



Preserving Foods: *Tomatillos*

SP 50-768, Revised March 2013

A native of Mexico, tomatillos are a first cousin to the ground cherry. They are closely related to the husk tomato. The tomatillo has a tart flavor, similar to green apples. The flesh of the tomatillo is different from green tomatoes. It is seedy, but solid, without the juicy cavity of the tomato. It is the key ingredient in salsa verde, the mild hot green sauce served with many Mexican dishes.

Harvesting

The fruit should be picked while still deep green, and when the husk has changed from green to tan.

Canning

Tomatillos may be canned following the instructions for canning tomatoes. Because of the firmness of the fruit, it is recommended that the hot pack method be used.

Remove the husks, wash well. They do not have to be peeled or seeded. Cook the tomatillos in boiling water until tender, 5-10 minutes. Drain and pack hot tomatillos loosely into jars. Fill with boiling water. ***Acidify with 1 tablespoon of lemon juice per pint, 2 tablespoons per quart or ¼ teaspoon Citric acid USP per pint or ½ teaspoon per quart.***

Leave ½ inch headspace, adjust lids and process.

Boiling water canner - Process pints for 40 minutes and quarts for 45 minutes. At 1,001-3,000 feet altitude, process pints for 45 minutes, quarts for 50 minutes; at 3,001-6,000 feet, process pints for 50 minutes, quarts for 55 minutes; above 6,000 feet, process pints for 55 minutes and quarts for 60 minutes. After processing, take canner off heat. Remove lid. Wait 5 minutes before removing jars.

Pressure canner - Process pints and quarts at 240°F (10 lbs. pressure for weighted gauge; 11lbs. for dial gauge) for 10 minutes. Check with your local county Extension Service office for adjusting processing times for elevations above 1,000 feet altitude. After processing, remove canner from heat and wait until pressure returns to zero. Remove weight or slowly open petcock. Wait 10 minutes. Unfasten canner lid and remove it carefully.

Salsa

Tomatillos may be substituted for tomatoes in salsa recipes. If you plan to can the recipe, be sure to use one that has been tested for canning.

Tomatillo Green Salsa

- 5 cups chopped tomatillos
- 1½ cups seeded, chopped long green chiles
- ½ cup seeded, finely chopped jalapeno peppers
- 4 cups chopped onions
- 1 cup bottled lemon juice
- 6 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 1 Tbsp. ground cumin (optional)
- 3 Tbsp. oregano leaves (optional)
- 1 Tbsp. salt
- 1 tsp. black pepper



Combine all ingredients in a large saucepan and stir frequently over high heat until mixture begins to boil; reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Ladle hot salsa into hot pint jars, leaving ½ inch headspace. Adjust lids and process in a boiling water canner: 15 minutes at 0-1,000 feet altitude; 20 minutes at 1,001-6,000 feet; and 25 minutes above 6,000 feet. After processing, take canner off heat. Remove lid. Wait 5 minutes before removing jars.

Other tested salsa recipes are available in *Salsa Recipes for Canning* (PNW 395). Tomatillos may be substituted for tomatoes in each of these recipes.

Yield: 5 pints

Source: OSU Master Food Preserver Program