

August 5, 1977

Home Canning

Beware of a home canning fad where no water is added to jars of some vegetables. Minnesota Extension Food Specialist Isabel Wolf says this method risks botulism food poisoning. Low acid vegetables are everything except tomatoes.

The fad involves packing raw vegetables into jars without adding water and then processing in a pressure canner. Mrs. Wolf says home canners may try the method because they think it will produce canned vegetables similar to low liquid commercially canned ones.

Tests on carrots at the University's Department of Food Science and Nutrition show that the vegetables receive only one-third of the minimum heat needed to kill the spores that cause botulism. The commercial methods for low liquid canning are safe, but they cannot be duplicated in home kitchens.

Water is needed in home pressure canning because it allows faster transfer of heat within the jars. Without hot water bringing vegetables to the proper temperature, heat treatment is slow and inadequate to kill spores of the botulism-producing bacteria.

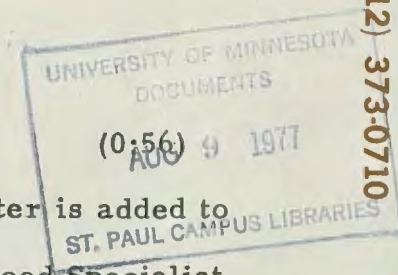
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Low Acid Tomato

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Don't fear the low acid tomato when beginning a home canning project. Research done at the University of Minnesota and the U-S Department of Agriculture shows that firm, ripe, fully colored tomatoes in virtually all varieties are sufficiently acid to prevent the growth of microorganisms that cause deadly botulism poisoning. Even orange and yellow tomatoes that taste sweet and are advertised as low acid can safely be canned in a water bath canner.

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