly if desired. Add 1 cup hot water for each quart of fruit. Cook slowly until fruit is soft, stirring frequently. Press through sieve or food mill. If desired for flavor, add sugar to taste. Reheat pulp to boil, or until sugar dissolves if added. Fill hot puree into clean jars, leaving 1/4-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process in a boiling-water canner

Pints or quarts 15 minutes; 1,001-6,000 feet 20 minutes; above 6,000 feet 25 minutes

Fruit Syrup

4 cups juice

4 cups sugar

¼ cup lemon juice (if desired)

½ package or less powdered pectin (if desired)

To extract juice from fruit use a steam juicer following manufacturer's directions. Or, extract juice. Cut apples and other hard fruits into small pieces. For each pound of fruit add 1 cup cold water to cover the fruit in the pot. Bring to boil, reduce heat then simmer 20 to 25 minutes.

Plums and other soft fruit, crush. For each pound add ½ cup water. Bring to boil, reduce heat, then simmer 5 to 10 minutes.

Strain juice through two layers of cheesecloth or through a jelly bag. Don't squeeze fruit since this will add unwanted pulp to the mixture.

Mix juice, sugar, lemon juice and pectin. Bring to a boil and boil two minutes. Remove from the

heat, skim off the foam and pour into hot ½-pint or 1-pint canning jars to within ½ inch of the top. Adjust the lids and process in a boiling water-bath canner for 10 minutes; 1,001-6,000 feet 15 minutes; above 6,000 feet 20 minutes. Remove from the canner and cool. Check lids, label and store in a cool, dry place. Cooperative Extension, Washington State University

References

USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning. On line version: <https://nchfp.uga.edu/resources/category/usda-guide>

National Center for Home Food Preservation University of Georgia Cooperative Extension Service: www.uga.edu/nchfp

Using Alaska's Wild Berries and Other Wild Edibles. University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Service

www.uaf.edu/ces or 1-877-520-5211/907-474-5211

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