

A DAILY EYE BATH



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A daily eye bath takes only one minute of your time every day. One minute which can often help prevent many causes of future eye troubles, such as headaches, irritation, tiredness, excessive watering, etc.

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PRESERVING FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

PRESERVING fruit and vegetables is not difficult, and need not be very expensive—for it can be done without sugar and without expensive equipment. There are only two essential points to be remembered.

First: The fruit or vegetables must be properly sterilised, in order to kill all the spores (or seeds) of the yeasts and moulds which attack fruits, and the bacteria which attack vegetables, especially peas and beans and sweet corn.

Second: After sterilising, the fruit or vegetables must be sealed absolutely airtight immediately, before any air (containing more spores) can reach it.

To Sterilise

1. *The Oven.*—Fruit may be done in the oven, just a few jars at a time, perhaps after cooking the dinner, while the oven is still hot, or by taking a special day for it. You may use a scone-tray to stand the jars on, but have it covered with a thick layer of paper, and leave a space between each jar, and plenty of space between the sides and back of the oven, so that the heat can circulate freely. Most people, however, like to stand the jars in a large meat dish, in order to catch any juice which bubbles out, thus saving much oven cleaning. Set the regulo at 1 in a gas oven, or to low (bottom element only) in an electric oven. Peas and beans cannot be satisfactorily sterilised in the oven.

2. *The water-bath.* This is the other method of sterilising. Use a large saucepan, or a kerosene tin cut lengthwise, or the copper. Do not stand the bottles directly on the bottom of the pan, or they may break. Stand them on folded cloths, or even paper, or the rack from your grilling pan, or a home-made wooden rack. Also see that the bottles do not touch each other, but are separated by wedges of cloth or paper. Cover the water-bath with a lid, and some damp folded sugar-bags on top of that if it is not tight fitting, in order to keep in the steam. You need only one-third fill the vessel. The lids are just placed loosely on the jars; if you have jars without lids, just cover them with saucers or anything handy, to keep in the heat. Count the time of sterilising from the time the water begins to boil—not from the time you put in the jars.

Preserving Peas

It is not advisable to try any "short-cuts" or easy methods when preserving peas. We sometimes hear of people who are successful by just excluding the air (sealing them down in cold water) or by just cooking them as for dinner, putting them into jars, and covering with the boiling liquid, and then sealing. While such methods may happen to turn out all right, it is really just a lucky accident, and not to be relied on. The only safe and sure method for peas is to sterilise them twice, 2 hours the first day and 1 hour the second day; and to add a little vinegar or lemon-juice to each jar. Tighten the lids after the first sterilising, loosen them a little for the second boiling, and finally tighten them thoroughly afterwards.

The Method.—Select tender, young peas, shell them, then cook for five minutes in boiling water. If tied in a piece of muslin or cheese cloth, they are easy to lift out. Plunge into cold water for a minute, then pack into jars, and fill up with cooled boiled water, to which 1 teaspoon of sugar has been added to every pint. It is better to omit salt, as it has a tendency to harden the peas. Add also about a dessertspoon of vinegar or lemon-juice to each quart jar. Adjust the rubbers and screw on the lids loosely. In the case of a spring-top jar, adjust the clamp, but do not fasten it down. Pack the jars in the boiler and sterilise for 2 hours at boiling point. Tighten the covers of the jars and leave to cool in the boiler for 24 hours. The following day, sterilise again for 1 hour, loosening the lids by a half-turn backwards. Then screw down the lids tightly or fasten down the clamps of the spring-top jars and put away in a cool dry place.

French Beans

Choose tender beans, string and cut to the desired size, or even leave them whole. Blanch them by plunging them into boiling water for 8 minutes, then into cold water for 1 minute, the same as for the peas. If tied in a piece of muslin they are easy to lift out. Then pack into jars. If left whole they will look nice in an upright position. Fill up the jars with boiled and cooled water (containing an ounce of sugar and ½ oz. of salt to each quart.) Add a dessertspoon of vinegar or lemon-juice to each quart jar. Place the lid on lightly and put the jars in the water bath with water up to the necks of the jars, if there is no cover; or only one-third way up if the steam can be kept in. Proceed as for peas, keeping the water at boiling heat for 2 hours the first day and 1 hour the second day.

Preserving Fruit

Fruit may be preserved either with or without sugar. The sugar improves the flavour of the bottled fruit, but it may be necessary sometimes to get the fruit cooked when it is impossible to procure sufficient sugar. In that case the fruit must be heated with sugar when it is being eaten. When preserved in syrup, it is of course, just ready for serving.

1. *Without Sugar.*—Pack the fruit carefully into jars, fill up with boiled and cooled water, put the lid on loosely, and sterilise either in the oven or in the water-bath, until the fruit is cooked, but not broken. Then screw down tightly at once; or if no screw-top jars, cover with melted wax, and then paste 2 or 3 thicknesses of paper over the top. The jars must be sealed while still boiling, so that when cold, and the steam has condensed, a vacuum will be formed between the fruit and the lid.

2. *With Golden Syrup.*—This is a "Recipe for the Times." It has been used and sent in by one of our own listeners. Make a syrup by boiling together 4 good tablespoons golden syrup to each pint of water. Prepare fruit in usual way, pack into jars and put into slow oven till skin of fruit begins to crack. Pour over boiling syrup, and seal