

Food Preservation/Canning Resources

As the growing season approaches our thoughts turn to gardening and the anticipation of delicious fresh fruits and vegetables. Abundance from the summer garden leads us to think about canning for our winter enjoyment. You don't have to garden to enjoy canning. If you are not growing your own produce, consider finding a good "pick-your-own" farm or purchasing produce from a local farmers' market. Once you've decided you want to undertake this canning adventure, the next step is learning all you can about proper preserving techniques. The University of Nebraska - Lincoln has a web site at <http://food.unl.edu/preservation/canning> to help you. It provides current USDA guidelines for preserving foods, helps you determine the correct altitude based on your location within the state and gives proper procedures for food preservation.

Additional food preservation resources are available on the Nebraska State 4-H website <http://4h.unl.edu/4hcurriculum/foodandnutrition> and are also listed below. These are important resources for those 4-H members wanting to enter their canned products at the county and state fair.

- [EC434 Let's Preserve: Canning Basics](#)
- [EC435 Let's Preserve: Vegetables and Vegetable Products](#)
- [EC436 Let's Preserve: Fruits and Fruit Products](#)
- [EC437 Let's Preserve: Tomatoes and Tomato Products](#)
- [EC443 Let's Preserve: Fermented and Pickled Products](#)
- [EC448 Let's Preserve: Jams, Jellies and Preserves](#)
- [USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning](#)

Other helpful hints for prize winning canning projects include:

- Always enter a thoroughly clean jar. Wipe the outside of the jar with a cloth dampened with vinegar to remove water spots and any food residue.
- Always use canning rings that aren't rusted or discolored. Always use new flats.
- Liquid should always cover the product when canning fruits and vegetables.
- Check your canning guide to determine the proper headspace for specific produce.

Spending time reviewing the fairbook and using the resources mentioned above will help you have a successful canning experience.