

Peppers

Types of Peppers and Products

- Regular: made with bell, pimiento, chili, and jalapeño peppers
- Sweet pickled: made with banana, bell, Hungarian, and pimiento peppers
- Hot pickled: made with chili and jalapeño peppers
- Marinated: normally made with sweet red, yellow, and green peppers
- Pickled pepper relish: normally made with sweet red, yellow, and green peppers

Quality

Select firm peppers free of disease and insect damage. Peppers of any color may be used.

Quantity

An average of 9 pounds is needed per canner load of 9 pints. A bushel weighs 25 pounds and yields 20 to 30 pints—an average of 1 pound per pint.

Freezing Procedures

Bell or Sweet Peppers

PREPARATION. Select crisp, tender, green or bright-red pods. Wash, cut out stems, cut in half, and remove seeds. If desired, cut into ½-inch strips or rings, or chop.

For Longest Shelf-Life

Water-blanch halves for 3 minutes and strips or rings for 2 minutes. Cool promptly, drain, and package, leaving ½ inch of headspace. Seal and freeze. For crisper texture, package raw, leaving no headspace. Seal and freeze.

Hot Peppers

Wash and stem peppers. Package leaving no headspace. Seal and freeze.

Canning Procedures

Handling and Preparation

Select your favorite pepper(s). *Caution:* If you choose hot peppers, wear plastic gloves while handling them, or wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before touching your face. Small peppers may be left whole. Wash and quarter large peppers. Remove cores and seeds. Slash two or four slits in each pepper, and place in a hot oven (400°F) or broiler for 6 to 8 minutes until skins blister. Cool peppers in water and slip off skins. Flatten small whole peppers.



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CAUTION: If you choose hot peppers, wear plastic gloves while handling them, or wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before touching your face.

Wash jars. Prepare lids according to the manufacturer's instructions. Place products into jars. Add liquids according to recipe. Remove air bubbles. Wipe sealing edge of jars with a clean, damp paper towel. Add lids and tighten screw bands. Process jars of nonpickled peppers in a pressure canner or jars of pickled peppers in a boiling water or atmospheric steam canner.

Procedures

To process in a pressure canner, place jar rack, 2 to 3 inches of water, and sealed jars in the canner. Fasten lid and heat canner on high setting. After steam exhausts for 10 minutes, add weighted gauge or close petcock to pressurize the canner. Start timing the process when the desired pressure is reached. Regulate heat to maintain a uniform pressure and process jars for the time given in Table 1.

Nonpickled Peppers

Process nonpickled peppers in a pressure canner. Fill jars loosely with peeled, cored, or flattened sweet or hot peppers. Add ½ teaspoon of salt to each pint, if desired. Add hot water, leaving 1 inch of headspace. Adjust lids and process the product for the time given in Table 1. When processing is complete, remove canner from heat. Air-cool canner until it is fully depressurized. Slowly remove weighted gauge or open petcock. Wait 10 minutes, unfasten, and carefully remove canner lid. Remove jars from canner with a jar lifter and place on towel or rack. Do not retighten screw bands. Air-cool jars for 12 to 24 hours. Remove screw bands and check lid seals. If the center of the lid is indented, wash, dry, label, and store the jar in a clean, cool, dark place. If the lid is unsealed, examine and replace jar if defective, use a new lid, and reprocess as before. Wash screw bands and store separately. Products are best if eaten within a year and are safe as long as lids remain vacuum sealed.



Processing Pickled Peppers

To Process Pickled Peppers in a Boiling Water Canner

Preheat canner filled halfway with water to 180°F for hot packs or 140°F for raw packs. Load sealed jars onto the canner rack and lower rack with handles, or load one jar at a time with a jar lifter onto rack in canner. Add water, if needed, to 1 inch above jars and add canner cover. When water boils vigorously, lower heat to maintain a gentle boil and process sealed jars as prescribed in Table 2.

When jars have been processed in boiling water for the recommended time, set canner off heat and remove the canner lid. Wait 5 minutes before removing jars. Remove jars from canner with a jar lifter and place on a towel or rack. Continue air-cooling and store as directed for nonpickled peppers.

To Process Pickled Peppers in an Atmospheric Steam Canner

Preheat the base of a steam canner that has been filled with the amount of water designated in the instruction manual that comes with the canner (usually about 2 quarts). Set the rack in the base of the canner. Heat water in the base of the canner to 180°F. As each jar is filled, place it on canner rack, keeping the cover or lid on the atmospheric steam canner as you work. When all jars are in the canner, bring the canner to a boil over medium to medium-high heat until a steady column of steam at least 6 inches long escapes from the vent hole(s). Processing time begins when there is a steady column of steam 6 to 8 inches long. Slowly adjust the heat to maintain a steady column of steam throughout the processing time. When processing is complete, remove the canner lid or cover. Allow the jars to sit in the canner for 5 minutes before removing them from the canner with a jar lifter to a towel-covered counter. Do not retighten screw bands. Cool, inspect, label, and store jars as described for nonpickled peppers.

Pickled Sweet Peppers

- 7 lb firm bell peppers
- 3½ cups sugar
- 3 cups vinegar (5%)
- 3 cups water
- 9 cloves garlic
- 4½ tsp canning or pickling salt

Yields approx. 9 pints

PROCEDURE. Select and wash your favorite sweet peppers, cut into quarters, remove cores and seeds, and cut away any blemishes. Slice peppers into strips. Boil vinegar, water, and sugar for 1 minute. Add peppers and bring to a boil. Place ½ clove of garlic and ¼ teaspoon of salt in each sterile half-pint jar, or double the amounts for pint jars. Add pepper strips and cover with hot vinegar mixture, leaving ½ inch of headspace. Adjust lids and process jars in a boiling water or atmospheric steam canner as prescribed in Table 2.

Pickled Hot Peppers

- 4 lb hot long red, green, or yellow peppers
- 3 lb sweet red and green peppers, mixed
- 5 cups vinegar (5%)
- 1 cup water
- 4 tsp canning or pickling salt
- 2 Tbsp sugar
- 2 cloves garlic

Yields approx. 9 pints

PROCEDURE. Wash peppers. Peel as described on page 1. If small peppers are left whole, slash two or four slits in each. Quarter large peppers. Flatten small peppers. Fill jars, leaving ½ inch of headspace. Combine and heat other ingredients to boiling and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove garlic. Add pickling solution over peppers, leaving ½ inch of headspace. Adjust lids and process jars in a boiling water or atmospheric steam canner as prescribed in Table 2.

Marinated Peppers

- 4 lb firm peppers
- 1 cup bottled lemon juice
- 2 cups white vinegar (5%)
- 1 Tbsp oregano leaves
- 1 cup olive or salad oil
- ½ cup onions, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, quartered (optional)
- 2 Tbsp prepared horseradish (optional)

Yields approx. 9 half-pints

PROCEDURE. Select your favorite sweet or hot peppers. Peel peppers as described on page 1. Quarter large peppers. Mix all remaining ingredients in a saucepan and heat to boiling. Place ¼ garlic clove (optional) and ¼ teaspoon of salt in each half-pint or ½ teaspoon per pint. Fill jars with peppers; add hot, well-mixed oil/pickling solution over peppers, leaving ½ inch of headspace. Adjust lids and process jars in a boiling water or atmospheric steam canner as prescribed in Table 2.



Pickled Pepper-Onion Relish

- 6 cups onions, finely chopped
- 3 cups sweet red peppers, finely chopped
- 3 cups green peppers, finely chopped
- 1½ cups sugar
- 6 cups vinegar (5%), preferably white distilled
- 2 Tbsp canning or pickling salt

Yields approx. 9 half-pints

PROCEDURE. Wash and chop vegetables. Combine all ingredients and boil gently until mixture thickens and volume is reduced by one-half (about 30 minutes). Fill sterile jars with hot relish, leaving ½ inch of headspace, and seal tightly. Store in refrigerator and use within one month. *Caution:* If extended storage is desired, jars must be processed immediately after filling in a boiling water or atmospheric steam canner, as prescribed in Table 2.

Sweet Pepper Relish

- 5 cups ground green bell peppers (about 7 to 8 peppers, or 3 to 4 pounds before grinding)
- 5 cups ground red bell peppers (about 7 to 8 peppers, or 3 to 4 pounds before grinding)
- 1½ cups ground onion (3 medium yellow onions, 2½ to 3 inches diameter, before grinding)
- 2½ cups cider or white distilled vinegar (5%)
- 2 cups sugar
- 4 teaspoons pickling salt
- 4 tsp mustard seed

Yields approx. 6 pint jars

PROCEDURE. Wash and rinse pint or half-pint canning jars; keep hot until ready to fill. Prepare lids and ring bands according to manufacturer's directions.

Wash peppers well; trim to remove stems and seeds. Peel, core and wash onions. Cut peppers and onions into large pieces. Coarsely grind peppers and onions.*

Measure 5 cups of each type of ground bell peppers with their juice, and 1½ cups of the ground onion, including juice.

Combine the measured peppers and onions with the remaining ingredients into a large stockpot. Bring the mixture to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat and cook at a low boil for 30 minutes, stirring often to prevent scorching.

Fill the hot relish into prepared hot pint jars, leaving ½ inch of headspace. If needed, remove air bubbles and readjust headspace to ½ inch. Wipe rims of jars with a dampened clean paper towel. Adjust lids and bands.

Process in a boiling water or atmospheric steam canner according to the recommendations in Table 1. Let cool, undisturbed, for 12 to 24 hours and check for seals.

*For recipe development, peppers and onions were ground using a stand mixer grinder attachment with the coarse blade. Bell peppers may be all one color or mixed in different proportions as long as 10 cups total are not exceeded. If you prefer a hotter relish, you may include up to 5 cups of Jalapeño peppers, as long as 10 cups total of peppers are not exceeded.

Pickled Corn-Pepper Relish

- 10 cups fresh whole-kernel corn (16 to 20 medium-size ears) or five 12-ounce packages of frozen corn, defrosted
- 2½ cups sweet red peppers, diced
- 2½ cups sweet green peppers, diced
- 2½ cups celery, chopped
- 1¼ cups onions, chopped
- 1¾ cups sugar
- 5 cups vinegar (5%)
- 2½ Tbsp canning or pickling salt
- 2½ tsp celery seed
- 2½ Tbsp dry mustard
- 1¼ tsp turmeric

Yields approx. 9 pints

PROCEDURE. Boil ears of corn for 5 minutes. Dip in cold water. Cut whole kernels from cob or use five 12-ounce packages of frozen corn. If using frozen corn, defrost in the refrigerator overnight or in a microwave. Combine peppers, celery, onions, sugar, vinegar, salt, and celery seed in a saucepan. Bring to



boil and simmer for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Mix mustard and turmeric in ½ cup of the simmered mixture. Add this mixture and corn to the hot mixture. Simmer for another 5 minutes. If desired, thicken mixture with flour paste (¼ cup of flour blended in ¼ cup of water) and stir frequently. Fill jars with hot mixture, leaving ½ inch of headspace. Adjust lids and process jars in a boiling water or atmospheric steam canner as prescribed in Table 2.

► **Table 1.** Recommended processing time in a pressure canner for nonpickled peppers.

			Canner gauge pressure (in pounds) at altitudes of					
			Dial gauge canner				Weighted gauge canner	
Product	Jar size	Time (min)	0–2,000 ft	2,001–4,000 ft	4,001–6,000 ft	6,001–8,000 ft	0–1,000 ft	Above 1,000 ft
Peppers	Half-pints or pints	35	11	12	13	14	10	15

► **Table 2.** Recommended processing times for pickled or marinated peppers in a boiling water or atmospheric steam canner.

			Processing time (in minutes) at altitudes of		
Product	Style of pack	Jar size	0–1,000 ft	1,001–6,000 ft	Above 6,000 ft
Pickled, sweet	Hot	Half-pints or pints	5	10	15
Pickled, hot	Hot	Half-pints or pints	10	15	20
Sweet pepper relish	Hot	Half-pints or pints	10	15	20
Marinated	Hot	Half-pints or pints	15	20	25
Pickled pepper-onion relish	Hot	Half-pints or pints	5	10	15
Pickled corn-pepper relish	Hot	Half-pints or pints	15	20	25

For additional information about food preservation, visit the Penn State Extension Home Food Preservation website at extension.psu.edu/food/preservation or contact Penn State Extension in your county.

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