



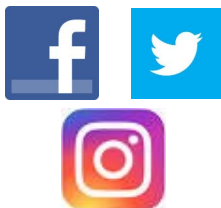
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## Helpful Hygiene Education Resources



**Handwashing is an important habit to prevent many types of illness.**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have launched a new website to educate consumers about healthy hygiene habits with new tools and resources.

Topics highlighted on this website include:

- How to clean and disinfect your home.

- The importance of healthy infant hygiene practices.
- Practical tips on healthy hygiene habits.
- Hygiene practices when around animals.
- Resources for public health and medical professionals.

There is a bi-lingual web-based training for K-12 personnel in schools and child care about clean hands and spaces.

Education can be enhanced with the latest statistics about hygiene services and personal hygiene. Educational materials are available in many formats such as fact sheets, posters, podcasts, and videos.

Learn more at [www.cdc.gov/hygiene/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/hygiene/index.html).

## Why Do Home Canned Green Beans Get Cloudy?

There are several reasons. First, the beans may be too mature which makes them too starchy. The starch settles out of the food during canning. Second, minerals in hard water can give a cloudy appear-

ance. Third, using table salt instead of canning salt. Table salt contains anti-caking agents that can cause cloudiness. With any of these three causes, it is a quality issue. Finally, it could be spoilage due to im-

proper heat processing. Do not consume them in this case.

Learn how to safely can green beans at [www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/mf1179.pdf](http://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/mf1179.pdf).

## Tips on Vacuum Packaging Foods

Vacuum packaging food is a great way to preserve food that is refrigerated, frozen or dried for later use. It removes air from the package for a tight seal which reduces dehydration or freezer burn. Food can be portioned out for easy use later.

Here are some tips to remember about using vacuum packaging and to reduce risks from

[Michigan State University Extension](#).

- Vacuum packaging is a method to package food. It does not replace canning. Foods requiring refrigeration or freezing must be stored this way. It does not prevent spoilage.
- *Clostridium botulinum* can survive in vacuum packaged

foods if present.

- Vacuum packaged fish must be removed from the packaging before thawing.
- Do not vacuum package raw onions, fresh garlic or fresh mushrooms.
- Do not vacuum package liquids or baked goods.



**Vacuum packaged meat**  
Photo: Canva.com



Learn more about bitter cucumbers from the [KSRE Horticulture Information Center](#).

## Will Pickling Bitter Cucumbers Save Them?

You don't know until you taste them. Cucumbers may look tasty, but one bite reveals the bitterness that will not go away.

Bitterness occurs due to heredity, moisture, tem-

perature, soil characteristics and disease. Hot temperatures typically causes bitterness via the compounds cucurbitacins B and C. The stem end is usually where the bitterness occurs, but sometimes the entire cucum-

ber is bitter. Removing the stem end and peeling the cucumber can help reduce bitterness.

Pickling bitter cucumbers will not improve or remove the bitterness.

## Back to School Food Safety!

It's almost time for schools to gear up for the year! For families that pack lunch to go, here are some tips to remember:

- Wash your hands before prepping any food.
- Use ice packs or frozen juice boxes to keep cold foods cold in an insulated lunch tote.
- Rinse fruits and vegetables with water and blot dry with a paper towel.
- Remind kids to store their lunch in a refrigerator at school if available.

Learn more tips at [www.fightbac.org/kidsfoodsafety/school-lunches/](http://www.fightbac.org/kidsfoodsafety/school-lunches/).



**Have a great school year!**  
Photo: USDA Flickr

## Can I Add Bacon to Home Canned Green Beans?

The short answer is...no. Here's why.

This is an example of creating your own recipe which can be a dangerous practice. While bacon and green beans are both low-acid foods, there are no processing recommendations for canning bacon. Therefore, can the beans by themselves. Then when ready to eat the beans, add the bacon just before serving.

Adding any fat or butter to home-canned products, unless specifically stated in the recipe may slow the rate of heat transfer during processing. This will result in an unsafe product. Additionally, the fat could seep in between the lid and jar rim and the lid will not seal properly.

There are recipes to can dry beans and baked beans with a small (3/4 inch) piece of bacon, ham or pork. These recipes have been tested to know they will be safe.

Learn more about canning, freezing and pickling a variety of beans at <https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/mf1179.pdf>. Green beans can also be [dehydrated](#).



### Use the Pickle Juice Too!

After enjoying those crunchy pickles, use the pickle juice to add flavor to other dishes. Here's some options:

- Mix pickle juice with some olive oil and fresh herbs for an easy marinade.

- Add pickle juice to BBQ sauce for some tangy flavor.
- Chop raw vegetables into pickle juice, refrigerate and marinate.
- Add pickle juice to your potato salad recipe to boost flavor.
- Pickle juice is a great addition to Bloody Mary beverages. Garnish with a pickle spear!

**Learn more about pickles from [ILovePickles.org](http://ILovePickles.org).**



**Juicy watermelon**  
Photo: USDA/ARS

### Don't Toss the Watermelon Rind!

Juicy watermelons are ready in many gardens! After enjoying a cool, refreshing slice of watermelon, don't toss out the rind. It can be used to make watermelon pickles! This is a southern specialty to use as a snack or in other creative ways.

When making watermelon pickles, just the pale green rind is used. Remove the watermelon flesh and the outside dark green skin. Here are a couple recipes to preserve watermelon rind from the National Center for Home Food Preservation:

- [Watermelon Rind Pickles](#)
- [Watermelon Rind Preserves](#)

To save the watermelon flesh, see instructions on [Freezing Melons](#).

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## Choose the Right Jar

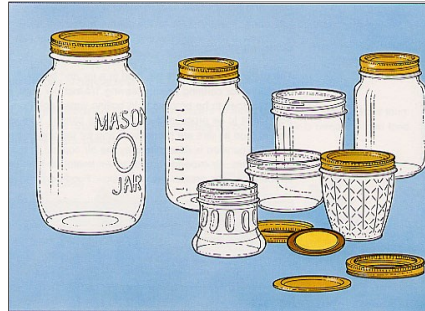


Photo: USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning

A variety of jar sizes are available to use in canning. Reliable recipes sources will indicate what size of jars are to be used for that recipe. But can you use a jar not listed for that recipe? Yes and no.

Standard jar sizes include half pint (8-oz.), pint (16-oz.), and quart (32-oz.). There are also in-between sizes such as 4-oz., 12-oz., 24-oz., and 28 oz.

When a recipe lists half-pint only, you cannot use a larger jar. This is because the larger jar may require a longer processing time which must be tested and verified to ensure safety. Guessing, by the home food preserver, can lead to spoiled food. If a recipe indicates half-pint AND pint, you can use a 12-oz. jar, but you cannot use any jar larger than a pint. For jams and jellies, 4-oz. jars are a good option. Use 4 oz. jars like half-pints; 12-oz. jars like pints; and 24-oz. and 28-oz. jars like quarts.

Just because your family uses a certain food in larger quantities, does not mean you can preserve in larger jars. Be smart, be safe!

A Jar Guide to what foods are best preserved in the various sizes of jars is at [www.ballmasonjars.com/take-guesswork-out-jar-selection.html](http://www.ballmasonjars.com/take-guesswork-out-jar-selection.html).



Karen Blakeslee, M.S.



On the Web at  
[www.rrc.ksu.edu](http://www.rrc.ksu.edu)



## Preserving Yellow Peaches



For information on canning yellow peaches, see <https://www.bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/mf1182.pdf>.  
Photo: USDA/ARS

Yellow peaches are a favorite to preserve in many ways. Besides just canning peaches, they can be frozen and dehydrated. But there are many other tasty peach treats! Try these:

- [Fruit Puree](#)
- [Peach Fruit Topping](#)
- [Mixed Fruit Cocktail](#)

As a reminder, there are no canning instructions to can white-fleshed peaches because they are a low-acid food. No research has been done to safely acidify and can white peaches. It is recommended to freeze them for later use.

Source: [National Center for Home Food Preservation](#)

- [Peach-Orange Marmalade](#)
- [Peach-Pineapple Spread](#)
- [Peach Apple Salsa](#)