Planning for Canning

Kathern Ayres
Iowa State College

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Planning for Canning

By KATHERN AyRES
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The Plan

"Get my jars filled" is not infrequently the main goal of the housewife in the summer and especially in the fall, during the latter part of the canning season.

Certainly, one of the greatest joys of the autumn time is to go down into the basement and see on the shelves where the empty jars stood rows of bright colored fruits, preserves, pickles and conserve and tempting green vegetables which have been stored away for winter use.

But do you can by plan or in the hit-or-miss fashion? Are you still filling jars with whatever happens to be in the backyard, just to keep it from spoiling, regardless of whether or not your family can eat it, or have you kept a record of the number of quarts of each kind of vegetable and fruit you have put up and are now, at the close of the canning season, checking over what is still required to satisfy your family's needs for the winter?

Deciding just what the canning budget should be to insure proper diet, which fruits and vegetables it is best to can, and how and when it pays to buy commercially canned goods are all puzzling problems which each homemaker comes up against every year.

Mrs. J. W. Woodrow, a homemaker at Ames, Iowa, has worked out a budget so that she knows exactly how many quarts of each kind of fruit and vegetables she needs for her family, consisting of her husband, her daughter, Margaret, nine years old, and herself.

Mrs. Woodrow told me that when she was first married she canned just as many quarts as she could as long as products for canning were available and as long as her strength lasted. As a girl, she had lived on a farm where much canned food was used, and after marriage she canned just as her mother had done, with little regard for the relative size of her own family.

When she and Mr. Woodrow left Boulder, Colorado, to move to Ames three years after they were married, they left behind them quarts and quarts of fruit which they had not been able to use.

"I decided then, "said Mrs. Woodrow, "that I would keep a record of just how much of each kind of fruit and vegetable we did eat, so that I would be able to make my canned fruit budget for following years. I always use fresh fruit and vegetables when they are in the market, so that my budget for canned food does not cover a longer time than from the first of October to the Middle of May."

"This fall I have filled my budget for the coming year which I think will be the right amount unless we have a great deal more company than I expect:"

- Pineapple........ 18 quarts
- Raspberries........ 20 pints
- White Cherries......... 12 quarts
- Peaches........ 20 quarts
- Pears........ 6 quarts
- Total fruit........ 56 quarts
- Tomatoes............... 24 quarts
- String Beans........ 18 quarts
- Peas.................. 36 quarts
- Carrots........ 12 quarts
- Beets............... 6 quarts
- Asparagus........ 12 cans
- Spinach........ 36 quarts

"If it is possible I can the raspberries, peaches, pears and tomatoes myself as we like the flavor of these 'home canned.'"

"Home canning in Ames is cheaper than buying commercially canned fruits and vegetables, provided that all or almost all of the home canned products keep. Last year I lost money on my tomatoes because so many of the jars spoiled. But I thought at the time when I bought them to can that was saving money. I am trying it over this year and I hope to have better luck."

Each year, early in May when Mrs. Woodrow already has her canning budget made out for the coming season, an agent from a large wholesale company comes to her home and takes her order of all fruits and vegetables which she wishes to buy commercially canned. Her order is filled by the fresh pack of each product as soon as it leaves the factory. Buying in such large quantity and at that time of year is a saving in money amounting to from 5¢ to 7¢ a can.

"I am sure that we use more fruit than the average family," Mrs. Woodrow told me, "because we have less pie and cake and have fruits for dessert instead, as I feel that this is better for my family. I believe I serve fruit for dessert about five dinners out of seven. Sometimes it is just plain sauce; other times we have it with light custard, ice cream or whipped cream. We like fresh fruit, particularly grapefruit for breakfast. From June to October when it is difficult to buy good fresh grapefruit, I sometimes buy it canned and we like it very much."

Mrs. Woodrow arrived at a satisfactory canning budget thru experience and thru her records. But what shall we suggest for the newly married or those who have never kept a count of the quarts used?

The thing to strive for, according to nutrition experts, is to can or store enough so that each member of the family may have two servings of vegetables and two of fruit each day of the year.

The class in food buying at Iowa State College has worked out the following canning budget for a family of five or six which allows for one canned vegetable and one canned fruit each day.

- Beans—56 quarts, to be served twice a week for seven months.
- Tomatoes—108 quarts, to be served three times a week for eight months.
- Fruits—242 quarts, to be used seven times a week for eight months.

This budget may be changed to agree with any particular size of family. And now after the planning comes the canning:

Can or Buy

"She feeds him out of tin cans" was once the whispered accusation made by the mother-in-law, not so common now probably, because some commercially canned goods are becoming more and more a necessity in every household. "All the young bride needs to know today is how to operate a tin can opener."

Some equipment for cold pack canning.
The question of whether or not it pays to have the most difficult canning done outside the home is one which can best be answered by each homemaker depending upon her own time and strength and the cost of fresh foods. Modern improved factory methods of canning are such that the products turned out are cheaper, safer and better in flavor than they have ever been before.

"I'd sooner eat string beans out of the can in the winter," said one husband, "than to eat make-shift meals in the summer while my wife stands over the stove canning in hot weather."

But if the kitchen equipment includes a steam pressure cooker, or convenient utensils for cold packing, and plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables are to be had just for the picking, or at low cost, it would be foolish for the homemaker not to plan her time so that she would be able to do some canning with ease.

The most difficult foods to home can are apricots, tomatoes, cherries, peaches, pears, and figs. These are hard to pack solidly, but are not impossible. Pineapple is much more convenient to home can because it can be canned in any desired size and shape. But the cold pack method is very economical for the homemaker.

Most of the canned fruits and vegetables should be bought in the best grades. But it is not always possible to buy the best quality for the most economical price. Home canning is also more economical than buying the canned products, such as canned fruits and vegetables, because these require a longer time in order to kill the bacteria in the very center of the pack. These foods should be the ones bought commercially canned, if possible.

Pineapple is more often bought canned than any other fruit. In California the canned fresh pineapple is so expensive that it would not pay to home can it. "It does not pay for the homemaker to can pineapples at $2.50 a bushel, if she counts her time of any value," said Mrs. Ruetta Ray Blinks, one of the outstanding food buying specialists of this country.

"But it is much more economical for the homemaker to buy fresh tomatoes at $1.00 a bushel or less and can them than it is to buy the commercially canned product."

After clean-up day in an Indiana town, the street commissioner looked over the accumulation of tin cans and estimated that there were 500,000 cans used in the town since the last clean-up day about a year previous. The population of the town is 12,000 and by his calculation, forty-five cans of prepared foods for each man, woman and child had been used in the year, an evidence of the increasing value of canned food for the busy housewife.

There will always be those choice fruits, relishes and conserves which the family enjoy most in mother's own size. This time when our young Mrs. Reva had just been married two months and was being entertained in her own home for the first time, I watched her opening a gallon can of black raspberries to make a pie for him and her and me.

"Don't look so shocked at this large can. You won't have to eat them all in one meal," she said. "Just come and see how nice they are; the fruit is unsweetened, packed solidly and there is very little juice here. I bought this can for $0.95. As soon as we've finished using as many as we need for today, I'll heat the rest, put in pint jars and seal to be opened later for Cedric and me. This is very nice for making jams and marrows. Buying our fruit this way is a great saving even if the gallon cans were not on sale." She had some gallons of peaches and apricots which she had bought on special sale for $0.80 each—certainly a remarkable value. The regular price of the No. 10 can is usually about half the cost of the same quantity purchased in small cans. The less tin bought the better the buy.

Another young bride, not so well trained in the best way of filling the market basket, was heard to say indignantly: "It is an outrage, your charging me 37c for this can of peas. I bought the same size can exactly this size for 25c in another store last week."

She was learning some of her first lessons in how to buy. She did not know that peas may be bought in six different grades according to the size of the sieve they go thru. The petit pois are the smallest, considered the most choice and are the most expensive. Then comes the extra sifted, finely sifted, early June, marrow fat, and the Telephone which are the largest in size. This time when our young Mrs. went shopping she probably received the petit pois, the most prized. Last week she had bought the telephone brand which is not so attractive in appearance, but these more mature peas have a better flavor and more food value. They are very good for pea soup or in any way in which the size does not matter.

Other canned foods have a similar range in price according to the grade. Fruit comes under one of the five grades, fancy, choice, standard, water pack and pie. The better grades have larger, more uniform shaped fruit in a heavier syrup; the cheaper grades are equally good in flavor and food value except for the small amount of sugar which they contain. Standard or second products can be used very nicely for pies and puddings. The water pack and pie grades come principally in gallon cans.

The National Canners Association has accomplished a great deal in standardizing the grades of products and sizes of containers. Hence, we find most canned fruits and vegetables on the market in the following sizes of cans:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. 1</td>
<td>contains 1 1/2 cups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 2</td>
<td>contains 2 1/2 cups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 3</td>
<td>contains 3 1/2 to 4 cups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 4</td>
<td>contains 4 cups or 1 quart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 5</td>
<td>contains 1/2 gallon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 10</td>
<td>contains 1 gallon, meaning 14 1/2 cups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the housewife orders by grade and by number of can, her grocer will be able to deliver just the quality and amount she wishes. Grades are usually indicated by brand names. So it is wiser for the homemaker to experiment until she finds the brand that satisfies her best and then buy that brand.

Peaches, pears, grapes and tomatoes, those fruits most commonly canned in September, may all be put up in any one of a number of ways—open kettle, cold pack, oven or fireless cooker. The open kettle is probably the most frequently used.

But the cold pack method is very nice, especially for the fruits as cooking at lower temperature preserves the shape and flavor.

For peaches scald, dip into cold water and peel. Cut from the seeds and pack into pints. Fill the jar with hot syrup of the desired consistency in which several cracked peach pits have been boiled. Partially seal and process in boiling water for twenty minutes.

Peel, and cut pears and pack in jars. Pour over a hot syrup. Partially seal and process for twenty minutes.

(Continued on page 16)
section in each of the seven districts of the state teachers association. With one exception permanent chairmen have been elected and plans for a unified state program have been laid. The work of the state association can be taken to the districts and thru this means a larger group of home economists can be interested in the state and national program of work.

"The Publicity Committee has urged greater use of the daily and weekly papers for advertising and reporting home economics activities, such as the annual meetings, the district meetings and other items of interest to the public. The committee also takes charge of the news items for the Journal of Home Economists can be interested in the one exception permanent chairmen of the state teachers association. With this means a larger group of home economics activities, such as the work of the state association which is to be held Nov. 4 and 5 in Des Moines."

4-H CLUBS
(Continued from page 6)

athletic and ingenuous. A lovely tan jersey for school, a dainty light blue silk for party, a practical simple suit for street, and a colorful print for housework, are samples of things well worn and exhibited by their owners. The final placing was a difficult one. Elizabeth Kelly of Howard county carried off first place. Miss Hazel Spencer was in charge of this feature.

Winners in Health Contest

Girls’ Contest: Alberta Hoppe, Linn county.

Boys’ Contest: Van Kinney, Davis county.

Counties with next highest score in girls’ health contest: Van Buren, Taylor, Iowa, Kossuth, Webster, Chickasaw.

Scott County Trophy

Won by Scott county for best exhibits.

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West of Sheldon-Munn

STATE FAIR SUMMARY

90 counties represented by demonstration teams
94 demonstration teams (including 4 in Food Health Show)
105 demonstrations were given during the week.
71 counties were represented in girls’ health contest.
371 total in girls’ camp.
26 counties were represented in judging contest.
24 counties were represented in Style Show.

Bernetta Scott, ’26, of Linn county is especially interested in 4-H club work and has been assisting the club in her home community this summer.

Gladys Stewart, ’26, of Fayette county, who was formerly a 4-H club girl has been busy the last month judging exhibits and demonstrations at county fairs.

Helen Siebels, another 4-H’er of ’26, is teaching Home Economics in the high school at Emmeteburg.

New Foods Fellowship

All summer long, regardless of heat that wilted down humans, a canning project has been going on in our laboratories. The Ball Brothers Fellowship Fund, appropriated to investigate canning methods, makes possible this project, to be known as Ball Brothers Industrial Fellowship. Miss Gertrude Sunderlin, last year fellow in bacteriology, has been awarded the senior fellowship, and Miss Gail Redfield, the junior fellowship. Miss Willetta Moore, formerly of the Foods and Nutrition department of Iowa State College, and now at the Oregon State Agricultural College, spent the first summer session in Ames getting the work started on the project.

PLANNING FOR CANNING
(Continued from page 13)

Grapes may be washed, picked from the bunch and put in jars. Fill the jars with a hot thin syrup. Partially seal and process in boiling water for sixteen minutes. Some housekeepers become alarmed when the grapes burst open but this is to be expected, because the pressure inside and outside of the grapes is not the same.

Tomatoes keep their shape better if put up by cold pack. Scald, peel and pack in jars either whole or cut in pieces. Cover with hot tomato juice. Add one teaspoon of salt to each quart. Partially seal, process in boiling water for twenty-five minutes. Whether the homemaker cans or buys canned products, the meals she serves will be good in appearance, taste and food value only when she has made plans for plenty of fruit and vegetables.

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