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**University of California**  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

UCCE Master Food Preserver Program  
Sacramento County

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*Sacramento County Master Food Preservers  
Monthly Wednesday Night Demonstration  
August 16, 2023  
Tomatoes and Peppers*



**Resources:**

- Please visit the National Center for Home Food Preservation at <http://nchfp.uga.edu> for detailed information about research-based methods of home food preservation.
- UC ANR Catalog (<http://anrcatalog.ucanr.edu>)

Should you need assistance or require special accommodations for any of our educational programs, please contact us at 916-875-6913.

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## CHOICE SALSA

Source: [https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can\\_salsa/choice\\_salsa.html](https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can_salsa/choice_salsa.html)

Yield: About 6 pints

6 cups peeled, cored, seeded, chopped ripe tomatoes

9 cups diced onions and/or peppers of any variety

1-1/2 cups bottled lemon or lime juice

1 Tablespoon canning or pickling salt

**CAUTION: Wear plastic or rubber gloves and do not touch your face while handling or cutting hot peppers. If you do not wear gloves, wash hands thoroughly with soap and water before touching your face or eyes.**

To prepare tomatoes: Dip washed tomatoes in boiling water for 30 to 60 seconds or until the skins split. Submerge immediately in cold water. Peel off loosened skins and remove cores. Remove seeds and chop into 1/4 to 1/2-inch pieces.

To prepare onions: Peel, wash, core and dice onions into 1/4-inch pieces.

To prepare bell peppers: Wash and core bell peppers. Remove the seeds and membranes before dicing into 1/4-inch pieces.

To prepare hot peppers: Wash and remove stems of hot peppers. Keep or remove as much of the seeds and membranes as you wish, depending on the 'pepper heat' of the salsa that you desire. Dice peppers into 1/4-inch pieces.

Combine tomatoes, onions, and peppers in a large saucepan; add lemon or lime juice and salt. Bring to a boil over medium heat while stirring. Reduce heat and simmer for 3 minutes, stirring to prevent scorching.

Ladle hot salsa into hot pint jars, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles and adjust head space if needed. Wipe rims and adjust lids.

Process in a boiling water canner **15 minutes at 0 – 1,000 feet altitude** (20 minutes at 1,001 to 6,000 feet, 25 minutes above 6,000 feet).

Turn off heat; remove the lid, and let the jars stand 5 minutes. Remove the jars and cool.

**Notes:** This is a fairly acidic salsa, but was tested with a wide variety of tomatoes, peppers and onions to ensure the necessary acidification for boiling water canning and still allow for some consumer choice in the ingredients.

The peppers used may be sweet bell peppers (of any color) and/or hot peppers.

The purpose of the commercially bottled lemon or lime juice is to standardize a minimum level of acidity in the recipe. For the purposes NCHFP testing, they used lemon juice as it was deemed the most acceptable flavor for the proportions in this particular recipe. For safety reasons, do not substitute vinegar for the lemon or lime juice. Do not use bottled key lime juice.

***Do not alter the proportions of tomatoes, vegetables and acid because that might make the salsa unsafe when this canning process is used. The chopped tomatoes and diced peppers and/or onions are to be measured level in dry measuring cups; the lemon or lime juice is measured in a liquid measuring cup. We did not test other vegetables for flavor or acidity.***

**Additional Note:** *Refrigerate any leftover salsa after filling jars, and enjoy freshly made!* Refrigerate the canned salsa once jars are opened for use.

## HERBED SEASONED TOMATOES

Source: Ball Complete Book of Home Preserving, 2012, page 358

Yield: about 6 pints

12 cups halved, cored, peeled tomatoes\*

Spice blend(s)

Bottled lemon juice or citric acid

Salt (optional)

Prepare canner, jars, and lids.

Prepare the quantity of spice blend(s) that suits your needs and set aside.

Place tomatoes in a large stainless steel saucepan. For best results, do not layer tomatoes in pan. Add water to cover. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring gently. Reduce heat and boil gently for 5 minutes.

Before packing each jar of tomatoes, add 1 tablespoon lemon juice or 1/4 teaspoon citric acid and 1/4 teaspoon salt to the hot jar. Add the specified quantity of your chosen spice blend. Pack hot tomatoes\*\* into prepared jars to within a generous 1/2 inch of top of jar. Ladle hot liquid into jar to cover tomatoes, leaving 1/2 inch headspace. Remove air bubbles and adjust headspace, if necessary, by adding hot liquid. Wipe rim. Center lid on jar. Screw band down until resistance is met, then increase to fingertip-tight.

Place jars in canner, ensuring they are completely covered with water. Bring to a boil and process for 40 minutes. (To adjust for altitude: at 1,001 to 3,000 feet process 45 minutes; at 3,001 to 6,000 feet process 50 minutes; at 6,001 to 8,000 feet process 55 minutes; 8,001 to 10,000 feet process 60 minutes.) **IMPORTANT: Process in a water bath canner only. A steam canner can only be used if processing time is less than 45 minutes.**

Remove canner lid. Wait 5 minutes, then remove jars, cool and store.

\*To peel tomatoes, place them in a pot of boiling water for 30 to 60 seconds, or until the skins start to crack. Immediately dip in cold water. The skins will slip off.

\*\*For best-quality product and vacuum seal, pack tomatoes one jar at a time. For each jar add the lemon juice or citric acid, then the salt, then the spice blend. Then pack the tomatoes and place jar in the canner. Repeat until all jars are filled.

## SPICE BLENDS

For each pint jar, use 2 tsp of spice blend.

### Italian Spice Blend

<b>Dried herbs and spices</b>	<b>2 jars</b>	<b>6 jars</b>
Basil	1 tsp	4 tsp
Thyme	1 tsp	2 tsp
Oregano	1 tsp	2 ½ tsp
Rosemary	½ tsp	1 ½ tsp
Sage	½ tsp	1 ½ tsp
Garlic Powder	¼ tsp	1 tsp
Hot pepper flakes (optional)	¼ tsp	1 tsp

### Mexican Spice Blend

<b>Dried herbs and spices</b>	<b>2 jars</b>	<b>6 jars</b>
Chili powder	2 tsp	6 tsp
Ground cumin	1 tsp	2 tsp
Oregano	1 tsp	2 tsp
Garlic powder	1 tsp	2 tsp
Ground coriander	1 tsp	2 tsp
Seasoned salt (optional)	½ tsp	1 ½ tsp

### Cajun Spice Blend

<b>Dried herbs and spices</b>	<b>2 jars</b>	<b>6 jars</b>
Chili powder	1 tsp	3 tsp
Paprika	1 tsp	2 tsp
Onion flakes	½ tsp	1 ½ tsp
Garlic powder	½ tsp	1 ½ tsp
Ground allspice	½ tsp	1 ½ tsp
Thyme	½ tsp	1 ½ tsp
Cayenne pepper	¼ tsp	1 tsp

## TUSCAN TOMATO JAM

Source: <https://www.ballmasonjars.com/blog?cid=tuscan-tomato-jam>

**Makes:** 4 Half Pint Jars (8oz)

**Prep:** 45 Minutes

**Processing Time:** 15 Minutes

This sweet and tart jam will liven up an autumn cheeseboard and is equally delicious in any of your favorite recipes calling for ketchup or chili sauce. Spread it on meatloaf half-way through baking to make a savory glaze or serve with eggs for brunch.

### INGREDIENTS

6 lbs. red tomatoes (about 18 medium)

6 Tbsp Classic Pectin

1 tsp. grated lemon peel (about 1/2 medium)

2 Tbsp. bottled lemon juice

1 tsp. salt

1/4 tsp. ground black pepper

2 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar (at least 5% acidity)

1/4 cup dry white wine, such as pinot grigio or sauvignon blanc

2 tsp. dried herbs, such as thyme, rosemary, oregano, savory or marjoram or a combination of any of these

1-1/2 cups granulated sugar

1. Prepare boiling water canner. Heat jars in simmering water until ready to use, do not boil. Wash lids in warm soapy water and set aside with bands.
2. Wash tomatoes. Core and slice into quarters. Cook until soft in large sauce pot or Dutch oven. Puree mixture using an electric food strainer or food mill to remove peels and seeds.
3. Return puree to sauce pot and simmer over medium-high heat until reduced by half, stirring frequently to prevent sticking. Add pectin, lemon peel, bottled lemon juice, salt, pepper, balsamic vinegar, white wine and herbs, stirring to blend in pectin. Bring mixture to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring constantly. Add sugar, stirring to dissolve. Bring mixture to a rolling boil that cannot be stirred down. Boil hard for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Skim foam if necessary.
4. Ladle hot jam into a hot jar leaving a 1/4-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe jar rim. Center lid on jar and apply band, adjust to fingertip tight. Place jar in boiling-water canner. Repeat until all jars are filled.
5. Water must cover jars by 1 inch. Adjust heat to medium-high, cover canner, and bring water to a rolling boil. Process half-pint jars 15 minutes, adjusting for altitude. Turn off heat and remove cover. Let jars cool 5 minutes. Remove jars from canner; do not retighten bands if loose. Cool 12-24 hours. Check lids for seal, they should not flex when center is pressed.

## FREEZING TOMATOES

Source: So Easy to Preserve, 2006, page 278

**Preparation** – Select firm, ripe tomatoes with deep red color.

**Raw** – Wash and dip in boiling water for 30 seconds to loosen skins. Core and peel. Freeze whole or in pieces. Pack into containers, leaving 1-inch headspace. Seal and freeze. Use only for cooking or seasoning as tomatoes will not be solid when thawed.

**Juice** – Wash, sort, and trim firm, vine-ripened tomatoes. Cut in quarters or eighths. Simmer 5 to 10 minutes. Press through a sieve. If desired, season with 1 teaspoon salt to each quart of juice. Pour into containers, leaving headspace. Seal and freeze.

- Headspace for Wide top opening: Pint - 1/2-inch, Quart - 1 inch
- Headspace for Narrow top opening: Pint - 1 1/2 inches, Quart - 1 1/2 inches

**Stewed** – Remove stem ends, peel and quarter ripe tomatoes. Cover and cook until tender (10 to 20 minutes). Place pan containing tomatoes in cold water to cool. Pack into containers, leaving headspace. Seal and freeze.

- Headspace for Wide top opening: Pint – 1/2-inch, Quart - 1 inch
- Headspace for Narrow top opening: Pint – 3/4-inch, Quart - 1 1/2 inches

## FREEZING GREEN TOMATOES

Source: So Easy to Preserve, 2006 edition - pg 278 or, 2014 edition - pg 290

**Preparation** – Select firm, sound green tomatoes. Wash, core and slice 1/4-inch thick.

**For Frying** – Pack the slices into containers with freezer wrap between the slices. Leave 1/2-inch headspace. Seal and freeze.

## TOMATO POWDER

Source: food52.com

Use tomato skins, fresh tomato slices (1/4-inch thick), or pureed tomatoes.

1. Place on dehydrator tray and dry until crisp.
2. Place dried tomato slices or leather or skins in blender, herb, or coffee grinder and blend until a fine powder.
3. Use powder in a variety of dishes from soups to meat loaf. The flavor of dried tomatoes is more concentrated so use sparingly in your cooking.

### **Reconstitution ratios:**

#### Tomato Paste

- 1 cup dried tomato powder
- 1-3/4 cups water
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar

#### Tomato Sauce

- 1 cup dried tomato powder
- 3 cups water
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar

#### Tomato Soup

- 1 cup dried tomato powder
- 3/4 cup water
- 1/2 cup dry milk
- Season to taste.

## TOMATO SKIN CHIPS

Source: The Ultimate Dehydrator Cookbook, 2014

1. Arrange tomato skins on dehydrator tray; sprinkle with seasonings (salt, garlic, etc.).
2. Dry at 135°F for 4-6 hours or until crispy.

## TOMATO LEATHER

Source: [https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/dry/veg\\_leathers.html](https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/dry/veg_leathers.html)

1. Core ripe tomatoes and cut into quarters.
2. Cook over low heat in covered saucepan 15 to 20-minutes.
3. Puree or force through a sieve or colander and pour into electric fry pan or shallow pan.
4. Add salt to taste and cook over low heat until thickened.
5. Spread on a dehydrator sheet or tray lined with plastic wrap.
6. Dry at 140° F.

## TOMATO HERB SEASONING

Source: <https://www.excaliburdehydrator-recipes.com/recipe/tomato-herb-seasoning/>

Yield: 1 15x15 tomato leather

1/2 tsp dried oregano

1/2 tsp salt

1/2 tsp dried basil

1/2 tsp dried parsley

1. Tear tomato leather into small pieces.
2. In a mini chopper or coffee grinder, pulse the tomato leather, oregano, basil, parsley, and salt until very finely chopped.
3. Process into as fine a powder as possible.
4. Store in a sealable plastic bag for up to 1 month.

## TOMATO HERB SEASONING VARIATION

Yield: 1 15x15 tomato leather

1/2 tsp dried oregano

1/2 tsp salt

1/2 tsp cumin seeds

1/2 tsp coriander seeds

## PARMESAN TOMATO CHIPS

Source: <https://www.excaliburdehydrator-recipes.com/recipe/parmesan-tomato-chips/>

8 Heirloom Tomatoes  
1/4 cup grated Parmesan Cheese  
1/2 tsp Basil  
1/2 tsp freshly ground Black Pepper  
1/2 tsp Salt  
1/2 tsp Oregano

1. Wash and dry tomatoes.
2. Slice tomatoes into 1/4-inch thick slices & place on dehydrator trays in a single layer.
3. Sprinkle a layer of grated Parmesan cheese on tomato slices.
4. Mix salt, basil, oregano, and black pepper together.
5. Sprinkle seasoning mixture on tomato slices.
6. Dry at 155° F for 8-12 hours or until crisp.
7. Store in an airtight container after cooled.

## MARINATED PEPPERS (Bell, Hungarian, Banana, or Jalapeno)

Source: [https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can\\_06/marinated\\_peppers.html](https://nchfp.uga.edu/how/can_06/marinated_peppers.html)

Yield: about 9 half-pints.

4 lbs firm peppers\*  
1 cup bottled lemon juice  
2 cups white vinegar (5 percent)  
1 Tablespoon oregano leaves  
1 cup olive or salad oil  
1/2 cup chopped onions  
2 cloves garlic, quartered (optional)  
2 Tablespoons prepared horseradish (optional)

\* **Note:** It is possible to adjust the intensity of pickled jalapeno peppers by using all hot jalapeno peppers or blending with sweet and mild peppers.

For hot style: Use 4 lbs jalapeno peppers.

For medium style: Use 2 lbs jalapeno peppers and 2 lbs sweet and mild peppers.

For mild style: Use 1 lb jalapeno peppers and 3 lbs sweet and mild peppers.

**Caution: Wear plastic or rubber gloves and do not touch your face while handling or cutting hot peppers. If you do not wear gloves, wash hands thoroughly with soap and water before touching your face or eyes.**

Select your favorite pepper. Peppers may be left whole. Large peppers may be quartered. Wash, slash two to four slits in each pepper, and blanch in boiling water or blister in order to peel tough-skinned hot peppers.

Peppers may be blistered using one of the following methods: Oven or broiler method: Place peppers in a hot oven (400°F) or broiler for 6-8 minutes or until skins blister. Range-top method: Cover hot burner, either gas or electric, with heavy wire mesh. Place peppers on burner for several minutes until skins blister.

Allow peppers to cool. Place in pan and cover with a damp cloth. This will make peeling the peppers easier. After several minutes of cooling, peel each pepper.

Flatten whole peppers. Mix all remaining ingredients in a saucepan and heat to boiling. Place 1/4 garlic clove (optional) and 1/4 teaspoon salt in each half pint or 1/2 teaspoon per pint. Fill jars with peppers, add hot, well-mixed oil/pickling solution over peppers, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process as below:

Pack	Jar Size	Process Time at Altitudes of			
		0 - 1,000 ft	1,001 - 3,000 ft	3,001 - 6,000 ft	Above 6,000 ft
Raw	Half-pints and pints	15 min	20	20	25

## ROASTED RED PEPPER SPREAD

Source: Former Ball Recipe from website

Yield: About 5 half-pint jars

- 6 pounds red bell peppers (about 12 large)
- 1 pound Roma tomatoes (about 10 medium)
- 2 large cloves garlic, chopped
- 1/4 cup chopped white onion (about 1 medium)
- 2 tablespoons minced basil
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon coarse salt
- 1/2 cup red wine vinegar, 5% acidity

1. Wash peppers, tomatoes, and basil under cold running water; drain. Roast peppers under a broiler at 425°F until skins wrinkle and char in spots, turning peppers over to roast evenly. Remove peppers from broiler and place in a paper bag; secure bag closed; cool 15 minutes. Roast tomatoes, garlic, and onion under a broiler at 425°F for 10 to 15 minutes. Remove vegetables from broiler. Place tomatoes in a paper bag; secure bag closed; cool 15 minutes. Peel garlic and onion. Chop garlic; set aside. Chop onion; measure 1/4 cup chopped onion; set aside. Cut off peel from peppers; remove stems and seeds. Cut peppers into quarters. Cut off peel from tomatoes and core. Cut tomatoes into quarters. Purée peppers, tomatoes, garlic, and onion using a food processor or food mill.
2. Combine all ingredients in a large saucepan. Bring mixture to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring to prevent sticking. Reduce heat to a simmer (180°F); simmer until mixture thickens, stirring frequently.
3. Ladle hot spread into a hot jar, leaving 1/4-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Clean jar rim. Center lid on jar and adjust band to fingertip-tight. Place the jar in the boiling water canner. Repeat until all the jars are filled.
4. Process half-pint jars **10 minutes at 0 – 1,000 feet altitude** (15 minutes at 1,001 to 3,000 feet, 20 minutes at 3,001 to 6,000 feet, 25 minutes at 6,001 to 8,000 feet, 30 minutes at 8,001 to 10,000 feet).
5. Turn off heat and remove cover. Let jars cool 5 minutes. Remove jars from canner; do not retighten bands if loose. Cool 12 hours. Check seals. Label and store jars.

## BOILING WATER CANNING PROCESS

1. Before you start preparing your food, fill the canner halfway with clean water. This is approximately the level needed for a canner load of pint jars. For other sizes and numbers of jars, adjust the amount of water in the canner so it will be 1 to 2 inches over the top of the filled jars.
2. Preheat water to 140°F for raw-packed foods and to 180°F for hot-packed foods. Food preparation can begin while this water is preheating. Do not have the water boiling when you add the jars.
3. Fill, fit with lids, load onto the canner rack and use the handles to lower the rack into the water; or fill the canner with the rack in the bottom, one jar at a time, using a jar lifter. When using a jar lifter, make sure it is securely positioned below the neck of the jar (below the screw band of the lid). Keep the jar upright at all times. Tilting the jar could cause food to spill into the sealing area of the lid.
4. Add boiling water, if needed, so the water level is at least 1 inch above jar tops. Pour the water around the jars, not on them. For process times over 30 minutes, the water level should be at least 2 inches above the tops of the jars.
5. Turn heat to its highest position, cover the canner with its lid, and heat until the water in the canner boils vigorously.
6. Set the timer for the total minutes required for processing the food, adjusting for altitude.
7. Keep the canner covered and maintain a boil throughout the process schedule. The heat setting may be lowered a little as long as a complete boil is maintained for the entire process time. If the water stops boiling at any time during the process, bring the water back to a vigorous boil and begin the timing of the process over, from the beginning.
8. Add more boiling water, if needed, to keep the water level above the jars.
9. When the jars have boiled for the recommended time, turn off the heat and remove the canner lid. Wait no more than 5 minutes before removing jars.
10. Using a jar lifter, remove the jars without tipping and place them on a towel, leaving at least 1-inch spaces between the jars during cooling. Let jars sit undisturbed to cool at room temperature for 12 to 24 hours.



## ATMOSPHERIC STEAM CANNING PROCESS

1. Use a research tested recipe and processing time developed for a boiling water canner when using an atmospheric steam canner. An atmospheric steam canner may be used with recipes approved for half-pint, pint, or quart jars.
2. Add enough water to the base of the canner to cover the rack. (Follow manufacturer recommendations.)
3. Preheat water to 140°F for raw-packed foods and to 180°F for hot-packed foods. Food preparation can begin while this water is preheating. Do not have the water boiling when you add the jars.
4. . Heat jars prior to filling with hot liquid (raw or hot pack). Do not allow the jars to cool before filling.
5. Load filled jars, fitted with lids, onto the canner rack and place the lid on the canner base.
6. Turn heat to its highest position to boil the water until a steady column of steam (6-8 inches) appears from the vent hole(s) in the canner lid. Jars must be processed in pure steam environment.
7. If using a canner with a temperature sensor, begin processing time when the temperature marker is in the green zone for your altitude. If using a canner without a temperature sensor, begin processing time when a steady stream of steam is visible from the vent hole(s).
8. Set the timer for the total minutes required for processing the food, adjusting for altitude. Processing time must be limited to 45 minutes or less, including any modification for elevation. The processing time is limited by the amount of water in the canner base. When processing food, do not open the canner to add water.
9. Monitor the temperature sensor and/or steady stream of steam throughout the entire timed process. Regulate heat so that the canner maintains a temperature of 212°F. A canner that is boiling too vigorously can boil dry within 20 minutes. If a canner boils dry, the food is considered under-processed and therefore potentially unsafe.
10. At the end of the processing time, turn off the heat and wait 2 to 3 minutes. Carefully remove the lid, lifting the lid away from you.
11. Using a jar lifter, remove the jars without tipping and place them on a towel, leaving at least 1-inch spaces between the jars during cooling. Let jars sit undisturbed to cool at room temperature for 12 to 24 hours.



## PRESSURE CANNING PROCESS – QUICK STEPS

1. Use reputable, research-based recipe.
2. Prep work area, food and jars.
3. Heat 2-3” canner water (not boiling).  
Hot Pack: 180°F, Raw Pack: 140°F
4. Jars in canner; lid on; weight off; high heat.
5. Vent 10 minutes.
6. Weight on.
7. Pressurize; lower heat to maintain pressure.
8. Start time; process, adjust heat as needed.
9. Ding! Timer off; heat off.
10. Wait until pressure drops to 0.
11. Weight off.
12. Cool 10 minutes more.
13. Lid off; jars out.
14. Cool jars, undisturbed 12-24 hours.  
Check seals; remove rings, clean jars.
15. Label and store sealed jars.  
Cool, dry, dark location.  
Use within 1 year for best quality.