

TOMATOES—FRUIT AND VEGETABLE

PEOPLE sometimes argue whether tomatoes are a fruit or a vegetable. It doesn't really matter, for we use them as both. Tomatoes make delightful salads and savoury dishes, and all sorts of things; and as well as being so popular, they are important in our diet. They contain a fair quantity of vitamin C, as well as a little vitamin A. and mineral salts. So try to have a tomato each day, while they are plentiful.

Poinsettia Salad

Choose firm, round tomatoes. Peel them; and cut them down into eighths, but leave them joined at the bottom, so they will open out like a flower. In the centre of each put a good teaspoon of cream cheese. Cover with dressing or mayonnaise, and sit in a bed of lettuce.

Tomato Juice

An excellent start for every meal. Just cut up the tomatoes roughly and put them into a saucepan with a very little water. Cook over a low heat until pulpy, stirring and mashing frequently. Then strain carefully, add salt and sugar to taste, and chill before serving.

To Keep: After straining the juice, bring it back to the boil, then fill it into heated jars or bottles, cover loosely and sterilise in water bath at boiling point for 30 to 40 minutes. Seal and make thoroughly airtight.

Tomato Cocktail

Three cups of tomato juice; the juice of a large lemon, and a little finely grated rind; 2 teaspoons of sugar; a pinch of cayenne; 1 dessertspoon of Worcester sauce. Mix, and allow to stand for half an hour. Chill thoroughly, shake well, and strain. Orange juice may be used instead of the lemon juice.

Bacon & Tomato Savoury

Wash some tomatoes, and cut in halves, crosswise. Sprinkle with salt and pepper, cut strips of bacon into quarter-inch pieces, arrange on the tomato halves and grill under a hot grill for about 10 minutes, or at the top of a hot oven.

Stuffed Tomatoes

Cut the tops off medium, round tomatoes. Scoop out the pulp and mix it with some chopped celery, and fry it in butter. Mix in some breadcrumbs, onion juice, black pepper, and any flaked left-over cooked fish. Fill the tomatoes, and pile up on top. Bake in the oven for about half an hour.

Potted Tomato Paste

This is ideal for school lunches. You need 3 medium tomatoes; 2oz. of grated cheese; 1 small, finely chopped onion; 1 egg; ½oz. of butter; pepper and salt. Peel the tomatoes, and cut them up into a small saucepan with the butter and onion. When tender, mash smoothly and add the beaten egg. Stir quickly until it becomes quite thick. Add the cheese and some breadcrumbs last—when off the fire. Put into small pots

and cover with wax, or melted butter. Keeps for a week or two.

Tomato & Orange Jam

Four quarts of tomatoes; 5 oranges, and 5lbs. of sugar. Skin the tomatoes by placing them in boiling water for a few seconds. Cut up, and measure. Put the oranges through the mincer, or chop them finely. Mix with the sugar, add the tomatoes and boil till all is thick and clear. Pot, and cover when cold.

Passionfruit & Tomato Jam

Keep this in your books till the passionfruit are ready; and then you need six pounds of tomatoes, 4½lbs. of sugar; and 15 to 20 passionfruit. Scoop the seeds from the passionfruit, boil the skins in water till soft, and add the pulp from the skins to the passionfruit seeds. Skin tomatoes, cut, and boil with the sugar till it is melted. Add the passionfruit, and boil about 20 minutes, till it will set.

Tomato Salad Dressing

Four tablespoons of tomato juice; 1 tablespoon of lemon juice; ¾ teaspoon of salt; ¾ teaspoon pepper; ½ teaspoon of prepared mustard; and 1 teaspoon of sugar. Just shake up all the ingredients together in a bottle, or jar.

Tomatoes Preserved Whole

Pack the tomatoes into screw top jars. Boil 2oz. salt with 2 quarts of water for a few minutes, and let it get cold. Then pour it over the tomatoes in the jars. Put the jars on the oven shelf on a piece of carpet or sugar bag, and sterilise until the skins show signs of cracking. The jars could also be done in a water-bath on top of the stove. Then put on new sterilised rubbers and lids, and screw down immediately. Have a little of the brine ready boiling to fill the jars to overflowing, before sealing. Invert to make sure the jars are quite airtight.

Preserved Tomato Puree

This is pure tomato pulp, and may be thinned down when using. Put the whole tomatoes in shallow tins, prick a little, and put in the oven. Cook slowly until very soft. The tomatoes should be fully ripe, and juicy. Then press them through a sieve, until nothing is left but the skins and seeds. There is pure tomato puree in the basin. Bring this to the boil, boil for a minute or two, then pour into hot sterilised jars and seal immediately. Make sure the jars are airtight, and keep in a cool cupboard.

Bright Red Tomato Sauce

Twelve pounds of ripe tomatoes; 3oz. of allspice; 3lbs. of brown sugar; 1½ pints of vinegar; 3oz. of salt. Wash and cut the tomatoes, tie the spices in muslin.

Put all in a pan and boil for 3 hours, stirring frequently. When it is cooked, put through a colander, bring to the boil again, and seal in sterilised jars. A great favourite.

FROM THE MAILBAG

Rusty Clothes Lines

Dear Aunt Daisy,

After a succession of "two-night visitors" I decided that in spite of the

weather I simply must get some of the extra sheets washed. I am rather proud of my lace-edged embroidered guest sheets, which were in the wash. Grabbing a break in the clouds and a spot of sun, I put the washing out. After being dashed about in the wind for about an hour, I brought in my half dry sheets, with lovely rust marks where they were pegged, to add to the decoration. My lines are rusty and I am told by my husband that new ones are unprocureable. Dear Aunt Daisy, can you help me with any suggestions?

"Peggotty," Invercargill.

Well, Peggotty, there is not much you can do about the clothes lines once they go rusty—as even if you painted them with aluminium paint there would always be the risk that the paint would come off, or the rust come through. Fencing wire makes excellent clothes lines, if you can get any. However, in the meantime, the safest way (though finicky) would be to put little squares of old sheeting under the clothes where you peg them to the line.

Now for the rust marks—you could dab them with salt and lemon, and put them in the sun. Or dab them with salt and lemon, and hold over the steam from a kettle, being careful not to burn yourself in the steam, or the sheets on the stove. Or you could get some oxalic acid from the chemist—about a dessertspoon to a medicine bottle of water is the proportion, and dab that on the rust marks. When they disappear, rinse in water containing a little ammonia.

Pickled Capers

I have had two or three requests for pickling capers, and nasturtium seeds, which are very like capers; so here are one or two methods.

First Method. Allow 12 peppercorns and 2oz. of salt to 1 quart of vinegar. Pick the capers when dry and ripe, put them in a bottle, fill up with the vinegar, salt and peppercorns. Cork well, and use the next season.

Second Method. Gather the capers before they are too old, put in salt and water for 24 hours. Then rub them dry, and put into bottles. Boil 1 pint of vinegar with 2 teaspoons of peppercorns, and salt to taste. Strain, and when cold, put in the jar with the capers; and seal.

Nasturtiums—First Method. Spread the seeds in the sun for two or three days to dry. Put them into jars, and sprinkle with a little salt. Fill up the jars with boiled spiced vinegar, and seal when cold. Leave two months before using.

Nasturtiums—Second Method. Put the green seeds in salt and water for two days, then in cold fresh water for 1 day. Pack them into jars, cover with boiling vinegar, seasoned with mace, peppercorns and sugar. Cork well.

Nail Varnish Stains

Dear Aunt Daisy,

Once again I wonder if you can help me. I have a pair of white cotton gloves, which I have worn only once, and I got some nail varnish on them in three different places. With the summer weather, one can't have too many light gloves, so I hope you can give me some remedy.

"Willie," Ashburton.

Did you try Nail Varnish Remover, Willie? That would probably have done the trick. Soak the glove in the remover, and move it with the fingers, and rub it, so that the varnish comes out of the fabric. And then wash it. Or you could get some amyl acetate from the chemist, or even acetone.