

Monk Fruit Sweetener

THIS ALTERNATIVE SWEETENER IS NOT FOR CANNING

Monk fruit sweetener is becoming popular amongst people looking for alternatives to sugar. Its sweetness is derived not from traditional fructose sugar molecules in the fruit, but from extracted chemicals that provide sweetness (which can be 100 to 250 times sweeter than sugar). These chemicals are then blended with other agents to bulk up the product and/or reduce the intensity of its sweetness. Monk fruit sweetener is available in both liquid and powdered forms.

To date, there has been no testing with monk fruit sweeteners to determine their effects on pH in home canned foods, and thus the safety is unknown. For this reason, **canning with monk fruit sweetener is currently not recommended.**

When canning fruit products, especially jams and jellies, sugar does play a role in both preservation and quality. There are other options to sugar, however, for those who wish to can without it. Jams and jellies can be made with low- or no-sugar pectins. Fruits may be canned in water or fruit juices, and Stevia and certain commercial sugar substitutes (e.g., Splenda) may be used. Other options include adding the sweetener of your choice at serving time, after a jar is opened.

For further information on canning visit the National Center for Home Food Preservation (NCHFP) at <https://nchfp.uga.edu> or contact your local Cooperative Extension office.

Brought to you by the UCCE Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County
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