

Jam session / The Gas Council.

Contributors

Gas Council (Great Britain)

Publication/Creation

London : Gas Council, [between 1940 and 1949?]

Persistent URL

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JAM SESSION

HOME-MADE jam and bottled fruit are worthwhile additions to the larder, and you can prepare your own quite easily if you follow the simple rules in this leaflet. Mr. Therm's gas cookers are at your service to ensure economy and efficiency in whatever method you use.



JAM MAKING

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

The general rule for good jam making is 1 lb. of sugar to 1 lb. of fruit. Satisfactory jam can be made with as little as $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of sugar to 1 lb. of fruit, but if you wish to store it the jars should be sealed and sterilized as for bottled fruit.

Prepare the fruit, put into a preserving pan and cook over a low gas until soft. Hard fruits such as damsons and green gooseberries need the addition of a little water to prevent them sticking to the pan before the juice begins to run. Blackcurrants need $\frac{3}{4}$ pint of water to every 1 lb. of fruit. When the fruit is cooked, add the sugar, stir thoroughly with a wooden spoon until dissolved, then boil the jam rapidly till setting point is reached.

Note these points carefully for successful results :

1. Choose firm, ripe fruit, as freshly picked as possible.
2. Warm the sugar before adding to the fruit ; it will dissolve quicker.
3. Do not overboil the jam. The shorter time it is cooked after adding the sugar the better will be the flavour and colour.
4. Keep careful control of the heat. Too great a heat will make the jam stick to the pan. On the gas cooker the heat is under perfect control, and can be adjusted immediately to suit the different stages of jam making.
5. To test for set put a little jam on a cold plate and leave for a minute. If the jam wrinkles when the plate is tilted it has reached setting point.
6. Continuous skimming is wasteful and unnecessary. When the jam sets, turn out the gas and quickly remove with a warm, dry spoon any scum that has arisen. Or when the jam is ready, just before the gas is turned out add a small knob of margarine (about $\frac{1}{4}$ oz. for a large pan of jam). Stir rapidly until the margarine melts. This clears the jam and no skimming is needed.
7. Wash all jars thoroughly, dry and warm before putting in the jam.
8. To prevent whole fruit rising in jars, allow jam to cool slightly in pan before potting. Otherwise pot and cover jam with wax discs while hot. Seal when cool.

RECIPES

GOOSEBERRY JAM

3 lb. under-ripe gooseberries ; 3 lb. sugar ; 1 pint water.

Prepare the gooseberries and put in a preserving pan with the water. Cook very gently till the fruit is quite soft and the contents of the pan reduced by about one-third. Add the sugar, stir till dissolved and bring to the boil. Boil for about 15 minutes then test for setting. Pot and cover as usual.

APRICOT JAM

4 lb. apricots ; 4 lb. sugar ; $\frac{3}{4}$ pint water ; juice of a lemon.

Wash the fruit, cut in halves, and remove the stones. Crack a few stones and blanch the kernels. Put the fruit, water, lemon juice and kernels into a preserving pan, bring to the boil, then cook gently until the fruit is tender. Add the sugar, stir till boiling, then boil hard till the jam sets when tested. Start testing after 15 minutes.

BLACKCURRANT JAM

4 lb. blackcurrants ; 4 lb. sugar ; 2 pints water

Prepare the fruit and put into a preserving pan with the water. Simmer gently until tender and the contents of the pan somewhat reduced. Add the sugar and stir thoroughly. When dissolved bring to the boil and boil hard till the jam sets. Test after 10 minutes.



FRUIT BOTTLING

Fruit bottling can be done either in the gas oven, or in a sterilizer on the hotplate. There are several types of vacuum jars on the market, but if these are not available, 1 lb. or 2 lb. jam jars are a very satisfactory substitute. Whatever the type of jars used, examine them carefully for flaws, making sure the bottle rims are smooth and unchipped, otherwise a perfect seal will not be obtained. Choose fruit which is quite sound and at the firm ripe stage. Wash, and if necessary grade into various sizes. Plums or pears or any large fruit may be halved for easier packing. Pack the fruit into perfectly clean jars as tightly as possible, remembering that the fruit will shrink a little when cooling. Though plain water is quite satisfactory for bottling, the fruit will retain its colour and flavour better if bottled in syrup. To prepare the syrup, dissolve 1 lb. of sugar in a quart of water ; bring to the boil, strain through muslin before use. Fruit may also be bottled in its own juice. Boil one cup of diced fruit with two cups of water for a few minutes, mashing to extract juice ; strain, bring to the boil and pour over fruit in the jar. Then sterilize in the usual way.



With Vacuum Jars

1. When using vacuum jars, check that the metal screw bands or lids are not rusty and that the rubber rings are not perished. New rings are made more pliable if they are soaked in warm water for $\frac{1}{4}$ hour and then dipped in boiling water just before use.

2. To test bottles before use, fill with water, place rubber band, lid and clip (or screw) in position, and stand the bottle on its head for half an hour after wiping it dry. If no water leaks out the bottle is fairly certainly fit to use.

3. When using screw band bottles the band must not be screwed down tightly when the bottles are placed in the sterilizer. The bottles should be removed one at a time after sterilization and then screwed down tightly.

4. Screws and clips should be left on the bottles until they are quite cold.

Without Vacuum Jars

If vacuum jars are not easily obtainable, 1 lb. and 2 lb. jam jars may safely be used instead. Metal caps and plastic or rubber rings may be bought to fit the jars, and plastic skin which can be cut to fit any size jar is also available.

The Oven Method

Light the gas and set the heat control dial to very cool. Pack fruit of similar size tightly into sterilized jars; put on the glass tops loosely without the rubber rings or screw bands (or cover with patty pans). Arrange the bottles on the grid shelf about the middle of the oven, making sure they do not touch one another. The fruit has now to be semi-cooked; the time for this will depend on the type and ripeness of the fruit, but the table overleaf gives the general rule.

When the fruit is ready lift out the bottles one at a time on to a thick cloth or board. Have ready boiling water or syrup and fill each bottle to overflowing. Put on the rubber ring and glass top and screw or clip down *immediately*. When cold, test each bottle by removing the screw cap or clip and lifting each by the glass top. If the top does not come away the bottle is satisfactorily sealed.

The Hotplate Method

Any large deep pan can be used, but it must have a false bottom—a drainer, wire stand or a thick piece of blanket—as the bottles will crack if placed directly on the surface which receives the heat. When bottling in large quantities is done a gas wash copper serves excellently if a wooden platform or pad of blanket is put in to raise the bottles from the bottom. Make a hole in the

BOTTLING TOMATOES

Tomatoes require longer sterilization than most fruits and should if possible be bottled by the water bath method on the hotplate. The fruit should be just ripe and perfectly sound. Smaller tomatoes can be preserved whole; large ones should be halved and packed overlapping. Remove stalks, blanch the fruit by dipping in boiling water for half a minute and then putting into cold water. The transparent outer skin is then easily removed. Pack the fruit as tightly as possible in the jars, pressing

it well down and sprinkling a little salt and sugar between the layers ($\frac{1}{4}$ oz. salt and 1 teaspoonful sugar to 2 lb. of tomatoes). Do not add any liquid. Complete the process as directed for bottling on the hotplate.

Unskinned, small, ripe tomatoes can be bottled in the oven if no other means are available. Remove stalks, rinse fruit if necessary in cold water and pack tightly in jars. Use boiling brine ($\frac{1}{2}$ oz. salt to 1 quart of water) to fill the jars, adding this after taking from the oven. Tomatoes need sterilizing at least $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours in the oven at 250°F .

OVEN BOTTLING TABLE

Strawberries, Raspberries, Loganberries, Gooseberries, Rhubarb	$\frac{3}{4}$ -1 hour
Apricots, Peaches, Plums, Greengages, Damsons, Cherries, Currants	1- $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours
Tomatoes, Pears, Quinces	$1\frac{1}{2}$ hours or longer

HOT PLATE BOTTLING TABLE

In each case bring the temperature up in $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours to the figure shown and keep it at that temperature for the time stated.

Fruit ..	Apples (in liquid), Apricots, Blackberries, Damsons, Gooseberries, Loganberries, Mulberries, Raspberries, Rhubarb, Strawberries	Cherries, Currants, Plums, Apples (solid pack) Peaches	Tomatoes, Pears, Quinces
Temperature	165°F .	180°F .	190°F .
Maintain temperature for ..	10 mins.	15 mins.	30 mins.

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lid of the pan so that a thermometer can be inserted at least two inches into the water. If a thermometer is not available, the fruit should be brought to simmering point in the time stated in the table overleaf and maintained there for the period shown.

Pack the fruit into bottles and then fill them to overflowing with *cold* water or syrup. Put on the rubber rings and glass lids and partly screw down, leaving the glass lid slightly loose. Place bottles in pan, and cover with cold water. Bring the water *gradually* to the required temperature as shown in the table ; raising the heat too quickly will make the fruit rise in the jars. On the gas cooker this close control of the heat is easily obtainable.

When ready, remove the bottles from the pan one by one on to a thick cloth or board and screw down immediately. When cold, test for satisfactory sealing.

HINTS FOR BETTER BOTTLING

Be very careful not to put bottles on to a cold surface ; if you do, they will crack.

Store all bottles in a dry, cool, dark place. Do not store bottles with clips on or with the bands screwed down tightly, as they may be difficult to remove later. When the jars are cold remove the bands, dry them, smear them inside with a little oil, thread on a string and store until wanted again.

APPLES. Any cooking apples can be used for bottling. As apples turn brown very quickly after peeling, the pieces should be put straight into cold, slightly salted water as they are cut. After packing into the jars rinse quickly with cold water to remove any traces of salt.

PLUMS. Bottle Victoria Plums when just turning pink ; yellow plums when firm and lemon-yellow ; purple plums when bright red.

DAMSONS. Bottle at the firm ripe stage when the deep purple colour has appeared.

GOOSEBERRIES. Green varieties are best. Bottle while hard and unripe.

CHERRIES. The fruit should be ripe but firm. Red acid (such as Morello) and sub-acid (such as May Duke) varieties give the best results. Black cherries and white hearts lose flavour and colour when bottled.

CURRANTS. Blackcurrants give the best results.

RHUBARB. Bottle in spring when young and tender.

LOGANBERRIES. Bottle when firm but deep red in colour. Handle as little as possible.

STRAWBERRIES do not bottle very satisfactorily, as the fruit loses colour and shrinks.