

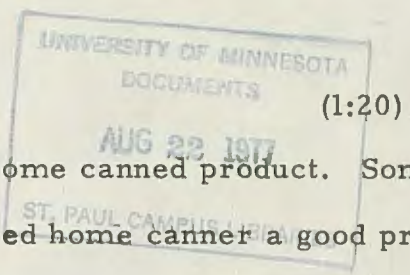
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consumer radio briefs

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It's Pickle Packing Time Again



Pickles are the most popular home canned product. Some varieties also offer the inexperienced home canner a good project to sharpen food processing skills.

Fermented or brined pickles are cured for several weeks. Fresh pack pickles are soaked for several hours in a salt solution and then combined with hot vinegar and spices. Fruit pickles are simmered in a sweet-sour syrup and relishes are chopped, seasoned and cooked.

All pickles must be processed in a boiling water bath canner to destroy yeasts, molds and bacteria that could cause spoilage and affect color, flavor and texture. Extension Food Specialist Isabel Wolf suggests beginning pickle makers try fresh pack pickles, fruit pickles and vegetable relishes.

More experienced pickle makers may want to try fermented pickles and sauerkraut. These are brined in large crocks to allow microorganisms to break down compounds within the cucumbers or cabbage. This process produces substances that preserve the product and give it a characteristic taste and appearance. Fermented pickles and sauerkraut also must be processed in a boiling water bath canner after being packed into jars.

If you plan to make pickles, the Agricultural Extension Service offers two fact sheets, Food Science and Nutrition 26, "Making Fresh Pack Pickle Products," and Food Science and Nutrition 27, "Making Fermented Pickles and Sauerkraut," free to individuals. They are available at county extension offices or by writing to the Bulletin Room, 3 Coffey Hall, University of Minnesota, St. Paul 55108.

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