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Can Meat Now - It Pays

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Can Meat Now—It Pays
By Lela Bennett, F. and N.

Do’s and Don’t’s for Beginners

The modern rural homemaker has added another accomplishment to her growing list. She is this winter canning meat which will prove a real delight to her family when cured meats grow tiresome during the busy season next summer. The urban housewife, not to be outdone, has discovered that home canned meat may enter scores of pleasant ways into her menus also, and will save immeasurably in time and by providing for the hot summer diiner or the unexpected company by the mere opening of a can.

Two things are necessary for the preservation of meat: perfect sterilization and a perfect seal. The perfect seal is comparatively simple for those who have canned. In canning meat one must be careful to select good jars, new rubbers and good lids. It is best not to use lids that have been on jars in which the food has spoiled. If you do use them, boil them in water for 10 to 15 minutes in order to make them as safe as possible. It is easy and time-saving to can in tin. A good seal is easily obtained: the tin cans may be stacked in the canner; there is no danger of breakage: tin is a better conductor of heat than glass, and the products heat more rapidly. The one and big disadvantage is the initial cost of the canner.

The problem of getting perfect sterilization is a difficult one. Yeast and molds are killed with a boiling temperature. No growing or vegetative forms of bacteria will survive for any length of time at the temperature of boiling water, but the spore form is killed at boiling temperature only by long continued heating, especially if the product canned is not acid as is the case with meat. The spores that require long continued heating at boiling temperature may be killed more quickly at higher temperatures such as are obtained with steam under pressure in the pressure cooker. The time varies from six hours at boiling temperature to thirty minutes at 240 degrees F., the temperature obtained by steam under the 10 pounds pressure which may be obtained in the pressure cooker. This explains why many people advocate canning meat in a pressure cooker, since one runs more chance of the meat not keeping if the hot water bath is used.

A very high temperature will produce a sterile product that will keep perfectly, but flavor and texture may be sacrificed. One should can at the lowest temperature for the shortest time that will keep the product.

In canning classes at Iowa State College, ground round steak was canned to be used in feeding experiments. It was not browned or salted but packed loosely into the jars. Part of the pint cans were processed for 30 minutes and the others for 35 minutes in the steam pressure cooker. The length of time that the jars need to be processed will vary with the tightness and looseness of the pack. With bones, the meat may be packed tightly. Without bones, the meat should be packed rather loosely. In the hot water bath, pint jars should not be processed under three hours. Forty minutes should be added for quart jars.

When using the pressure cooker and canning in pint jars, pork should be processed one hour at 15 pounds pressure and beef 40 minutes at 15 pounds pressure. Fifteen minutes should be added for quart jars.

Check up on these points for successful meat canning.

1. When canning in a pressure cooker be sure the steam has come out from the pot, cork vigorously for several minutes before closing it in order to get a more accurate temperature.

2. Keep the pressure even. Temperature fluctuates if you don’t. Then too, you may draw liquid from your jars by the change in pressure.

3. When canning in glass let the pressure run down to zero before opening the canner. Otherwise you may draw liquid from your jars.

4. Don’t start counting time in the hot water bath until the water is boiling.

5. Be sure the water covers the jars or you may lose liquid out of the jars.

6. Be sure your jars are sitting on a rack in processing in order to avoid breakage and to give a circulation under the jar. This gives a more even temperature.

7. Store your jars in a cool dry place. You will have less spoilage.

The Canner in Operation

Meat

Pressure Cooker

Water Bath

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pork</th>
<th>1 hr.</th>
<th>15 min. added</th>
<th>3½ hrs.</th>
<th>40 min. added</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beef</td>
<td>40 min.</td>
<td>1 hr. for qts.</td>
<td>3 hrs.</td>
<td>1 hr. for qts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken (raw)</td>
<td>1 hr. for qts.</td>
<td>3½ hrs.</td>
<td>1 hr. for qts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken (browned)</td>
<td>1 hr. for qts.</td>
<td>3½ hrs.</td>
<td>1 hr. for qts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken (picked from the bones)</td>
<td>30 min. for pts.</td>
<td>1½ hrs.</td>
<td>for pts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary of Process Times for Canned Meats

Experimental work indicates that meats which have been browned with or without flour, or to which water, bone or fat has been added, keep, when canned, about equally well. We may therefore prepare the meat as desired for specific uses with equally good results.

If it is to be used for soup, it may be cut into cubes, brought to the boiling point in water and put in jars ready to process.

If it is to be used as browned meat, cut in serving pieces, brown without flour, add salt to taste, pack in the jars and pour in the fat in which it was browned.