

How to Can Soups

Question: I want to know about pressure canning soups. I usually make chicken soup with large egg noodles. Is it okay to add noodles at the time of canning or will they get mushy? I have never canned soup before and need some advice.

Answer: Vegetable, dried bean or pea, meat, poultry or seafood soups can be canned. USDA does not recommend adding noodles, other pastas, rice, flour, cream, milk or other thickening agents to home canned soups. Noodles, other pasta and rice will become mushy. However, the most important reason is that adding these items slows the penetration of heat into the jars of soup; thus, heating of the soup in the jars may be insufficient to kill spores of *Clostridium botulinum*, the bacteria that causes deadly botulism.

The following information about canning soups comes from HGIC 3300 and USDA Canning Guide 4.

Procedure:

- Select, wash and prepare vegetables, meat and seafood. Prepare as for hot pack canning. Cover meat with water and cook until tender. Cool meat and remove bones. Cook vegetables. Fully rehydrate dried beans or peas; for each cup, add 3 cups of water, boil 2 minutes, remove from heat, soak 1 hour and heat to boil.
- Drain vegetables, beans, peas, meats; combine with meat broth, tomatoes or water to cover. Boil 5 minutes. Caution: Do not add noodles, other pastas, rice, flour, cream, milk or other thickening agents. Salt to taste, if desired.
- Fill jars halfway with solid mixture. Add remaining liquid, leaving 1-inch headspace. Adjust lids to fingertip tight.

Process:

- For weighted gauge pressure canners at 0-1000 feet, process at 10 pounds pressure - 60 minutes for pints and 75 minutes for quarts. At higher altitudes, process at 15 pounds pressure.
- For dial gauge pressure canners at 0-2000 feet, process at 11 pounds pressure - process 60 minutes for pints and 75 minutes for quarts. At higher altitudes, increase pressure to 12 pounds for 2001-4000 feet and by 1 additional pound for each additional 2000 feet up to 8000 feet.
- Important note: If soup contains seafood, process for 100 minutes.

Home-canned soups are a great way to enjoy multiple vegetables and meats through the year. Just remember that they are low-acid foods and must be pressure canned for safety.

Sources:

- HGIC 3300 Preserving Vegetables (Asparagus-Broccoli-Mushrooms-Okra-Peppers-Squash-Mixed Vegetables-Soups) http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/food/food_safety/preservation/hgic3300.html.
- USDA *Complete Guide to Home Canning* (December 2009). Guide 4, pp.18-19.