Too Many Empty Jars!

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Recommended Citation
Tiffany, Margaret (1941) "Too Many Empty Jars!," Farm Science Reporter: Vol. 2 : No. 3 , Article 5.
Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/farmsciencereporter/vol2/iss3/5
A recent survey investigating the number of jars 390 farm women put on the shelf in one year indicated that they were falling almost 50 percent below the canning goals set up by Extension Service nutritionists at Iowa State College.

Although wash boilers and pressure cookers are doing double duty these days, Iowa farm women will have to "up" their record to reach the goal of 575 quarts fruit, vegetables and tomatoes recommended for a family of four for one season.

Of the vegetables actually canned by the 390 women last year, only three—tomatoes, string beans and pickles—were canned by three-fourths or more of the group.

Those who canned tomatoes and snap beans put up only about half the recommended amounts of 125 and 60 quarts, respectively. Pickles, on the other hand, are not among the recommended vegetables, but were canned in abundance. Those canning corn exceeded recommendations of 20 quarts per family by averaging 28 quarts a family. Not quite half of the families canned peas, and this group canned three-fourths as many as recommended.

Fruits for the most part were canned by from 50 to 60 percent of the families. The combined cannings of apples, peaches, pears and apricots were fairly close to standard. Cherries were slightly below the recommended 25 quarts and berries were canned in less than half the suggested amounts, but over twice as many plums as suggested were canned. This indicates that farm families will can more of one fruit to balance the lack in another, if the first fruit is more available.

The average total of fruits canned by the 390 families was 139 quarts and of vegetables, 158 quarts—totalling 297 quarts per family. Extension nutrition specialists say that they should be canning 225 quarts of vegetables and at least an equal amount of fruit, plus 125 quarts tomatoes, making a grand total of 675 quarts per family, or 3375 quarts for a family of four.

Note:
This survey of home canning and home production, made by Miss Tiffany, included 203 women enrolled in the home economics extension work, 76 whose families had FSA tenant purchase loans and 111 farm women chosen at random. Each of these three groups represented all parts of the state. The latter group was personally interviewed. The families averaged between four and five members each.

—The Editor
of 575 quarts. However, it should be pointed out that the families surveyed bought some canned fruits and vegetables—an average of 60 cans. This would actually increase the total amount of canned goods used, but would still leave the families considerably below nutrition recommendations.

Tomatoes Popular

The most popular vegetable on the farm basement shelves was tomatoes. They were canned by 85 percent of the families either as a vegetable, as juice or both. Four-fifths of the families canned them as a vegetable, while nearly half canned juice.

Those canning the whole or stewed tomatoes put up between 55 and 60 quarts each. The average amount of juice canned per family was 38 quarts. The total amount of tomatoes canned per family was 74 quarts, compared with the recommended 125 quarts for a family of four.

About the same number of families canned green beans and pickles as canned tomatoes, but the quantities canned were considerably less—around 35 quarts per family for each of these two vegetables.

Corn was canned by well over half of the families, the average amount being about two boilermals—28 quarts.

Peaches, Plums, "Tops"

Peaches were the most popular fruit—three-fourths of the families canned them and averaged about 38 quarts.

Plums were next—63 percent of the families canned an average of 22 quarts.

Fewer families canned berries, but those who did canned larger quantities than those who canned plums. In fact, the average number of quarts was 33, or less than half the standard.

About the same number of families canned pears as berries. These families averaged 25 quarts each.

Apples were canned by three-fifths of the group. The amount canned was relatively low, chiefly because the families preferred to buy fresh apples during the winter.

Berries were canned by about half of the families—an average of 20 quarts each.

Unlike vegetables, relatively smaller proportions of the home-canned fruits were home-produced. About three-fourths of the families canning plums and berries raised their own. About three-fifths of those canning apples and cherries raised all they canned, while only a fourth of those canning pears and even fewer of those canning peaches raised their own.

Less than half as many renter families as owners produced all the fruit they canned. The owning and renting families were approximately even, however, on the proportion raising all the vegetables they canned.

Only a relatively small amount of canned fruit was purchased to supplement that canned at home. Peaches and cherries were bought by the largest number of the families. A few bought canned Italian plums, pears and berries. Most of these fruits were bought in gallon cans when there were extra men to feed. A few women recanned what was left, but most of those who had electric refrigerators found that they could keep the surplus fruit conveniently without spoilage and therefore did not bother with the work of canning.

With so few families buying canned fruits, the average expenditure for canned fruits and vegetables was only $11.86. Renters spent more than the owners, probably to make up for the smaller amount of fruit they had on their farms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT 390 IOWA FARM WOMEN CANNED IN 1939</th>
<th>Extension</th>
<th>What the women did</th>
<th>Percent canned</th>
<th>Av. Amt. canned</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Berries</td>
<td>75</td>
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<td>Cherries</td>
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<td>Plums</td>
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<td>Pears</td>
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<td>20</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apricots</td>
<td>100</td>
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Tomatoes 125 85 74
Snap beans 90 77 33
Corn 20 69 20
Peas, lima beans, shell beans 30 77 15
Pickles and relishes 0 80 35