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What's Your Food Preservation IQ?

Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service
HE 121

WHAT'S YOUR FOOD PRESERVATION I.Q.?  

True False

1. Tomatoes can be safely processed in a boiling water bath.

2. All food, except jelly, should be sterilized after it is put into a jar.

3. A dial pressure gauge needs to be checked periodically for its accuracy.

4. Vegetables and meats should be processed in a steam pressure canner.

5. Boiling water will kill all yeasts, bacteria and mold.

6. Corn-on-the-cob does not need to be blanched.

7. Unblanched frozen food is not safe to eat.

8. Blanching destroys enzymes that can toughen and produce off-flavors in frozen food.

9. Jars should be turned upside down to cool to insure that the lids seal properly.

10. Pickles should be processed in a boiling water bath.

Cooperative Extension Service · Purdue University · West Lafayette, Indiana
WHAT'S YOUR FOOD PRESERVATION I.Q.?

1. TOMATOES CAN BE SAFELY PROCESSED IN A BOILING-WATER BATH.
   True
   Scientists have shown that tomatoes can be processed in a boiling-water bath if directions are carefully followed. Firm, just ripe tomatoes should be used. If tomatoes must be stored before canning, they should be stored in a cool environment. Overripe tomatoes or tomatoes picked from dead vines should not be canned. They should be eaten as fresh tomatoes or they can be frozen.

2. ALL FOOD, EXCEPT JELLY, SHOULD BE STERILIZED AFTER IT IS PUT INTO A JAR.
   True
   All food, except jelly, should be processed either in a boiling-water bath or in a steam-pressure canner. Fruits, pickles, and tomatoes should be processed in a boiling-water bath. Meats and vegetables should be processed in a steam-pressure canner.

3. A DIAL PRESSURE GAUGE NEEDS TO BE CHECKED PERIODICALLY FOR ITS ACCURACY.
   True
   A dial pressure gauge can give inaccurate readings. It should be checked yearly before the canning season begins. If it is used frequently, it should be re-checked during the canning season.

4. VEGETABLES AND MEATS SHOULD BE PROCESSED IN A STEAM PRESSURE CANNER.
   True
   A steam-pressure canner is the only equipment made for home use that will heat water to 240°F, the temperature required to effectively kill the bacteria that causes botulism. This bacteria will grow in foods such as vegetables and meat that contain little acid.

5. BOILING WATER WILL KILL ALL YEAST, BACTERIA AND MOLD.
   False
   Most bacteria, all yeasts and molds are killed at boiling water temperature (212°F). However, this temperature is not high enough to destroy certain spores that can cause
botulism. (See answer to #4)

6. CORN-ON-THE-COB DOES NOT NEED TO BE BLANCHED. False
All vegetables, except peppers, need to be blanched before freezing to destroy enzymes. If not destroyed, these enzymes will produce toughness and off-odors in frozen food.

7. UNBLANCHED FROZEN FOOD IS NOT SAFE TO EAT. False
Blanching food does not make it safe. Blanching only destroys harmless enzymes. (See #6)

8. BLANCHING DESTROYS ENZYMES THAT CAN TOUGHEN AND PRODUCE OFF-VARIETIES IN FROZEN FOOD. True

9. JARS SHOULD BE TURNED UPSIDE DOWN TO COOL TO INSURE THAT THE LIDS SEAL PROPERLY. False
Jars should be cooled right side up. As the food cools, a partial vacuum forms which helps seal the lid.

10. PICKLES SHOULD BE PROCESSED IN A BOILING-WATER BATH. True
Pickles should be processed in a boiling-water bath. This destroys microorganisms that can soften pickles.

If you missed:

0-1  Good - Knowledge and understanding about food preservation.
2-4  Average knowledge about food preservation.
5 or more Need to "bone up" on principles and procedure on food preservation.
You can learn more about the principles of food preservation by reading the following publications:

HE-132 - Vegetables - Canning at Home
HE-133 - Fruits - Canning at Home
HE-134 - Vegetables - Freezing at Home
HE-135 - Fruits - Freezing at Home
HE-136 - Tomatoes - Canning
HE-129 - Use and Care of Your Pressure Canner
H&G 8 - Home Canning of Fruits and Vegetables
H&G 10 - Home Freezing of Fruits and Vegetables
H&G 56 - Making Jams and Jellies at Home
H&G 92 - Making Pickles and Relishes at Home