



GROUND-VINE FRUITS

ALL the ground-vine fruits are very useful, aren't they? Pumpkins, vegetable marrows, cucumbers, water melons, pie melons, can all be used in a variety of ways. Pie melons and pumpkins are our subject for this week. Quite a number of jams can be made using the pie melon as a basis. Pie melons vary a good deal, and no matter how long and hard you may boil some of them, they simply won't turn golden. In that case, just brown some sugar in an old spoon, and put it in.

Pie Melon and Tree Tomato Jam (Well Recommended)

Six pounds pie melon (after peeling and seeding), 4lb. of tree tomatoes (skinned). Put all through mincer, add the juice of 2 or 3 lemons, and stir 10lb. sugar well through. Bring slowly to the boil, stirring often, then boil briskly till it will set when tested. A nice firm jam. Use half quantities if the sugar is a problem.

Pie Melon Jelly

This is very delicate in flavour, and takes the place of breakfast marmalade with many people. Cut into pieces 10lb. of melon, using both skins and seeds. Sprinkle over 1½lb. sugar and leave all night. Also cut up 9 lemons, cover with boiling water and leave all night. Next day, boil all together till soft, and strain through jelly bag, allowing plenty of time. Then measure the juice and allow cup for cup of sugar. Bring juice to the boil, add sugar gradually (warmed is best), stir till dissolved, and then boil fast till it will set when tested.

Australian Pie Melon Jam

To 8lb. melon allow 6lb. sugar, a small teacup of lemon juice, rind of 2 small lemons, ½oz. bruised ginger (lemon rind and ginger tied in muslin bag). Cut the melon in square pieces (removing seeds and rind), and leave all night with a little sugar sprinkled over. In the morning, boil until quite transparent, then add the rest of the sugar and boil till it jellies. Instead of the lemon-rind and bruised ginger, the pulp of two dozen passionfruit may be put into the muslin bag, and boiled with the melon and lemon juice. This gives a delightful flavour.

Pie Melon Pickle

Cut up 3lb. of pie melon in small pieces and cover with vinegar. Leave all night. Then put it on to boil with 2 small cups sugar, 2lb. onions, 1 dessertspoon salt, 2 dessertspoons spice, a few cloves, 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper. Boil for 2 hours. Then mix up 1 tablespoon flour, 1 tablespoon mustard and 1 tablespoon turmeric with a little vinegar to a smooth paste. Add it to the mixture, and boil a little longer. Bottle while hot.

Pumpkin Pie

This is "the real thing," given me by an expert. It is really a custard tart with pumpkin and spices added. Be sure to have the underneath pastry very thin, and cook the pie on an oven slide, as you do scones, so that the crust cooks properly. Seven ounces sugar, or half

sugar and half golden syrup, 2 eggs, 1lb. boiled (prepared) pumpkin, 1 pint milk, ½oz. cinnamon and ground ginger, good pinch of salt. Mix spice with sugar and beat with eggs. Then beat in the pumpkin. Add milk, salt and golden syrup. Bake in sharp oven at first to set custard, then put lower down.

Pumpkin Lemon Cheese

Two pounds pumpkin, peeled and seeded, and steamed till tender, drain as dry as possible, put in preserving pan with 2lb. sugar, ¼lb. butter, and grated rind and juice of 3 lemons. Allow all to come to boiling point, simmer for 5 minutes, strain through fine strainer, and put in pots and seal. Good for cake fillings and tarts.

Melon Jam

(With Raspberry Pulp or Jam)

Take 6lb. melon (weighed after peeling and seeding), and 6lb. sugar. Cut up melon, sprinkle layers with sugar, and leave overnight. Next day, boil until tender, and add either 3lb. raspberry pulp and 3lb. sugar OR a 2lb. tin or jar of raspberry jam and NO sugar. Boil till it will set when tested.

FROM THE MAILBAG

The Answer is NO

Dear Aunt Daisy,

I am about to become a "bachelor girl" one of these days very soon, and am therefore rather interested in methods of bottling and preserving vegetables and fruits, etc., with a minimum of sugar, because at present I am boarding, and of course have no chance of saving any of the precious sugar for these commodities. I have heard of some method where it is done with cold water only, and am wondering if this proves effective. So if you could possibly help me out, I would be very grateful indeed.

"Janelyn" (Southland).

No, Janelyn, the method whereby you simply cover the fruit or vegetables with cold water and screw them down is definitely NOT to be followed. It is true that it has worked all right with green gooseberries, but for my own part I would not use it even for those. Fruit MUST be sterilised, and it can be done quite well in plain water without sugar, although the flavour is certainly better and richer if a syrup is used—even a very light syrup of one cup sugar to 3 cups water, boiled together for 10 minutes before pouring over the fruit. Vegetables must be sterilised for a much longer time than fruit, and done according to the methods I have lately given on this page. Remember that most vegetables need twice sterilising at boiling point, for two days in succession, that a handful of salt in the water-bath helps that water to attain a higher temperature, and that all non-acid preserved vegetables must be re-boiled for at least 15 minutes before eating, as a precaution against botulinus poisoning. Actually, non-acid vegetables should only be preserved with a pressure cooker; in factories large pressure cookers are used.

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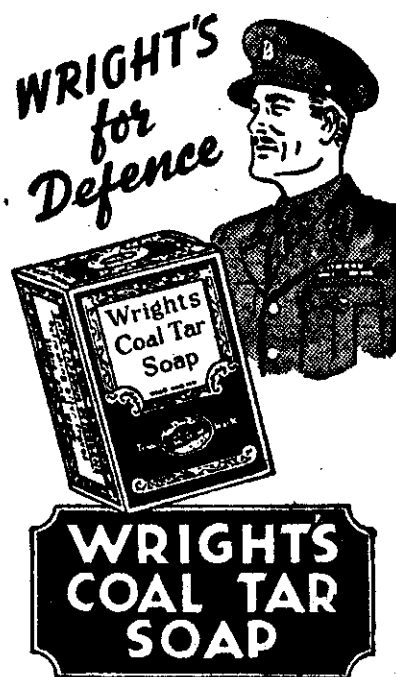
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