

# TRADITIONAL METHODS OF CANNING AND PRESERVING



RECIPES AND TIPS FROM  
ALBERTA'S  
FIRST NATIONS  
PEOPLE





The purpose of this project was to capture some of the traditions of the First Nations people of Alberta in the collection, harvesting and preserving of traditional foods.

These recipes have been provided by Alberta First Nations and are based on their own experiences and practices. It is important to note that these home recipes have not been tested further, therefore the **safety** and **quality** of the end product is not guaranteed. Some general food safety steps (e.g., refrigerating leftovers immediately and washing foods in clean water prior to preserving them) have been added to a number of recipes to reduce the risk of food-borne illnesses and food spoilage.

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# INTRODUCTION





# CULTURAL PROTOCOLS

Traditionally, First Nations people lived off the land and certain protocols were followed to pay respect to the spirits, the land and the animals that provided for them. Hunters played an important role in honouring the animals they killed by following cultural etiquette.

Today, specific protocols are still followed when hunting and when using foods for traditional and ceremonial purposes. It is expected that certain rituals will take place before and during hunting, gathering and cooking foods for ceremonies.

In respecting the spiritual and ceremonial protocols for some foods included in this book, the Elders asked that certain rituals not be published. However, the knowledge is certainly available to those who wish to make the journey.

"PARENTS TODAY ARE LIKE CROWS. THEY LEAVE IN THE MORNING AND ARE GONE ALL DAY. THEY COME HOME AND FEED THEIR BABIES, THEN GO TO SLEEP. THE NEXT MORNING THEY LEAVE AGAIN. SINCE PARENTS DON'T TAKE THE TIME TO MAKE MEALS FOR THEIR CHILDREN, THE CHILDREN BECOME PICKY EATERS AND DON'T LIKE TRADITIONAL, HEALTHY FOODS."

MARY ANN WELLS, ELDER - KAINAI FIRST NATION



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This book of recipes and tips was compiled and edited by Community Nutrition and Community Health Representative (CHR) staff at the Alberta Regional Office of Health Canada, First Nations and Inuit Health with significant input from their food safety colleagues. A special thank you goes out to Judi Kingry, Marketing Manager, Bernardin Ltd., for providing guidance to the canning section.

We would like to thank all of those people who contributed to the creation of this recipe book, including all of the Elders, CHRs, former CHRs, community members, facilitators and those who have passed on since their contribution to this project. Many personally contributed the recipes passed down to them, while others contributed to the editing and guidance in preserving the traditions and outlining safety practices. The following community people deserve the credit and recognition of helping make **Traditional Methods of Canning and Preserving: Recipes and Tips from Alberta's First Nations** a reality:

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# DANGER ZONE

Bacteria can grow in all environments, but grows much faster in the ‘danger zone.’ The danger zone is a temperature range that needs to be controlled and monitored to eliminate or reduce the possibility of contracting food poisoning. Bacteria multiply faster in temperatures between 4°C to 60°C (or 40°F to 140°F). Cold foods should be kept at 4°C (40°F) or colder. Hot Foods should be kept at 60°C (140°F) or hotter. See *Temperature Chart for Food Safety*.

## Temperature Chart for Food Safety

	DEGREES F	FUNCTION
	250° 240°	Canning temperature for low-acid vegetables, meat, and poultry in pressure canner.
	212°	Canning temperatures for fruits, tomatoes, and pickles in water-bath canner.
	165°	Cooking temperatures destroy most bacteria. Time required to kill bacteria decreases as temperature is increased.
	140°	Warming temperatures prevent growth but allow survival of some bacteria.
<b>DO NOT KEEP FOOD IN THIS TEMPERATURE RANGE FOR MORE THAN 2 HOURS.</b>	125°	Some bacterial growth may occur. Many bacteria survive.
	60°	Temperatures in this zone allow rapid growth of bacteria and production of toxins by some bacteria.
	40°	Some growth of food-poisoning bacteria may occur.
	32°	Cold temperatures permit slow growth of some bacteria that cause spoilage.
	0°	Freezing temperatures stop growth of most bacteria, but may allow bacteria to survive. (Do not store food above 10 degrees F for more than a few weeks).

DANGER ZONE

From: <http://missvickie.com/howto/cooking101/perishable-chart.html#DangerZone>



# FOOD SAFETY WITH FIGHT BAC™!



When handling food it is always important to remember to follow the Fight BAC! principles, to lower your risk of contracting food borne illness.

## CLEAN

- Always remember to wash hands with soap under warm running water **before** handling any type of food, **between** handling raw and cooked foods, **and after** handling any type of food.
- Always clean surfaces such as chopping boards, knives, etc., that will contact food. Clean and sanitize the area **before** and **after** preparing the food. Use a mild bleach solution of 1 tablespoon (15 ml) household bleach mixed with 1 gallon (4 litres) water to sanitize and reduce the possibility of contracting a food-borne illness.
- Always thoroughly wash or rinse fruits and vegetables to remove excess dirt.

## SEPARATE

- Always remember that cross-contamination may occur when you handle raw uncooked foods and cooked foods without washing your hands. This can lead to a food-borne illness.
- Always remember to try and keep raw uncooked foods away from cooked food.
- Always remember to clean and sanitize working surfaces between all foods.

## CHILL

- Always store food at temperatures 4°C (40°F) or colder.
- Always refrigerate leftover foods within 2 hours.

## COOK

- Always try to reduce the amount of time food stays in the “**danger zone.**”
- Always cook foods to a safe temperature for the corresponding safe amount of time.

*(Above information modified from Fight BAC!)*



# MY NOTES...

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# SMOKING & DRYING FOODS





# HISTORY OF SMOKING AND DRYING FOODS

In the past, First Nations people relied only on what the land provided. Of course, there were no refrigerators or freezers. For the people in central and southern Alberta, buffalo was the major source of food, clothing and shelter. Meat was often cut into razor-thin strips and dried in the sun. All of the parts of the animal were used. Nothing went to waste.

Pemmican was an ideal food for travelling hunters. The women made it by combining powdered dried meat with oil or fat and dried berries. It was nutritious and lightweight and kept well. Pemmican was stored away from the air and light in birch bark containers, or in cleaned and dried animal intestines, then stored in root cellars or underground pits.

Most berries were gathered in season, dried and later added to soup. Saskatoons were a favourite berry. Bulbs, roots and seeds were also air-dried and stored for winter use.

Other game such as moose and deer were more important in the northern areas. Dried whitefish, pike and pickerel were also popular. Soups made from duck and rabbit are still widely consumed.

When smoking fish and game, First Nations people carefully selected the proper woods and controlled the cooking time and amount of fire to develop the best flavour.

*Adapted from Native Foods and Nutrition, 1995*





# HOW DOES SMOKING AND DRYING WORK?

Most bacteria need moisture to grow. The purpose of drying is to remove enough water from the food so that bacteria cannot grow during storage.

The purpose of smoking is to give a special flavour, but also to remove water from foods. Although fire is used, the heat is only for drying the meat, not for cooking it. Removing water from foods helps stop microorganisms from growing.

Meat, fish and poultry need to be very dry to be preserved. Meat, fish and poultry do not have much natural acid to help preserve them. Fruits and berries have more natural acid in them that help stop microorganisms from growing.





# SAFETY REMINDERS FOR SMOKING AND DRYING

## CLEAN

Wash your hands with soap and **warm** running water for at least 20 seconds before and after handling raw meat, fish, poultry or game.

Hand washing is the single most effective way to prevent the spread of infections. Bacteria can come from the food handler, the surface upon which the food is prepared, and the food itself. To prevent contamination of food by the handler, good hand washing techniques should be practised. These techniques include:

- Using an adequate amount of soap
- Rubbing the hands together to create friction
- Rinsing hands under **warm** running water

If working outside when preparing foods for smoking or drying, place a clean sheet, tablecloth or canvas over your work surface. Since it is difficult to clean picnic tables and other outside surfaces, this will help keep your work area clean. You may also place clean cardboard underneath the sheet or canvas. This helps to keep your work area clean so drippings do not soak into it.

Many microorganisms that cause food poisoning get into food because they live in the soil and on work surfaces where food is prepared. For example, the bacteria Clostridium botulinum is found in fish. Eating this bacteria could cause a serious life threatening illness and even death. This is why it is important to keep everything clean as you work.

Microorganisms can also cause food-poisoning because of prolonged exposure to temperatures in the 'danger zone.'



**DO NOT KEEP PERISHABLE FOOD IN THE DANGER ZONE (4°C – 60°C OR 40°F – 140°F) FOR MORE THAN TWO HOURS.**

## SAFETY REMINDERS FOR DRYING BERRIES

- Always store dried foods in a cool, dry place to avoid the pickup of moisture.
- Always properly wash and/or rinse berries in clean water before drying (this is done to remove microorganisms and dirt, to prevent mould growth and to eliminate or slow the growth of harmful bacteria).



## SAFETY REMINDERS FOR SMOKING AND DRYING... CONTINUED

- Always remember to wash rocks before and after the crushing of berries as there could be microorganisms on the rocks that could cause spoilage.
- Always store berries that are in oil in a refrigerator at a temperature below 4°C for no longer than one week.

## SAFETY REMINDERS FOR SMOKING AND DRYING MEAT AND FISH

- **Fish smoked without proper salting and cooking can cause food poisoning – it can even be deadly.** There are two requirements for the smoking of fish so that it will store safely with refrigeration: You must heat fish to an internal temperature of 160 degrees F, using a meat thermometer, and maintain this temperature for at least 30 minutes. You must also salt or brine fish long enough to ensure enough salt is present in the finished product.
- Always keep fish and meat refrigerated at temperatures colder than 4°C prior to smoking.
- Always clean meat and fish prior to smoking.
- Always remember to maintain enough humidity when smoking meat and fish.
- Always keep track of the recommended smoking times and temperatures to prevent the growth of harmful bacteria. Smoking time depends on the meat size and outdoor air temperature.
- Insert a food thermometer into the thickest part of the meat/fish to ensure that the meat has reached a safe internal temperature for a long enough time to kill harmful microorganisms.
- Always refrigerate smoked meat and fish to ensure they are safe to eat.

**DO NOT KEEP PERISHABLE  
FOOD IN THE DANGER  
ZONE (4°C – 60°C OR  
40°F – 140°F) FOR MORE  
THAN TWO HOURS.**

**HANGING DRIED FOODS IS NOT RECOMMENDED AS  
CONTAMINATION CAN OCCUR FROM THE ENVIRONMENT.**



# SMOKE HOUSES

Each person who smokes meat or fish has his or her own way of making a smoke house. Generally, wooden poles and rails are made from various kinds of trees available in the area. These are used to build the frame and the racks. The smoke house is usually built in a teepee shape. A fire is built underneath the frame. The type of wood used for the fire depends on the desired flavour of the meat or fish. For example, resin tars in soft wood such as pine, may produce “off” flavours. The wood selected must make good smoke when burned. Strips of meat or fish are then hung from the rails above the fire. The frame of the smokehouse is usually covered to protect it from wind so the smoke will rise to the meat. Traditionally, animal hides were used to cover the frame but today canvases or tarps are also used.



MODERN DAY SMOKEHOUSE



OUTDOOR SMOKING

Bacteria grow faster in the ‘danger zone’ of temperatures between 4°C to 60°C (40°F to 140°F). Therefore, it is safest to smoke meat in fairly cold weather. Late in the fall or early in the spring is better when outdoor temperatures are cooler.

“TREES ARE MEDICATION. THAT IS WHY SMOKED FOODS TASTE SO GOOD.”  
JULIA HOUSE, ELDER - PAUL FIRST NATION



# HOW TO BUILD A SMOKE HOUSE

## Julia's Smokehouse

Julia House, Elder - Paul First Nation

To make a smoke house, take 4 rails approximately 6 feet long and make a teepee-shaped frame.

These can be rails of any strong material that will not burn.

Do not use green wood since it will bend when heavy meat is hung from it.

Fasten the rails together at the top with rope.

Take racks or rails, approximately 4 or 5 feet long and place them between the supporting rails of the frame.

They can either be put around the outside of the supports or across the inside of the frame.

Place the longer poles against the frame to make a larger frame around it.

Fasten a tarp or canvas to the outer frame.

This gives you room to move around the racks as the meat is smoking.

## Leaf Smoke House

Mary Half, Elder - Goodfish Lake First Nation

*As done by her grandmother, Chip pa soos.*

You need to build a leaf house if you do not have a modern smoke house or tools.

The old way was to get 3 long branches or sticks and place them together.

The sticks that were used had a hook so you could hook them together if you did not have rope to tie them.

Join the hooked sticks together at the top to make a teepee.

Attach smaller branches close to the base of the teepee to anchor.

Add racks to hang meat from.

Place branches (with leaves still on) around the smoke rack (teepee) to contain the smoke.

**NOTE:** *This method was used to dry all kinds of meat. Once the meat was dried, it was pounded to make a powder-like mixture. This was placed in a clean sack and stored.*



# RECIPES FOR DRIED BERRIES

## Drying Saskatoons, Chokecherries or Bull berries

**Mary Ann Wells, Elder - Kainai First Nation**

Remove twigs and leaves from fresh berries.

Wash with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Place a clean canvas on the ground in a sunny place away from animals.

Spread berries evenly across the canvas.

Occasionally scatter berries with your hands to make sure they dry evenly and do not mould.

If not dry after one day, gather up berries at night and bring inside. Place out on the canvas again the next day.

Repeat each day until berries are dried throughout.

Check berries frequently to make sure birds and bugs do not get in them and that there is no mould.

Place berries in a white cloth sack and hang in a cool place or in the freezer.

Berries taste better dried and then frozen than if they were frozen without drying.

## Saskatoon Berries

**Mary Half, Elder - Goodfish Lake First Nation**

Wash berries with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Spread saskatoons on a clean canvas.

Turn over and move berries around to dry evenly and to prevent mould growth.

Dry for about a day, depending on the weather.

Once they are dried, you can clean the berries of any debris and store in a clean flour bag.



## RECIPES FOR DRIED BERRIES...CONTINUED

### Crushing/Drying Chokecherries

Mary Ann Wells, Elder - Kainai First Nation

Wash berries with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Crush between two clean, flat rocks for best flavour or use a clean meat grinder.

Form crushed berries into patties the size of your palm and approximately ½ inch (1 cm) thick.

Place the patties on a clean canvas in the sun.

Flip patties several times throughout the day until completely dried.

The end product will be very hard and will crumble easily.

Store in a clean white cloth sack or freeze.





## RECIPES FOR DRIED BERRIES...CONTINUED

### Dried Saskatoons

**Albina Bulldog, Elder - Beaver First Nation**

Wash berries with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

When the sun is out, place the berries outside on a clean canvas, oilcloth or tablecloth. Put them up high where dogs and other animals cannot get at them.

When the sun is gone, gather the edges of the cloth and bring the berries inside. It takes about a week for the saskatoon berries to fully dry.

Put berries in a clean flour sack, pillowcase or brown paper bag and store in a cold place. Do not store in plastic.

To eat, add to bannock dough or eat straight like raisins.

You can also cook them with rice to make a pudding.

When cooked, add a little sugar and serve with cream.

### Berry Soup

**Mary Ann Wells, Elder - Kainai First Nation**

Boil water in a pot.

Put in dried saskatoon berries.

If making soup from crushed berry patties, soak the patties first in water in a shallow pan until soft, then boil.

Cook berries until they return to their original size.

Measure 1 cup (250 ml) cold water.

Add enough flour or cornstarch to cold water to make a paste.

Add paste to berries and water mixture.

Stir until thickened.

Sugar can be added, if desired, either during or after cooking.

This tastes good with fried bread or on its own.



## RECIPES FOR DRIED BERRIES...CONTINUED

### Saskatoon Soup

Rachel Betty Hoof, Elder - Kainai First Nation

Wash berries with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Boil soup bones from meat and strain.

Use broth of soup bones to cook saskatoon berries.

Add ½ teaspoon (2 ml) of salt.

Cook for approximately ½ hour.

Mix approximately 2 tablespoons (30 ml) of flour with some water to make a paste and then add to broth.

Add sugar to taste.

**NOTE:** *In the old days white roots were used to thicken soup. Today sugar and starch are used instead.*

### Pemmican

Rachel Betty Hoof, Elder - Kainai First Nation

Dry meat.

Use a food processor to crush meat.

Add Indian popcorn and a small amount of mint, sugar, and dried saskatoons.

Mix together.

### Pemmican

Veronica Waskahat, Elder - Frog Lake First Nation

Crush dry meat very fine.

Mix with dried berries or raisins and homemade lard.

**NOTE:** *This is mostly used at traditional ceremonies.*



## RECIPES FOR DRIED BERRIES...CONTINUED

### Pemmican

**Margaret Bulldog, Elder - Beaver First Nation**

Dry meat in oven until it is very dry.

Place a clean cloth on a cutting block and put the dried meat on the cloth.

Pound the meat to make a powder.

Mix with dried berries and lard or moose grease.

### Dried Chokecherries

**Veronica Waskahat, Elder - Frog Lake First Nation and  
Lena Waskahat, CHR - Frog Lake First Nation**

Crush chokecherries until fine using smooth clean rocks.

Add sugar and lard.

Mixture should be smooth.

Form into patties.

Place on a clean canvas outside in the sun.

Dry for 2 days, turning as they dry.

THERE DIDN'T USED TO BE NURSES OR DOCTORS (WHERE WE LIVED) SO WE HAD TO KEEP HEALTHY AND SHARE (REMEDIES) WITH NEIGHBOURS, LIKE GRAPE JUICE HELPS YOU GO TO THE BATHROOM."

EUNICE STEINHAUER, ELDER - SADDLE LAKE FIRST NATION



## RECIPES FOR DRIED BERRIES...CONTINUED

### Dried Chokecherries

**Julia House, Elder - Paul First Nation**

Wash chokecherries with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Place on a large, clean flat rock and crush with a second clean smaller rock.

You can also put them in a meat grinder, but the taste will be different.

Dry the chokecherries outside on a clean canvas for 2-3 days.

You can put the canvas on plywood, depending on sun and wind.

Take them indoors at the end of each day.

Keep turning the chokecherries while they dry.

When dried, mix with grease or oil.

You can either eat as is, or cook.

To cook, add oil or lard and/or sugar.

If you have any leftovers, refrigerate immediately and use it within one week. Never store fresh foods-in-oil at room temperature.

### Saskatoons

**Veronica Waskahat, Elder - Frog Lake First Nation,  
Lena Waskahat, CHR - Frog Lake First Nation and  
Nancy Trottier, Elder - Frog Lake First Nation**

Wash berries with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Mash saskatoons. Add sugar and a little bit of flour.

Form mixture into patties.

Place on a clean canvas outside in the sun.

Dry for 2 days, turning patties as they dry.



### Chokecherry Patties

**Mary Half, Elder - Goodfish Lake First Nation**

*Passed on from her grandmother, Chip pa soos.*

Wash the chokecherries with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Wash 2 rocks, 1 round and 1 indented.

Place a clean canvas or covering underneath the rocks.

Crush the cherries between the two rocks.

The indented rock should be on the bottom and will hold the juice from the cherries.

A meat grinder can be used but the taste and texture of the chokecherries will be different.

Take the crushed chokecherries and roll them into balls.

Flatten them into patties.

Place the patties on top of a clean canvas in the sun to dry.

Dry the patties for approximately 1 day.

Turn them over to make sure they are dried all over.

Repeat the next day if they are not completely dry.

Traditionally, patties were stored in clean flour sacks.

When you are going to cook the patties, you will need to soak them overnight in water in the refrigerator for cooking the next day.

When soaking, you only need enough water to cover the patties.

When patties are soft, cook with lard or oil for about 20 minutes. Stir and watch your cooking so it doesn't burn.

Once patties are cooked, you can mix them with potatoes, add sugar to sweeten, or eat as is.

If you have any leftovers, be sure to store them in the refrigerator and use within one week.



## RECIPES FOR DRIED BERRIES...CONTINUED

### Chokecherry Pie

Mary Half, Elder - Goodfish Lake First Nation

Wash the chokecherries with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Crush chokecherries (see instructions under Chokecherry Patties recipe).

Cook them in a large pot with lard or oil.

The amount of lard or oil will depend on the amount of chokecherries you are cooking.

Stir constantly and watch it does not burn.

Add sugar to sweeten, if desired.

Make piecrust.

Either a homemade piecrust recipe can be used or use the recipe from the shortening box.

Once piecrust is ready for cooking, add ½ inch (1 cm) of chokecherries to cover pie plate.

Cover with pie dough topping.

Cook at 375°F (190°C) for about 45 minutes, as you would normally cook a pie.

You can also put pie dough on a cookie sheet and cover with chokecherries.

Cover with a second layer of dough and cook like you would a pie.

You can also cut it into little round shapes and bake like tarts.



# RECIPES FOR DRIED VEGETABLES

## Dried Corn

**Mary Half, Elder – Goodfish Lake First Nation**

String 6 stalks of unhusked corn together and hang for the winter.

Once dried, put into clean flour sacks and store away in a dry place.

You can eat them throughout the winter, or in the spring you can remove the kernels, soak for a period of time, and then plant them in your garden.

## Dried Carrots

**Mary Half, Elder – Goodfish Lake First Nation**

*This type of drying was done with my grandmother, Chip pa soos.*

Wash carrots but leave the stalk (top) on.

Tie several carrots together in the area where the stem and the carrot meet.

Hang to dry.

When the carrots are dried, the tops will fall off.

When this happens, you can put the carrots into a clean flour sack and put away in a cool, dry place.





# RECIPES FOR SMOKED & DRIED MEAT AND FISH

## Smoking Meat

Cassie Lefthand, Elder – Stoney Tribe (Eden Valley)

Make a teepee from willow branches.

Use “circular” willow branches to build a circular rack.

Cover the teepee with canvas.

Build a fire and then slowly burn willow trees so that there is only smoke (no flames) at all times.

Clean the meat. (Deer, elk, moose, rabbit, and beaver are good to use).

Hang strips of meat on the racks.

Smoke the meat for 5 days.

If the meat is really dry from smoking it will not spoil for a long time.

When the meat is dry, lay it on a clean canvas and cover with another clean canvas.

Flatten it with a heavy weight.

Place the flattened meat in a clean sack and hang it in the basement or in a cool, dry place.

When ready to eat, boil dry meat with animal fat for a couple of hours to increase its' tenderness.

Store any leftovers immediately in the refrigerator and use within one week.

## Smoking Fish

Rita Billette, CHR - Cold Lake First Nation

Take 10-20 fish.

Cut along the backbone from head to tail.

Gut and clean the fish.

Make a fire under the smoke house using willow or deadfall.

Let the fire burn down so that it is not too big.

Once the fire is small with light smoke, lay fish flat on racks in the smoke house.

Turn fish twice a day.

Smoke for 1 to 2 days, depending on your taste.

*NOTE: Fish does not have to be completely dry if you keep it refrigerated when finished. However, to keep fish without refrigerating, it must be completely dry.*



## RECIPES FOR SMOKED & DRIED MEAT AND FISH... CONTINUED

### Smoking Whitefish or Jackfish

Isabelle Smallface, Elder - Beaver Lake First Nation

Assemble a smoke house 5-6 feet tall.

Gather partially rotten wood (not green wood) since it burns longer.

Make a fire in the smoke house but not too hot. Smother for smoking.

Wash the fish, remove the insides and fillet.

Place fish fillets on the racks in the smoke house approximately 4 feet above the fire.

Place them on their backs first so they don't stick to the racks. Turn every few hours.

Fish will harden and turn a smoky colour.

Check the fire regularly to make sure it is still smoking.

When fish is completely dry, it is done.

Smoking usually takes about 2 days, depending on fish size and outdoor air temperature.

Refrigerate or freeze immediately.

Before eating, you can reheat in oven at 350°F (175°C) for about 25-30 minutes.





# RECIPES FOR SMOKED & DRIED MEAT AND FISH... CONTINUED

## Smoked Whitefish

Julia House, Elder – Paul First Nation and Mary Rain, Elder – Paul First Nation

Cut open the whitefish by cutting from the head to the tail on either side of the backbone (you will be cutting on both sides of the back fin).

The head can be taken off or left on, depending on your preference.

Take the bones out.

The scales and bones can be separated from the flesh by peeling down from the backbone.

Take the guts out and wash the fish.

Build a fire for the smoke house from fresh white poplar or black balm (Aspen) wood.

Make sure the wood is not too dry or it will not smoke well.

Hang the fish fillets from the racks and keep the fire smoking constantly.

Smoke the fish for 1-2 days, turning the fish over every few hours.

The fish is done when it is dry and smokey in colour.

Eat as is, pound to make into pemmican, or boil it to make soup.

Refrigerate or freeze any leftovers.

TIP

*Leave the piece of flesh at the base of the tail intact so that both sides of the fish remain connected. This makes it easier to hang the fillets for smoking.*

TIP

### FOR SMOKING WHITEFISH:

*The thick part of the fillet along the back has a lot of bones and fat and is difficult to smoke. Without proper drying, it can spoil quickly. This part can be cut off so the smoke can dry the meat.*

Julia House, Elder – Paul First Nation

TIP

### FOR SMOKING WHITEFISH:

*Alternately, slice into the thick portion several times but do not cut through. This will allow the smoke to dry it out.*

Richard Rabbit,  
Montana First Nation



## RECIPES FOR SMOKED & DRIED MEAT AND FISH... CONTINUED

### Dried Fish

**Mary Half, Elder - Goodfish Lake First Nation**

*As done long ago by her grandmother, Chip pa soos.*

Once fish is cleaned and cut, you can also smoke or dry it the same way as rabbit or other meat.

When dried, pound it to make a powdered mixture.

Put it in a clean flour sack and store it in a dry place. (See earlier tips about the safe storage of dried foods.)

**NOTE:** U-way-kan-nuk (*pounded dried meat*) has nothing added to it. In other areas, pemmican referred to a mixture of dried meat, berries and grease.

### Pemmican Treat

**Mary Rain, Elder - Paul First Nation**

Take dried pieces of meat (elk, deer, or moose) and pound it until crushed.

Take 2 cups (500 ml) of crushed meat.

Mix with 1 cup (250 ml) of dried berries and ½ cup (125 ml) of homemade grease, butter, margarine or oil.

Form into balls and eat.

Store leftovers in the refrigerator or freeze.

If mixed with oil, use up any leftovers within one week.

### Drying Moose Meat

**Rita Billette, CHR - Cold Lake First Nation**

Clean meat prior to smoking.

Cut into thin strips.

Get a fire started using green poplar or dry willow.

Hang meat on the rack of a smoke house and lightly smoke for 2 to 3 days, keeping the fire going at all times.



## RECIPES FOR SMOKED & DRIED MEAT AND FISH... CONTINUED

### Preparing/Cleaning Duck or Goose for Smoking

**Margaret Marshall, Elder - Horse Lake First Nation**

Pluck the feathers from a duck or goose.

In a pot, melt 1-2 squares of paraffin wax for each duck or goose.

Place the bird on paper (not newspaper) on a baking sheet or on a brown bag.

Use a small clean paintbrush to apply hot wax to the bird.

Put more under the wing tip since the feathers are harder to get out there.

Once the wing has hardened, pull it off.

Waxing ensures that all the fluff and feathers are removed. It does not damage the meat.

Smoke the bird for flavour using dry willows.

### Pickarel

**Margaret and Albina Bulldog, Elders - Beaver First Nation**

Clean the fish.

Cut off the head, slit on either side of backbone, and then clean the organs out.

Fillet the fish.

Lay the fillets skin side down.

Make cuts into the fillets horizontally along length of the fish, but don't cut through the fish.

Add salt water to keep the insects away and to add extra flavour.

Soak for approximately 1-2 hours until the fish are ready to be hung.

Build a smoke house using dry poplar trees.

Take 12 poles and make a teepee.

Place other poles across center to make a grid.

Build a fire underneath the teepee.

Place fillets on clean poles with scale side down.

Smudge the fire with poplar wood.

Don't use spruce wood as it will make the fish taste bad.

Smoke for 3 days, leaving 1-2 days before turning.







# SALT-CURING FOODS





# HISTORY OF SALT-CURING

Before the invention of refrigerators, meat was preserved using salt. Salt not only aided in the preservation of meat, it also added to its taste. Salt-curing is a process in which salt is added to food to remove moisture. By removing moisture, microorganisms lose one of the key requirements they need to grow. Therefore, the numbers of microorganisms that can cause food poisoning are decreased. Salt-curing reduces the possibility of spoilage by stopping spoilage organisms and their spores. It is always important to remember the time-temperature factor when curing foods.

There are several ways to salt-cure. They include salting the surface, pumping the salt solution into the meat using a spray pump, an artery pump or a machine pump, or by using a needle to pump the salt-solution directly into the muscle. Each of these methods is used to draw the moisture out of the cells and out of the meat to reduce the possibility of food poisoning or microbial spoiling of the meat. Salt-curing is also done along with smoking. Both do wonders for the taste of the meat.





# HOW DOES SALT-CURING WORK?

Salt in foods soaks up water and slows down the activity of the microorganisms that cause spoilage. The stronger the salt solution, the less spoilage will occur and fewer microorganisms that will grow. Because salt draws up moisture from foods, it is often the first step in drying and smoking meats. Salting also aids in the preservation of dried and smoked meats.

However, eating a lot of very salty foods may increase your blood pressure. This can affect the health of your heart. Some foods can be washed before cooking and eating to remove some of the salt. If foods are only lightly salted, they will need to be refrigerated. For long-term storage, they need to be canned or frozen.

Not all foods can be salted. Some foods, like fruit, do not taste good with salt. Another example is organ meats. Because of their high-protein content the flavour would be ruined with heavy salting. If there is no other way of preserving vegetables, they may be cured by salting. If you must salt-cure vegetables, eat them without adding extra salt either when reheating or at the table.

*(Adapted from Putting Food By see reference section)*





# SAFETY REMINDERS FOR SALT-CURING

- Keep food under refrigeration prior to processing.
- Salt curing requires careful temperature control, meaning that temperatures need to be cold enough to prevent spoilage of the meat and, at the same time, hot enough to allow salt to penetrate the meat.
- It is important to note that drying only temporarily inactivates microorganisms. If they are supplied with the right conditions they may still grow, increasing the possibility of contracting a food borne illness.
- Dehydration of meat must be quick enough to cook the meat and remove enough water to prevent microorganisms from growing.
- Always insert a food thermometer into the thickest part of the meat to monitor its internal temperature.
- For dry curing/dry salt curing it is recommended that you cure for 7 days per inch of meat thickness in refrigerated conditions of less than 4°C. *(From Proper Processing of Wild Game and Fish see reference section)*
- If improperly cooked, home made jerky may contain bacteria that can result in severe, life threatening illness and possibly death.

"EVERYONE IS DIFFERENT. THEY HAVE THEIR WAYS TO EAT, HOW THEY WANT THEIR FOOD DONE."

EILEEN JANVIER, ELDER - COLD LAKE FIRST NATION



# RECIPES FOR SALT-CURING

## Jerky

**Melda Cattleman - Montana First Nation**

Cut the meat from the back leg of an animal (deer, moose, and cow work best) into strips as thin as possible. Be careful not to cut where they all attach to each other at the top.

Sprinkle seasoning salt or regular salt over the meat. You could also try rolling the meat in the salt and shaking off the excess or dipping the meat in salt water.

Spread the meat out like an octopus, with the end remaining attached in the middle.

Smoke for about 1-2 days, and then dry for about a day or try cooking the meat in the oven at 350°F (175°C), increasing the temperature as it cooks.

Continually turn the meat to dry all parts.

The thicker the meat, the longer it will take to cook.

When cooked, the jerky will come out crispy and salty.

Store it in a clean gunnysack, canvas bag or hang it.

*(NOTE: See earlier safety tips about safe storage of foods.)*

### **Uses for the remaining bone:**

Clean the meat off the leg bone.

Cook the whole bone in the oven at 325°F (160°C) for 2-3 hours, or over an open fire (over a fire takes less time).

Crack the bone open.

The bone breaks easily once cooked.

Eat the marrow from inside, as is, or mix with berries.

The bone marrow can also be used as lard before it is cooked.



## RECIPES FOR SALT-CURING...CONTINUED

### Curing Meats

**Albina and Margaret Bulldog, Elders - Beaver First Nation**

Slice moose meat or beef very thinly.

Sprinkle meat with curing salt.

You could also use regular table salt.

Lay meat out in sun (up high so it is out of the way of animals).

The salted meat can then be smoked and/or dried.

Refrigerate or freeze in plastic bags.

*(NOTE: See earlier safety tips about safe storage of foods.)*

AN ELDER CAUGHT A RABBIT AND ROASTED IT FOR HIS GRANDSON. THE GRANDSON HAD NEVER SEEN A ROASTED RABBIT BEFORE, AND ASKED WHAT IT WAS. HIS GRANDFATHER TOLD HIM IT WAS A MOOSE. THE GRANDSON THOUGHT IT SURE TASTED GOOD. THEN HE SAW REMAINS OF THE RABBIT INCLUDING THE RIB CAGE AND EXCLAIMED, "THAT SURE IS A TINY MOOSE!"

MARY RAIN, ELDER - PAUL FIRST NATION



# CANNING FOODS





# HISTORY OF CANNING

Home canning became popular after 1858 when the Mason jar (the type of jar most commonly used for canning) was patented. The first method of canning used was called “open kettle” canning. In this method, hot jars were filled with hot, fully cooked food and then the lid was put on. No further heating was done. We now know that this is not a safe way to can foods because there is a high risk that bacteria can enter jars during filling. If a good seal is not formed, bacteria can grow during storage.

## CAUTION!

**Foods must be heated AFTER they have been put into jars. If not, bacteria can grow and the food will not be safe to eat. Bacteria can become active and spoilage can occur.**

I HAVE NEVER LIKED COOKING. I LOST MY PARENTS WHEN I WAS YOUNG SO I NEVER HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN. MY HUSBAND LOVES TO COOK AND THERE IS ONLY ROOM FOR ONE COOK IN THE KITCHEN.”

MOLLY DAVIS, CHR - KAINAI FIRST NATION



# HOW DOES CANNING WORK?

Why do foods that usually need to be kept cold or frozen not go bad when canned and kept at room temperature? There are a few factors involved.

The first one is heat. When processing foods during canning (boiling filled jars or heating them in a steam pressure canner), the heat kills dangerous enzymes and microorganisms that could cause life-threatening human illness as well as food spoilage.

Heat also pushes the excess air out of the jars, which may prevent the growth of some microorganisms. Changes in the food are reduced in the absence of air. However, it is also important to note that some **bacteria grow better in the absence of air** such as *Clostridium botulinum* which causes botulism.

Heat also serves to push air out of the jars. So when jars cool, a vacuum is formed inside, causing the lid to be pulled downward against the rim of the jar, sealing it. This airtight seal is the final important factor that would prevent dangerous or spoilage microorganisms from re-entering the jars.

FOR CANNED FOODS, THE MOST DANGEROUS ORGANISMS CAN GROW WITHOUT AIR OR WHERE THERE IS A VACUUM, PROVIDED THEY SURVIVE THE HEATING PROCESS. THEREFORE, THE HEAT AND TIME APPLIED TO JARS AFTER FILLING IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR A SAFE FOOD TO RESULT.





# IMPORTANT TIPS FOR SAFE CANNING

- Special jars made for canning (Mason jars) must be used. Mason jars are specifically designed to withstand repeated use and the high temperatures required when preserving food at home. Do not use jars that contained store-bought foods.
- Canning jars should be heated **before** filling them with hot food. Place jars on a rack in a large pot; add water and heat to a simmer. Keep jars warm until needed. It is not necessary to sterilize jars prior to filling as the jar, its contents and closure (e.g., screw bands, lids and seals) are sterilized when filled jars are heat processed in a boiling water or pressure canner.
- Jars can also be heated in a dishwasher but not in an oven. Glass heats unevenly in an oven. Doing so can cause glass to weaken and break.

CANNING LOW ACID FOODS, (VEGETABLES, MEAT, GAME AND FISH) WITHOUT A PRESSURE CANNER DRAMATICALLY INCREASES THE RISK OF THE GROWTH OF *CLOSTRIDIUM BOTULINUM* SPORES, WHICH CAN LEAD TO A DEADLY FORM OF FOOD POISONING. A PRESSURE CANNER IS ESSENTIAL TO HEAT FOOD TO A HIGH ENOUGH TEMPERATURE TO KILL THE SPORES. BOILING WATER IS NOT HOT ENOUGH.

- **Botulism toxin can be present without showing any signs of food spoilage. Its survival is an indication that food has been under-sterilized due to improper equipment, improper temperatures (not high enough), and/or processing times that were too short. To be safe, boil home-canned low acid vegetables for 10 minutes before eating them. Boil corn, meat and poultry for 20 minutes. If you believe that the food is questionable and you are in doubt, throw it out!!!**
- Foods cannot be safely canned in the oven, in the microwave, in the dishwasher or by using the “open kettle” method in which no further heat processing takes place after the jars are filled. These methods **do not** prevent all risks of spoilage.
- When making jams and jellies, skim the foam off the top before putting it into the jars. The foam has a lot of air in it that can cause seal failure or a weaker seal. Plus the jam or jelly will also look better without the foam on top.
- Always use the quantity of fruit, sugar and lemon juice specified in the jam and jelly recipes, especially those that include added pectin. Do not reduce sugar. The jam or jelly will not set properly. For reduced sugar fruit spreads, select a pectin specifically formulated to gel fruit with little or no sugar.



## IMPORTANT TIPS FOR SAFE CANNING... CONTINUED

- Do not double recipes. Accurate measures are more difficult and it is often hard to get the mixture to a full rolling boil. Instead, make two separate batches to get twice the amount of jam or jelly. Doubled or large batches of relishes and sauces, etc. require longer cooking to evaporate moisture to achieve desired textures. Smaller batches cook off excess moisture faster which enhances the flavour.
- The sealing disc portion of two-piece SNAP LID® closures cannot be reused. Once an airtight seal forms onto a jar, the indentation into the sealing compound solidifies. This means it may not reform tightly onto another jar.
- Screw bands and canning jars can be reused.
- Always place jars on a rack in a canner—both pressure canners and boiling water canners. Placing jars on the bottom of the canner in contact with direct heat may cause breakage.
- After processing, **cool jars upright**, undisturbed for 24 hours. Turning the jar upside down does not improve the sealing success and may, in fact, interfere with the formation of the seal.
- Do not re-tighten screw bands after heat processing. Even though screw bands may appear to be loose, do not retighten them. Doing so may damage the sealing compound on the sealing discs and prevent the formation of an airtight seal.
- **Paraffin wax is no longer recommended for sealing jars.** Pinholes that form in the wax as it hardens allows air to reach the food. This exposure to air leads to mould growth. Also, when wax cools, it may shrink away from the sides of the jar so microorganisms can get into the food. Use two-piece metal lids (snap lid and screw band) and heat process filled jars.
- Moulds in jams and jellies can produce bacterial spores that go deep into the food. Mouldy jam or jelly must be thrown out since these spores can cause illness, even though you cannot see them. Do not taste questionable jams and jellies. **If in doubt, throw them out.**
- Some sugar substitutes (such as aspartame found in Nutrasweet®, Equal®, and saccharin) may not retain their sweetness following prolonged heating and/or storage. Always use a tested, reliable recipe from a reputable source for special diet food preservation.
- Fruit mixtures prepared without sugar are generally called “spreads.”
- Date and label all foods. Store home canned products in a cool dark place. For best quality, use home canned foods within 1 year.



# SIGNS OF SPOILAGE

**NEVER EAT FOODS  
THAT ARE SPOILED.**

If any part of the food shows signs of spoilage (such as mould on top of jam) throw out everything in the jar.

Check each jar carefully before opening. The following are signs that foods are not canned properly and they could be spoiled:

- Broken seal before opening
- Bulging lid
- Leakage or liquid spurting out
- Gas bubbles
- Unnatural or “off” smells
- Food is soft, mushy or slimy
- Food has mould on it
- Cloudy liquid
- Sediment (sandy texture) in the liquid
- Unnatural colour
- Foaming or a bad odour during cooking

If you think a food may be spoiled but you are not sure, never taste it to find out. It is better to waste some food by throwing it away than to take the chance of getting food poisoning.

Spoiled or questionable foods should be thrown out in the regular garbage or can be buried deep into the ground, so that other people or animals do not eat them. Sealed jars developing swollen lids may explode, so they should be placed in a heavy-duty, leak proof plastic bag or similar container and then disposed of in a heavy-duty garbage bag.



# SAFETY REMINDERS FOR CANNING

## CLEAN

Always wash your hands **before** and **after** working with food and canning equipment.

It is important to wash your hands:

- After handling meat, poultry and seafood
- After changing tasks (going from cutting meats to cutting vegetables)
- After using the washroom
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- After touching animals
- After changing diapers



Working in a clean area with clean equipment is very important when canning foods. If microorganisms get into the food or jars, the food will spoil or cause you to be sick when eaten. The best cleaning method is to use a mild bleach mixture (see page 9 for recipe).

When preparing food, wear a clean apron to keep your clothes clean and to stop anything from your clothes getting into the food.

If you have cuts or a rash on your hands or wrists, cover the area and wear disposable gloves. Be sure to wash your hands as frequently as you would wash bare hands and change gloves after you do any of the activities described above.

Tie loose hair back or wear a hairnet to be sure that your hair will not get into the food you are preparing.



# CANNING HIGH ACID FOODS

**HIGH ACID FOODS:** Jams, jellies, fruit spreads, marmalades  
Fruits and fruit sauces  
Pickles, relishes, salsa, chutnies  
Tomatoes with added acid

**EQUIPMENT:** Canning/Mason jars  
(quart/L, pint/500 ml or half pint/250 ml)  
Saucepan (large, deep)  
Snap lids (new)  
Screw bands  
Boiling water canner with jar rack  
Jar lifter tongs  
Wide mouth funnel  
Rubber spatula  
Clean wooden board, newspaper, or towels  
Jar labels

**NOTE:** *For information on increased processing times for various elevations when canning high acid foods refer to “Elevations” at the end of this section.*



## CANNING HIGH ACID FOODS...CONTINUED

### STEPS FOR CANNING HIGH ACID FOODS

- STEP 1:** Wash canning jars in hot, soapy water and rinse well. **Do not use cracked or chipped jars.**
- STEP 2:** Place mason jars on rack in canner. Add water to cover jars. Bring water to a simmer.
- STEP 3:** Heat snap lids in a separate saucepan in hot 82°C (180°F) water. This softens the sealing compound around the rim. Do not boil.
- STEP 4:** Remove one jar at a time from the water. Use jar lifter tongs. Fill hot jars with the prepared recipe.
- STEP 5:** Leave proper “headspace” between the top of the jar and the top of the food in the jar.
- Jam or Jelly (½ pint/250ml jar) – ¼ inch (0.5 cm) headspace**
- Fruit, Pickles, Tomatoes, Relish – ½ inch (1 cm) headspace**
- STEP 6:** Remove air bubbles by sliding a clean rubber spatula around the inside of the jar between the jar and the food. Re-adjust head space if necessary.
- STEP 7:** Wipe the rim of the jar with a clean cloth to remove any stickiness.
- STEP 8:** Place a snap lid on the jar.
- STEP 9:** Apply screw bands securely and firmly until resistance is met (i.e., finger tight). Do not force the bands.
- STEP 10:** Place filled jar in the canner. Cover canner with lid and bring water to a full rolling boil. Boil to appropriate heat processing times. **Increase time for higher elevations.** (See table at the end of this section).



## CANNING HIGH ACID FOODS...CONTINUED

- STEP 11:** Start counting processing time when water is boiling. Repeat steps 4 to 8 until all jars are filled.
- STEP 12:** Place a wooden board, layers of clean newspaper, or towels in a draft-free place. When the boiling time is up, remove lid and allow boiling to subside. Remove jars from the canner using jar lifter tongs. Place the jars upright on the board, newspaper, or towels. **Do not re-tighten screw bands.**
- STEP 13:** Cool jars upright for 24 hours. As the jars cool, the lids will snap down to create a vacuum seal. **Do not turn jars upside down.**
- STEP 14:** After 24 hours, check to see if the jars have a vacuum seal. Sealed lids curve downward.
- STEP 15:** Remove screw bands. Label the jars with the **name of the food** and the **date** you made it.
- STEP 16:** Store jars in a cool, dark place.

*(Adapted from Bernardin Guide to Home Preserving, see reference section)*



# RECIPES FOR CANNING JAMS/JELLIES

## Blueberry Jam

Judy Belcourt, Elder - Horse Lake First Nation

Use the recipe supplied by the pectin manufacturer.

Process all filled 250 ml (half-pint) jars in boiling water canner.

Make sure all fruits being used are washed with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt. They can then be crushed finely and mixed with berries or different kinds of fruit.

Eat jam with hot bannock or toast.

Jam and peanut butter sandwiches are also good.

## Carrot Marmalade

Nancy Trottier, Elder - Frog Lake First Nation

Combine the following three ingredients in a large pot or kettle: 2 lbs (1 kg) of finely grated raw, washed and peeled carrots, 5 ½ cups (1.4 L) of sugar, 1 ½ cups (375 ml) of water.

Bring to a boil.

Reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, for 15 minutes.

Wash 3 oranges, grate rind and remove pulp.

Add orange rind and pulp to the mixture.

Wash and juice 4 lemons. Add the lemon juice to the mixture.

Cook until desired consistency, approximately 15-25 minutes. Process filled 250 ml jars in boiling water canner for 10 minutes. Follow canning instructions for **HIGH ACID** foods.

*NOTE: It is recommended to add the oranges to the kettle mixture in order to achieve a proper acidity level.*



## RECIPES FOR CANNING JAMS/JELLIES ...CONTINUED

### Chokecherry Jelly

Mary Rain, Elder - Paul First Nation

Wash the chokecherries with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Cook the cherries for about half an hour until the stones are popping out.

After they are cooked, use cheesecloth to strain the juice by placing cheesecloth over the second pot.

Pour the berries onto the cloth then gather up the sides of the cloth in one hand.

Squeeze the cloth containing the berries and allow the berry juices to drain out into the pot.

Make jelly with juice using instructions from a regular pectin package.

Process 250 ml filled jars in boiling water canner for 10 minutes.

Follow canning instructions for **HIGH ACID** foods.

The jelly will keep for about one year but check frequently for signs of spoilage.

### Saskatoon Jam

Nancy Trottier, Elder - Frog Lake First Nation

Wash 5 quarts (5 L) of saskatoons with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Put berries in the blender on “chop.”

Add  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup (175 ml) sugar for every 1 cup (250 ml) of berries. Mix in 1 can, 8 oz (240 ml) of crushed pineapple and juice.

Let stand until sugar is dissolved, stirring often.

Process filled jars (250 ml) in boiling water canner.

Follow canning instructions for **HIGH ACID** foods.

Mixture can also be frozen instead of canned.



# RECIPES FOR CANNING LOW SUGAR JAMS/JELLIES

## Eunice's Rhubarb and Strawberry Jam

Eunice Steinhauer, Elder - Saddle Lake First Nation

Wash strawberries and rhubarb with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Cut rhubarb into ½ inch (1 cm) chunks to make 4 cups (1L).

Mash strawberries to make 2 cups (500 ml).

Place the rhubarb and strawberries into a stainless steel or new enamel pot.

Add 2 cups (500 ml) of sugar and stir using a wooden spoon until it makes its own juice without heat.

Place on medium heat on the stove and stir mixture constantly - do not leave.

Bring mixture to a full boil, still stirring, then remove from heat.

Add Sucaryl (non-sugar sweetener) to taste - approximately 2 tablespoons (30 ml).

Follow canning instructions for **HIGH ACID** foods.

For a 250 ml (half-pint) to 500 ml (pint) jar, boil in a boiling water canner for 15 minutes.

For a 1 L (quart) jar, boil in a boiling water canner for 20 minutes.

This recipe makes 4 cups (1 L) or 8 small jars.

### TIP

*Do not substitute raspberries for strawberries. It is ideal to use frozen rhubarb and strawberries. Place them in a bowl with sugar in the fridge overnight and start making the recipe the next morning.*



# RECIPES FOR CANNING BERRIES/FRUITS

Adding syrup to canned fruit helps to keep its flavour, colour and shape. However, it does not prevent spoilage. Try decreasing the amount of sugar added to the syrup to decrease the calories from the added sugar, and to lower the rise in blood sugar levels in people with diabetes. You could also can fruit in unsweetened 100% fruit juice or juice that has been diluted slightly with water.

**Very light** = 7 cups (1.75 L) water + 1 cup (250 ml) sugar

**Light** = 6 cups (1.5 L) water + 1 ½ cups (375 ml) sugar

**Medium** = 5 cups (1.25 L) water + 2 cups (500 ml) sugar

**Heavy** = 5 cups (1.25 L) water + 3 cups (750 ml) sugar

**Very Heavy** = 4 cups (1 L) water + 4 cups (1 L) sugar

*(Adapted from Miro pressure canner instructions.)*

Process all home canned fruit in boiling water canner for the recommended time.

For 250 ml (half-pint) to 500 ml (pint) jars, process for 15 minutes and for 1 L (quart) jars process for 20 minutes.

## Saskatoons with rhubarb and orange

**Doris Jackson, CHR - Goodfish Lake First Nation**

Wash an ice cream pail (4 L) full of saskatoons with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Remove twigs and leaves and throw away dried or hollow berries.

Wash an ice cream pail (4 L) of rhubarb.

Dice rhubarb.

Wash 1 orange and cut off and discard the ends. Slice thinly.

Boil 4 cups (1 L) of water with the saskatoons, rhubarb and orange together.

Let boil until they are soft and cooked.

Add sugar to taste.

Skim foam off the top.

This recipe will make 4 to 6 L (4 to 6 quarts).

Follow canning instructions for **HIGH ACID** foods.

For 500 ml (pint) to 1 L (quart) jars remember to boil in boiling water canner for 15-20 minutes.



## RECIPES FOR CANNING BERRIES/FRUITS... CONTINUED

### Blueberries

**Evangeline Janvier, Elder - Cold Lake First Nation**

Wash about 5 lbs (2½ kg) of freshly picked blueberries with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Cook berries in 2 cups (500 ml) of water and 1 cup (250 ml) of sugar.

Follow canning instructions for **HIGH ACID** foods.

For a 500 ml (pint) jar, boil in boiling water canner for 15 minutes. For a 1 L (quart) jar, boil in a boiling water canner for 20 minutes.

### Chokecherry syrup

**Faith Gabert - Camrose (see note below)**

Wash chokecherries with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt. Place in a large pot.

Add water to barely cover berries.

Cover pot and bring to a boil.

Reduce heat and simmer for 30-45 minutes.

Line a strainer with clean cheesecloth, large enough to hang over the sides of the strainer.

Place strainer over large container or bowl.

Pour chokecherry mixture into the cheesecloth-lined strainer and collect the juice in the container below.

Let the mixture drip through the strainer overnight.

Discard the pulp.

Take 3 cups (750 ml) of juice and place in a pot with 4 cups (1 L) or less of sugar

Boil for 20 minutes until a syrup consistency.

Follow canning instructions for **HIGH ACID** foods.

**NOTE:** *This recipe was contributed by Alison Gabert who facilitated all of the sessions and compiled this cookbook.*



## RECIPES FOR CANNING BERRIES/FRUITS... CONTINUED

### Chokecherries

Veronica Waskahat, Elder - Frog Lake First Nation and  
Lena Waskahat, CHR - Frog Lake First Nation

Wash chokecherries with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Crush chokecherries finely with clean smooth rocks and add sugar (and lard). Do not use lard if canning in boiling water canner.

Mixture should be smooth.

Follow canning instructions for **HIGH ACID** foods.

### Berries

Mabel Shirt, Elder - Goodfish Lake First Nation

Use freshly picked blueberries, saskatoons, high or lowbush cranberries, or gooseberries.

Clean berries by removing smaller white berries, twigs, grass and leaves. Wash them with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

In a saucepan or large canner add 4 L of berries, 4 L of water and sugar to taste.

Bring to a boil.

Skim off the foam from the top of the mixture.

Follow canning instructions for **HIGH ACID** foods.

Processing time will soften the berries but they need to be brought to a boil before placing in jars.





## RECIPES FOR CANNING BERRIES/FRUITS... CONTINUED

### Canned Saskatoons

Margaret and Albina Bulldog, Elders - Beaver First Nation

Wash saskatoons with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Put 4-5 cups (1 L-1.25 L) of saskatoons and 1-1 ½ cups (250-375 ml) of sugar together in a large saucepan.

Add enough water so it can boil without going dry but do not cover the berries.

Boil together for 20-25 minutes until the berries look soft.

Keep watching so it does not boil over or stick to the pot.

Pour into hot mason jars.

Use 250 ml (½ -pint) jars for smaller families.

Follow canning instructions for **HIGH ACID** foods.

Store berries in a dark, cool place.

You can eat them on their own, or put fresh cream over them.

They can also be eaten with toast or bannock.





## RECIPES FOR CANNING BERRIES/FRUITS... CONTINUED

### Canned Cranberries

Margaret and Albina Bulldog, Elders - Beaver First Nation

Wash cranberries with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Put 4-5 cups (1 L-1.25 L) of cranberries and 2 cups (500 ml) of sugar together in a large saucepan.

(Cranberries need more sugar than other berries because they are bitter).

Add enough water so it can boil without going dry, but do not cover the berries.

Boil together for 20-25 minutes until the berries look soft.

Keep watching so it does not boil over.

Once the berries are cooked, use a potato masher to make a sauce.

Pour into hot mason jars.

Use 250 ml (½-pint) jars for smaller families.

Boil in boiling water canner, 500 ml (pint) to 1 L (quart) jars, for 15-20 minutes.

Follow canning instructions for **HIGH ACID** foods.

Store berries in a dark and cool place.

You can eat them on their own, or put fresh cream over them.

They can also be eaten with toast or bannock.

HISTORY OF SASKATOON BERRY SOUP MAKING: "IN OLDEN DAYS, BERRY SOUP WAS MADE WITH SOUP BONE BROTH. THIS WOULD GIVE IT FLAVOUR. WHITE ROOTS ARE ALSO USED IN THE SOUP TO THICKEN IT. NOW SUGAR AND STARCH ARE USED IN PLACE OF WHITE ROOTS."

RACHEL BETTY HOOF, ELDER - KAINAI FIRST NATION



# RECIPES FOR CANNING PICKLES AND RELISH

## Mustard Pickles-Yellow String Beans

Mabel Shirt, Elder - Goodfish Lake First Nation

Pick 4 L of yellow beans (1 ice cream pail).

Wash beans with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Cut off tips of both ends and discard.

Cut beans into 1-inch (2½ cm) pieces.

Boil beans in 4 L of water.

When cooked, strain water and keep in saucepan.

Boil 2 L vinegar and add 2½ cups (625 ml) of dry mustard, gradually, until it thickens.

Add 2½ cups (625 ml) sugar and 1 teaspoon (5 ml) pickling salt. Wash and cut up a half of a red pepper into small pieces.

OPTIONAL: sliced carrots and onions can also be used.

In a large bowl, mix beans, mustard mixture and red peppers.

Follow canning instructions for **HIGH ACID** foods.

For a 500 ml (pint) jar, boil in a boiling water canner for 15 minutes.

## Dill Pickles

Maryanne Jacknife, CHR - Cold Lake First Nation

Prepare canning jars.

Wash cucumbers, (about dill pickle size) with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Put the dill weed, diced garlic, onion\* and pickling salt into the hot jars.

Fill jars with cucumbers.

Fill jars ½ full with vinegar.

Top up with boiling water.

Leave ½ inch (1 cm) of headspace.

Place hot lids on jars.

Follow canning instructions for **HIGH ACID** foods.

Let stand for 2-3 weeks after processing for flavour to develop. Pickles are usually crunchy when canned this way.

\*Use measurements according to taste.



## RECIPES FOR CANNING PICKLES AND RELISH... CONTINUED

### Canning Pickles

**Margaret Bulldog, Elder - Beaver First Nation**

Mix together 13 cups (3.25 L) of water, 4 cups (1 L) of vinegar (5% vinegar), 1 cup (250 ml) of sugar, and ⅓ cup (80 ml) of salt.

Bring it to a boil over a hot stove to make the brine.

Wash cucumbers with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Place the cucumbers, dill and a peeled clove of garlic into clean hot canning jars.

Pour hot brine into jars and leave ½ inch (1 cm) for headspace.

Follow canning instructions for **HIGH ACID** foods.

This recipe makes about 10 L (10 quarts) of pickles.

### Bread and Butter Pickles

**Margaret Bulldog, Elder - Beaver First Nation**

Wash 4 quarts (4 L) of cucumbers with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Slice, but do not peel them.

Add 5 medium sliced, washed onions, 2 chopped, washed green peppers and 1 cup of pickling salt.

Cover with cracked ice or very cold water and mix; the more ice added the crisper the pickles.

Let stand for 3 hours.

Drain well.

In a large pot, combine 1½ teaspoons (7 ml) turmeric, 1½ teaspoons (7 ml) celery salt, 2 tablespoons (30 ml) mustard seed, 3 cups (750 ml) vinegar and 4 cups (1 L) sugar.

Add cucumber mixture and heat just to boiling.

Fill clean, hot jars with cucumber mixture and cover with hot liquid mixture, leaving ½ inch (1 cm) head space.

Follow canning instructions for **HIGH ACID** foods.

The recommended time in a boiling water canner for 500 ml (pint) jars is 10-15 minutes.



## RECIPES FOR CANNING PICKLES AND RELISH... CONTINUED

### Olivets

Florence Youngchief, CHR - Kehewin First Nation

*This recipe is suitable for larger-sized cucumbers.*

Wash cucumbers with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Cut cucumbers into pieces approximately 2 inches (5 cm) in length.

Pack into hot jars.

Mix together 2 cups (500 ml) of vinegar with ½ cup (125 ml) salt, 2 cups (500 ml) water, ½ cup (125 ml) white sugar and 4 teaspoons (20 ml) mustard seed.

Stir until dissolved. Do not heat.

Pour over cucumbers leaving ½ inch (1 cm) headspace.

Store in refrigerator, as is.

**NOTE:** *There is no known processing time for this recipe as it is not required that brine be heated.*

### Beet Relish

Margaret Bulldog, Elder - Beaver First Nation

Wash beets with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Boil beets until tender crisp. Let cool.

Slip off skins and grate to make 8 cups (2 L).

Combine 4 cups (1 L) sugar and 1 cup (250 ml) vinegar in a large pot.

Place 3-4 tablespoons (45-60 ml) pickling spices in a bag or cheesecloth and tie at the top. Add bag to pot.

Boil for about 3 minutes.

Add beets and 2 pouches of pectin.

Boil another 5-10 minutes, then remove spice bag.

Put relish in hot jars.

Follow canning instructions for **HIGH ACID** foods.

Process jars in boiling water canner for 15 minutes.

Makes 6-8 pints (500 ml) jars.



## Homemade Horse Radish

**Terri Williams, CHR - Woodland Cree First Nation**

Clean the roots of fresh horseradish and peel off the skin.

Peel strips of winter turnips (rutabaga) and wash with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Put together in a meat grinder and grind.

Add 2 teaspoons (10 ml) vinegar.

Put in a small jar with ½ teaspoon (2.5 ml) of salt.

Store horseradish in refrigerator. Serve with steak.

*NOTE: The pungency of horseradish fades within 1-2 months, even when refrigerated. Therefore, make relish more frequently in small quantities.*

## Mustard Cucumber Relish

**Margaret Bulldog, Elder - Beaver First Nation**

Wash vegetables with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Finely chop 7 cucumbers, 4 large onions, 3 green and 2 red peppers (if using a food processor, be careful not to mince vegetables into a purée).

Mix vegetables with ½ cup (125 ml) of pickling salt.

Let mixture stand overnight in a glass bowl in the refrigerator.

The next day, rinse and drain through a fine sieve or a cheesecloth.

In a saucepan, combine ½ cup (125 ml) of flour, ¾ cups (937.5 ml) vinegar, 3 cups (750 ml) honey, 1 tablespoon (15 ml) mustard seed, 1 tablespoon (15 ml) turmeric, and 1 tablespoon (15 ml) celery seed.

Bring to a boil.

Add well-drained vegetables and return to a boil for 1 minute.

Fill hot, prepared canning jars while mixture is still hot.

Follow canning instructions for **HIGH ACID** foods.

The recommended processing time is 10 minutes for a 250 ml (half-pint) jar and 15 minutes for a 500 ml (pint) jar.

# CANNING LOW ACID FOODS

**LOW ACID FOODS:** Vegetables  
Meat  
Poultry  
Game  
Fish and seafood  
Soups and stews

**EQUIPMENT:** Canning/Mason jars  
(quart (1 L), pint (500 ml) or half pint (250 ml))  
*Note: Jars that are larger than a quart (1 L) are not recommended for low acid foods processed in a pressure canner.*  
Saucepan  
SNAP LID® sealing discs and screw bands  
**Weighted Gauge Pressure Canner with jar rack**  
Jar lifter tongs  
Wide mouth funnel  
Rubber spatula  
Clean wooden board, newspaper, or towels  
Jar labels

**NOTE:** For information on processing times for canning low acid foods refer to “Elevations” chart at the end of this section.



### STEPS FOR CANNING LOW ACID FOODS

- STEP 1:** Wash mason jars with hot, soapy water and rinse well. **Do not use cracked or chipped jars.**
- STEP 2:** Place jars on rack in pressure canner and add 2 to 3 inches (5 to 8 cm) of water. Heat water to a gentle boil. Keep jars warm in the canner until ready to fill.
- STEP 3:** Heat sealing discs in a separate saucepan in hot (180°F/82°C) water. Do not boil.
- STEP 4:** Prepare food according to the recipe.
- STEP 5:** Remove a jar from the hot water using jar lifter tongs. Pack food into a hot jar leaving 1¼ inch (3 cm) headspace. (Headspace is the area between the top of the food and the top of the jar).
- STEP 6:** Add canning liquid (such as water, meat juices, broth or tomato juice). Leave 1 inch (2.5 cm) headspace.
- STEP 7:** Remove air bubbles by sliding a clean rubber spatula around the inside of the jar between the jar and the food. Readjust headspace if necessary by adding more canning liquid.
- STEP 8:** Wipe jar rim to remove any food residue.
- STEP 9:** Place a sealing disc on the jar. Screw band down until resistance is met, then increase to fingertip tight. Do not force the bands or tighten too much.
- STEP 10:** Return jar to the rack in the canner.
- STEP 11:** Repeat steps 5 to 10 until canner is filled. Do not fill more jars than will fit in the canner for a single session of heat processing.

## CANNING LOW ACID FOODS...CONTINUED

**STEP 12:** When the rack is full of jars, adjust water level following the manufacturer's instructions for your particular canner.

### TIP

*If your water is especially hard use bottled water or add 1 teaspoon (5ml) or 1 tablespoon (15ml) of vinegar to the water inside the canner to prevent water stains on the jars and the canner. Lock the canner lid and leave the vent open. Place the canner over high heat. Allow the steam to escape steadily for 10 minutes (this is called venting the canner).*

**STEP 13:** Close the vent and use the instructions from your pressure canner to achieve and maintain the recommended pressure. Adjust heat gently; do not make rapid heat level changes. Process foods for time recommended for each food at the appropriate elevation. *See section on elevations.*

**STEP 14:** When processing time is up, remove canner from heat. Leave the canner **undisturbed** until the pressure drops to 0 lb/kPa. When dial registers zero (dial gauge canner) or when no steam escapes when weight is nudged (weighted gauge canner), wait 2 minutes. Then, remove the cover (tilt cover away from yourself) and allow jars to rest in canner for 10 minutes.

**STEP 15:** Place a wooden board, layers of clean newspaper, or towels in a draft-free place. Remove jars from the canner using jar lifter tongs. Place the jars on the board, newspaper, or towels. **Do not re-tighten screw bands.**

**STEP 16:** Cool jars upright for 24 hours. As the jars cool, the lids will snap down to create the vacuum seal. **Do not turn jars upside down.**

**STEP 17:** After 24 hours, check to see if the jars have a vacuum seal.

**STEP 18:** Remove screw bands and check seals. Sealed lids curve downward and will not move when pressed. Jars that have not sealed must be refrigerated or reprocessed.

**STEP 19:** Wipe jars; rinse and dry screw bands; store separately or replace screw bands loosely on jars if desired. Label the jars with the **name of the food** and the **date** you made it. Store jars in a cool, dark place.

*(Adapted from Bernardin Guide to Home Preserving, see reference section)*



# RECIPES FOR CANNING VEGETABLES

## Jean Whiskeyjack's Special Canning Beets

Jean Whiskeyjack, Elder - Saddle Lake First Nation

Wash 10-15 medium size beets with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Place in a large, stainless steel pot.

Add water to cover beets and boil 3-4 hours until they are soft.

Prepare 1 L (quart) jars for canning (see earlier instructions).

Peel beets and slice or dice into jars.

Boil water.

Fill jars  $\frac{1}{2}$  full of water and  $\frac{1}{2}$  full of vinegar, leaving 1 inch (2  $\frac{1}{2}$  cm) headspace at the top.

Add 1 teaspoon (5 ml) of sugar to each jar.

Fill jars following instructions for **LOW ACID** foods.

In a pressure canner at 10 lbs (68 kPa), process 500 ml (pint) jars for 20 minutes; 1 L (quart) jars for 25 minutes.

Follow **LOW ACID** directions for cooling/opening pressure canner.

Store jars for 2 to 3 weeks before eating.

This recipe makes 4 to 5 jars.

## Canning Carrots

Florence Youngchief, CHR - Kehewin First Nation

Wash carrots with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Peel and slice or dice large carrots and leave baby carrots whole.

Cover with water and bring to a boil.

Simmer for 5 minutes.

Leave 1 inch (2  $\frac{1}{2}$  cm) head space at the top of canning jars.

Fill jars following instructions for **LOW ACID** foods.

In a pressure canner at 10 lbs (68 kPa), process 500 ml (pint) jars 20 minutes; 1 L (quart) jars 30 minutes.

Follow **LOW ACID** directions for cooling/opening pressure canner.

## RECIPES FOR CANNING VEGETABLES... CONTINUED

### Canning Beets

**Florence Youngchief, CHR - Kehewin First Nation**

Cut off tops of beets but leave the tap root and 1 inch (2½ cm) of the stem. Wash beets with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt and sort for size.

Boil beets of similar size in water until skin slips off easily (approximately 15-25 minutes, depending on size).

Cool and remove the skins, stems and roots.

Can baby beets whole.

Cut medium and large beets into ½ inch (1 cm) slices, cubes or halves or quarters.

Leave 1 inch (2 ½ cm) head space at the top of the canning jars.

Fill jars following instructions for **LOW ACID** foods.

In a pressure canner at 10 lbs (68 kPa), process 500 ml (pint) jars for 20 minutes; 1 L (quart) jars for 25 minutes.

Follow **LOW ACID** directions for cooling/opening pressure canner.

### Canned Tomatoes

**Margaret Bulldog, Elder - Beaver First Nation**

Wash tomatoes with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Blanch whole ripe tomatoes (see Freezing section for blanching instructions).

Remove skins.

Put whole or halved tomatoes into hot 500 ml (pint) jars, filling jars to within ¾ inch (2 cm) of top rim.

Add hot canned tomato juice or ketchup to cover tomatoes.

Add 1 teaspoon (5 ml) of sugar and 1 teaspoon (5 ml) of salt to each jar.

Process 500 ml (pint) jars for 85 minutes in a boiling water canner; or 25 minutes in a pressure canner at 10 lbs (68 kPa) pressure.

Follow **LOW ACID** directions for cooling/opening pressure canner.

Eat cold with macaroni or use in your own recipes.



# RECIPES FOR CANNING MEATS

## Moose Meat

**Doris Jackson, CHR - Goodfish Lake First Nation**

Cut 5 lbs (2 ½ kg) of moose meat into cubes.

Wash meat thoroughly and soak in salt water for 4 hours.

Take meat out of salt water and pat dry.

Heat some cooking oil in a roasting pan.

Brown moose meat for a few minutes with seasoning salt and pepper, stirring constantly.

Do not cook.

Pour 3 cups (750 ml) of water over meat and stir for a few minutes.

Fill jars following instructions for **LOW ACID** foods.

In a pressure canner at 10 lbs (68 kPa), process 500 ml (pint) jars for 75 minutes and 1 L (quart) jars for 90 minutes.

Follow **LOW ACID** directions for cooling/opening pressure canner.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *For the next two recipes remember to wear gloves when handling and skinning rabbits to prevent the bacteria *Tularemia* from causing infection. Also remember to cook meat thoroughly.*

## Jeannie's Rabbit Soup

**Mary J. Samson, Elder - Saddle Lake First Nation**

Skin, clean and cut up a rabbit.

Place in a pot of water and season with salt and some pepper.

Boil the rabbit and begin adding chopped potato, onion, turnip and a few carrots.

Add some diced bacon and continue to boil.

Fill jars following instructions for **LOW ACID** foods.

In a pressure canner at 10 lbs (68 kPa), process 500 ml (pint) jars for 65 minutes and 1 L (quart) jars for 75 minutes.

Follow **LOW ACID** directions for cooling/opening pressure canner.

When serving soup, drain liquid from Rabbit Soup into pan.

Mix some flour and water to make a light broth.

Stir into the liquid to make a lightly thickened broth.

Add solids from jar; heat and serve.

### Rabbit Stew

Florence Youngchief, CHR - Kehewin First Nation and  
Isabelle Smallface, Elder - Beaver Lake First Nation

Wash all vegetables in clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Prepare: 1 small onion, sliced  
4 small potatoes, cubed  
2 small carrots, sliced  
6-7 cups (1.5-1.75 L) water  
4 strips bacon, cut in pieces  
1 teaspoon (5 ml) salt  
½ teaspoon (2.5 ml) pepper

Skin and clean 1 rabbit. Cut into pieces. Place in a medium cooking pot.

Add vegetables.

Boil until meat is cooked and vegetables are soft.

In a separate bowl, mix ½ cup (125 ml) flour and 1 cup (250 ml) water together until smooth.

Add to soup and stir until well mixed.

This recipe serves 4-5 people. Serve immediately.

If canning Rabbit Stew, omit the thickening step and fill jars following instructions for **LOW ACID** foods.

In a pressure canner at 10 lbs (68 kPa), process 500 ml (pint) jars for 65 minutes and 1 L (quart) jars for 75 minutes.

Follow **LOW ACID** directions for cooling/opening pressure canner.

When serving stew, drain liquid from a jar of Rabbit Stew into pan.

Mix some flour and water to make a light broth.

Stir into the liquid to make a lightly thickened broth.

Add solids from jar; heat and serve.



### Duck Soup

Delphine Williams, Elder - Woodland Cree First Nation

Amounts of the ingredients will depend on how many people you need to feed.

Wash all vegetables in clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt and cut up potatoes, diced carrots, onions, or use frozen vegetables.

Cut up duck into chunks and place them in a large pot.

Add water. Cook duck in a pot for 25-30 minutes.

(Younger ducks will take less time to cook.)

Add vegetables and boil until soft.

Skim fat off top.

Fill the jars following instructions for **LOW ACID** foods.

In a pressure canner at 10 lbs (68 kPa), process boneless meat in 500 ml (pint) jars for 75 minutes and 1 L (quart) jars for 90 minutes. For bone-in meat, process 500 ml (pint) jars for 65 minutes and 1 L (quart) jars for 75 minutes.

Follow **LOW ACID** directions for cooling/opening pressure canner.

When serving Duck Soup, drain liquid from jar into a saucepan and thicken as described in recipe.

Add solids from the jar; heat and serve.

*If NOT canning this stew, you can thicken the broth by following these steps.*

Take ½ - ¾ cup (125-187 ml) of cold water and add 3 tablespoons (45 ml) of flour. Mix well to make thin paste.

(You can also use crushed rolled oats instead of flour.)

Make sure there are no lumps.

Add the mixture to the soup, stirring constantly.

Cook until soup thickens.

You can adjust the amount of flour and water you add, depending on how thick or thin you want the soup.

### Canned Duck (also for Deer and Moose Meat)

**Alma Jacknife, Elder - Cold Lake First Nation**

Clean duck and get ready. (Pluck feathers, etc.)

Cut into pieces and put into clean, prepared canning jars.

Fill the jars with water, leaving headspace.

Add ½ teaspoon (2.5 ml) of salt and a bit of pepper.

Fill jars following instructions for **LOW ACID** foods.

In a pressure canner at 10 lbs (68 kPa), process boneless meat in 500 ml (pint) jars for 75 minutes; 1 L (quart) jars for 90 minutes.

For bone-in meat, process 500 ml (pint) jars for 65 minutes and 1 L (quart) jars for 75 minutes.

Follow **LOW ACID** directions for cooling/opening pressure canner.

**NOTE:** *Canned duck is good to make into soup or gravy.*

### Canned Whitefish

**Margaret Bulldog, Elder - Beaver First Nation**

Preserve fish in 250 ml (half-pint) or 500 ml (pint) jars only; larger 1 L (quart) jars are not recommended for preserving fish.

Clean and scale whitefish.

Cut fish to pack into clean pint 500 ml (pint) jars.

To each jar, add 1½ tablespoons (25 ml) of vinegar, 1 tablespoon (15 ml) of oil, 2 tablespoons (30 ml) of tomato soup and ½ teaspoon (2.5 ml) of salt.

In a pressure canner at 10 lbs (68 kPa), process 250 ml (half-pint) or 500 ml (pint) jars for 100 minutes.

Follow **LOW ACID** directions for cooling/opening pressure canner.



### Canned Moose Meat

**Albina and Margaret Bulldog, Elders - Beaver First Nation**

You will need moose meat, salt, pork fat and some canning jars.

Cut the moose meat into small pieces.

Rinse the pieces with warm water.

Put meat into clean and prepared 500 ml (pint) canning jars.

Add 1 teaspoon (5 ml) of salt and a small piece of pork fat. (The pork fat brings out the flavour.)

**Do not add water to raw-packed meat.**

Leave 1 inch (2½ cm) headspace.

Fill jars following instructions for **LOW ACID** foods.

In a pressure canner at 10 lb (68 kPa), process boneless meat in 500 ml (pint) jars for 75 minutes and 1 L (quart) jars for 90 minutes.

**NOTE:** *The jar contents will have a jelly-like consistency. If it is still too watery, do not use it.*

Follow **LOW ACID** directions for cooling/opening pressure canner.

Store in cellar for up to 1 year.

Meat can be used to make soup or gravy.

Serve with potatoes and other vegetables.

### Canned Moose Meat

**Margaret Bulldog, Elder - Beaver First Nation**

Wash and clean moose meat.

Cut into 2x2 inch (5x5 cm) pieces.

Slice peeled clove of garlic and mix throughout meat.

Fill clean 1 L (quart) jars with meat mixture.

Sprinkle some salt and pepper in each jar.

**Do not add water to raw-packed meat.**

Fill jars following instructions for **LOW ACID** foods.

In a pressure canner at 10 lbs (68 kPa), process boneless meat in 500 ml (pint) jars for 75 minutes and 1 L (quart) jars for 90 minutes.

Follow **LOW ACID** directions for cooling/opening pressure canner.

The meat should be jellied when cooled.

Store jars in a cool dry place.

## RECIPES FOR CANNING MEATS...CONTINUED

### Canned Chicken

**Florence Youngchief, CHR - Kehewin First Nation**

Cut chicken from bones.

Place a handful of chopped onions in the bottom of clean canning jars.

Fill jars loosely with cut-up chicken pieces and chopped onions. Allow 1 inch (2.5 cm) headspace.

Add 1 teaspoon (5 ml) of salt and pepper to each jar.

Do not add water.

In a pressure canner at 10 lbs (68 kPa), process boneless meat in 500 ml (pint) jars for 75 minutes and 1 L (quart) jars for 90 minutes.

Follow **LOW ACID** directions for cooling/opening pressure canner.

### Canned Fish

**Florence Youngchief, CHR - Kehewin First Nation**

Preserve fish in 250 ml (half-pint) or 500 ml (pint) jars only.

Larger 1 L (quart) jars are not recommended for preserving fish.

Jars must be clean, but need not be heated prior to adding fish.

Pack clean, chilled fish into canning jars filling to within 1 inch (2.5 cm) of top rim.

Mix together:

- 2 teaspoons (10 ml) vinegar
- 2 tablespoons (30 ml) ketchup
- 1 teaspoon (5 ml) vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon (5 ml) salt
- a pinch of dry mustard and pepper to taste

Pour this mixture over fish in the jar.

Clean rim of jar and put on hot sealing discs.

In a pressure canner at 10 lbs (68 kPa), process 250 (half-pint) or 500 ml (pint) jars for 100 minutes.

Follow **LOW ACID** directions for cooling/opening pressure canner.



# ELEVATION CHART

Water boils at different temperatures depending on the elevation of the land above sea level. The higher you are from sea level, the lower the temperature needs to be for the water to boil. This means that at higher elevations, you must boil the equipment for a longer time in order to kill microorganisms. Boiling for a longer time at a lower temperature will kill microorganisms the same way that boiling at a higher temperature for a shorter time, will.

How to use the charts:

1. Find a town or city close to where you live (see chart on following page).
2. Compare the elevation of the town or city with the chart below.
3. Process **HIGH ACID** canning jars according to the times listed in the chart in this section for canning **HIGH ACID** foods.

## ELEVATION CHARTS FOR CANNING

For canning **HIGH ACID** foods, at elevations higher than 305 metres (1,000 feet) use the following chart:

### INCREASE PROCESSING TIMES FOR HIGH ACID FOODS.

ALTITUDE	PROCESSING TIME INCREASE
Metres	Minutes
306-915	5
916-7,830	10
1,831-2,440	15
2,441-3,050	20

For canning **LOW ACID** foods, at elevations of higher than 1,000 ft (305 m) use the following chart:

Weighted gauge canner-10 lbs (68 kPa).

*NOTE: Recommended processing times for LOW ACID foods does not change.*

ALTITUDE	WEIGHTED GAUGE		DIAL GAUGE		
	Meters	lbs	kPa	lbs	kPa
0-305	10	68	11	75	
306-609	15	102	11	75	
610-1,219	15	102	12	82	
1,220-1,828	15	102	13	89	
1,829-2,438	15	102	14	95	
2,439-3,048	15	102	15	102	

## ELEVATION CHART...CONTINUED

### ELEVATION CHART

#### TREATY 6

Camrose	739 m
Cold Lake	541 m
Edmonton (city centre)	671 m
Elk Point	605 m
Glenevis	732 m
Rocky Mountain House	988 m
Stony Plain	766 m
Winfield	910 m

#### TREATY 7

Calgary (Elbow View)	1128 m
Cardston	1193 m
Cochrane	1311 m
Fort McLeod	950 m
Gleichen	905 m
Kananaskis	1391 m
Lethbridge	921 m
Nordegg	1320 m

#### TREATY 8

Bigstone	774 m
Eureka River	665 m
Fort Chipewyan	232 m
Fort McMurray	369 m
Grande Prairie	669 m
High Level	338 m
Peace River	571 m
Slave Lake	581 m
Valleyview	762 m

*Source: Environment Canada - Canadian Climate Normals, 1971-2000 (see reference list for website address).*

**FOR EXAMPLE:** if you live in Slave Lake you are at an elevation of 581 metres (m). This means you would increase your processing time for **canning HIGH ACID foods** by 5 minutes. If you live in Cardston, you are at an elevation of 1193 m so you would increase your processing time for **canning HIGH ACID foods** by 10 minutes.







# FREEZING FOODS





# HISTORY OF FREEZING

Freezers have not been around for a long time. Before freezers, foods could only be kept frozen when the weather allowed it - in the winter! Foods were stored outside, usually in a shelter to keep animals away. This method could only be used if the temperature outside stayed cold enough. Once spring came, other methods of preserving had to be used. During a mild winter, freezing foods was not an option.

It has only been in more recent years that people are able to easily freeze everything from fresh berries to homemade stews. Freezers are now not very expensive and are easy to buy. Freezing is also a simple way to store foods quickly and safely. Because of this, people today freeze foods for later use more than any other preserving method.

"ANYTHING THAT LIVES IN WATER  
SHOULD BE FROZEN IN WATER."

MARY RAIN, ELDER - PAUL FIRST NATION



# HOW DOES FREEZING WORK?

Microorganisms that cause food to spoil cannot grow at temperatures of  $-18^{\circ}\text{C}$  to  $-23^{\circ}\text{C}$  ( $0^{\circ}\text{F}$  to  $-10^{\circ}\text{F}$ ). Therefore, frozen foods, if properly prepared, will keep safe as long as they stay frozen. **NOTE: Freezing DOES NOT KILL these microorganisms.** As soon as the food is thawed, the organisms can grow again and cause food to spoil.

Freezing also stops the enzymes in foods that cause foods to ripen. This helps to keep the natural flavour and colour of frozen foods. However, freezing does cause some changes in the foods. The water found naturally in food freezes to make ice crystals. These crystals have sharp edges that can damage the tiny walls of cells of the food. When thawed, foods will be mushy.

It is best to freeze foods quickly in a very cold freezer. The crystals will be smaller if freezing is fast. Also avoid thawing, then re-freezing. Thawing gives microorganisms that are present an opportunity to multiply rapidly to high levels. They may not necessarily be killed upon re-freezing, which is why thawing and re-freezing should be avoided. The fewer the bacteria found in foods, the less likely the risk of illness. Thawing also increases the damage to the cells of the food and means the quality will be poor. Thawing also increases the amount of time a food spends in the danger zone.

*(Adapted from Canning, Freezing & Drying, see reference section)*





# SAFETY REMINDERS FOR FREEZING

## CLEAN

Wash your hands before working with food. Also, remember to wash your hands:

- after handling meat, poultry and seafood
- after using the washroom
- after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- after touching animals
- after changing diapers



## CHILL

Never defrost food at room temperature. Thaw food in the refrigerator, in cold water or in the microwave if you will be cooking with it immediately.

## COOK

Frozen raw berries and frozen cooked foods do not have to be cooked upon thawing but other foods such as raw meat, fish and uncooked casseroles do. See chart, on the following page, for cooking temperatures.

Freezing foods does not kill bacteria that may be on food, it only puts them to “sleep.” Cook frozen foods thoroughly, if required. Cooking times vary among different types of foods. Don’t leave cooked foods out at room temperature for longer than two hours. Store leftovers promptly.

## SEPARATE

Cooked foods can become contaminated with bacteria by coming into direct contact with contaminated foods (e.g. raw foods), contaminated kitchen utensils or contaminated counter surfaces. Therefore, to prevent the chance of cross-contamination, it is recommended that raw foods be kept separate from cooked foods. It is also necessary to keep raw foods separate from raw fruits or vegetables to prevent cross-contamination. Never re-use utensils or cutting boards that have been used to cut raw foods unless they have been cleaned and sanitized in between.

*(Modified from Fight BAC™ see reference section)*

## SAFETY REMINDERS FOR FREEZING... CONTINUED

### SAFE COOKING TEMPERATURES

Ground Meat & Meat Mixtures	
Beef, Pork, Veal, Lamb	160°F
Turkey, Chicken	165°F
Fresh Beef, Veal, Lamb	
Medium Rare	145°F
Medium	160°F
Well Done	170°F
Poultry	
Whole poultry and poultry parts	165°F
Stuffing (cooked alone or in bird)	165°F
Fresh Pork	
Medium	160°F
Well Done	170°F

Ham	
Fresh (raw)	160°F
Pre-cooked (to reheat)	140°F
Seafood	
Fish with fins	145°F
	or flesh is opaque and separates easily with fork
Leftovers & Casseroles	
Leftovers & Casseroles	165°F

*Internal temperature as measured with a food thermometer.*

#### *Sizzling Cooking Tips*

##### **Is It Done Yet?**

Use a clean food thermometer to measure the internal temperature of food to make sure meat, poultry, casseroles, and other types of food are cooked all the way through.

##### **Microwave Musts**

When cooking in a microwave oven, make sure there are no cold spots in food because bacteria can survive there. For best results, cover food, stir and rotate for even cooking. If there is no turntable, rotate the dish by hand once or twice during cooking. Observe stand times.

##### **Boil and Bubble**

Bring sauces, soups and gravies to a boil when reheating.

*Adapted from: [www.fightbac.org](http://www.fightbac.org)*



# RECIPES FOR FREEZING BERRIES

## Chokecherries

**Veronica Waskahat, Elder - Frog Lake First Nation and  
Lena Waskahat, CHR - Frog Lake First Nation**

Wash chokecherries with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Crush chokecherries finely with clean, smooth rocks.

Add sugar and lard.

Mixture should be smooth.

Put into freezer bags, label and freeze immediately.

## Freezing Berries

**Albina and Margaret Bulldog, Elders - Beaver First Nation**

Berries, especially saskatoons, taste better frozen than canned.

Wash berries (cranberries, raspberries, strawberries, saskatoons, or chokecherries) with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Put berries in medium size freezer bag.

For saskatoons, add 2 tablespoons (30 ml) of sugar.

Label and freeze in freezer bags.

Berries can be frozen individually on cookie sheets first and then put into freezer bags.

This way they hold their shape better.

When ready to eat, boil in some water.

Use to make pies or jellies.



# RECIPES FOR FREEZING JAMS/JELLIES

## Saskatoon Jam

Nancy Trottier, Elder - Frog Lake First Nation

Wash 5 quarts (5 L) of saskatoons with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Put berries in the blender on “chop.”

Add  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup (187 ml) sugar for every 1 cup (250 ml) of berries. Mix in 1 can (8 oz/240 ml) crushed pineapple and juice.

Let stand until sugar is dissolved, stirring often.

Label and freeze in clean plastic containers.





# RECIPES FOR FREEZING VEGETABLES

## Freezing Vegetables

Adapted from *Putting Foods By* - see Reference section

After picking vegetables, wash with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

For vegetables that may hide insects (broccoli, brussels sprouts and cauliflower), soak for a ½ hour in salt water (1 tablespoon (15 ml) salt in 1 quart (1 L) cold water).

Blanch vegetables in boiling water to stop enzymes that can make the vegetables lose their flavour and colour and make them tough.

Plunge vegetables into boiling water using a wire basket or cheesecloth.

Shake the vegetables in the water to get even treatment.

Leave in boiling water for 1½ - 5 minutes, depending on the size and density of the vegetable (see chart on Recommended Blanching Time for Various Vegetables).

Cool vegetables quickly in plenty of ice water.

When completely cooled, drain on clean towel.

Get rid of as much moisture as possible.

Spread a single layer of the vegetable on a tray or cookie sheet and place in the freezer.

When frozen, scoop the vegetables into any freezer-safe container (freezer bags or plastic containers).

Label contents.

### *Exceptions:*

*Beets, pumpkin and tomatoes should be cooked before freezing.*

"NUTRITIOUS FOOD AND VITAMINS  
CAN (HELP) CONTROL YOUR DIABETES."  
EILEEN JANVIER, ELDER - COLD LAKE FIRST NATION

## RECIPES FOR FREEZING VEGETABLES... CONTINUED

### RECOMMENDED BLANCHING TIME FOR VARIOUS VEGETABLES:

Vegetable	Blanching Time (Minutes)	Vegetable	Blanching Time (Minutes)
Beans	3	Kohlrabi, cubed	1
Broccoli	3	Mushrooms, whole	5
Cabbage	1 ½	Mushrooms, sliced	3
Carrots, whole	5	Parsnips, whole	5
Carrots, cut up	2	Parsnips, cut up	2
Cauliflower	3 (in salted water)	Peas	1 ½
Celery	3	Peppers, sliced	2
Corn	4	Rutabagas, cubed	2
Greens, wild	2	Squash	3
Kohlrabi, whole	3	Turnips, cubed	2

### Freezing Garden Vegetables

Isabelle Smallface, Elder - Beaver Lake First Nation

Wash garden peas or carrots with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Cut carrots into small pieces.

Boil the vegetables until half-cooked (approximately 10-15 minutes).

Be sure not to let them overcook.

Drain water and cool.

Put into freezer bags, label and store in freezer.

To reheat, boil in water for a few minutes until soft.



# RECIPES FOR FREEZING MEAT AND FISH

## Freezing Fish

**Mary Rain, Elder - Paul First Nation**

Clean the fish; take the insides out.

Cut it so it is ready to cook.

Place fish in a clean, empty ice cream pail.

Fill the pail with water and put the lid on.

Label and put in freezer.

The fish will keep for a least 1 month.

The taste of the fish is better this way than if it was frozen in a freezer bag.

There is no freezer burn and it does not dry out.

## Freezing Goose/Duck/Prairie Chicken/Turkey

**Margaret Bulldog, Elder - Beaver First Nation**

Cut off the head of the bird.

Pluck the feathers.

Dunk bird in hot water if necessary to make the feathers come out better.

Singe over an open fire.

Pull out the insides.

Rinse the cavity with water.

Cut the feet off.

Put in an extra large freezer bag, label and freeze immediately.

## RECIPES FOR FREEZING MEAT AND FISH... CONTINUED

### Freezing Duck or Fish

**Delphine Williams, Elder - Woodland Cree First Nation**

Pluck as many feathers as possible off a duck.

Do not dunk it in hot water first - the skin will come off the duck.

Young ducks are harder to clean because they have pin feathers.

Singe the duck over an open fire to get rid of the remaining feathers.

To do this, put on a dry willow stick, or hold by the wings or by the feet, then singe it over the fire. It is cleaner to singe the duck if it is left whole.

Using a small dry willow, scrape the burned feathers off it.

Wash the duck.

Clean the insides out of the duck.

Keep the heart, gizzard and intestines for later.

Wash it out again.

The duck can either be cut up or kept whole.

Put it in a clean, empty 2 L milk carton and fill with water (for smaller ducks use smaller cartons).

If you are unable to use milk cartons, you can use freezer bags.

Close the carton - fold and staple the top or cover with wax. Make sure the duck is not exposed to any air.

Label and freeze immediately.

To use, you don't have to thaw it out, just cook it, boil it or roast it.

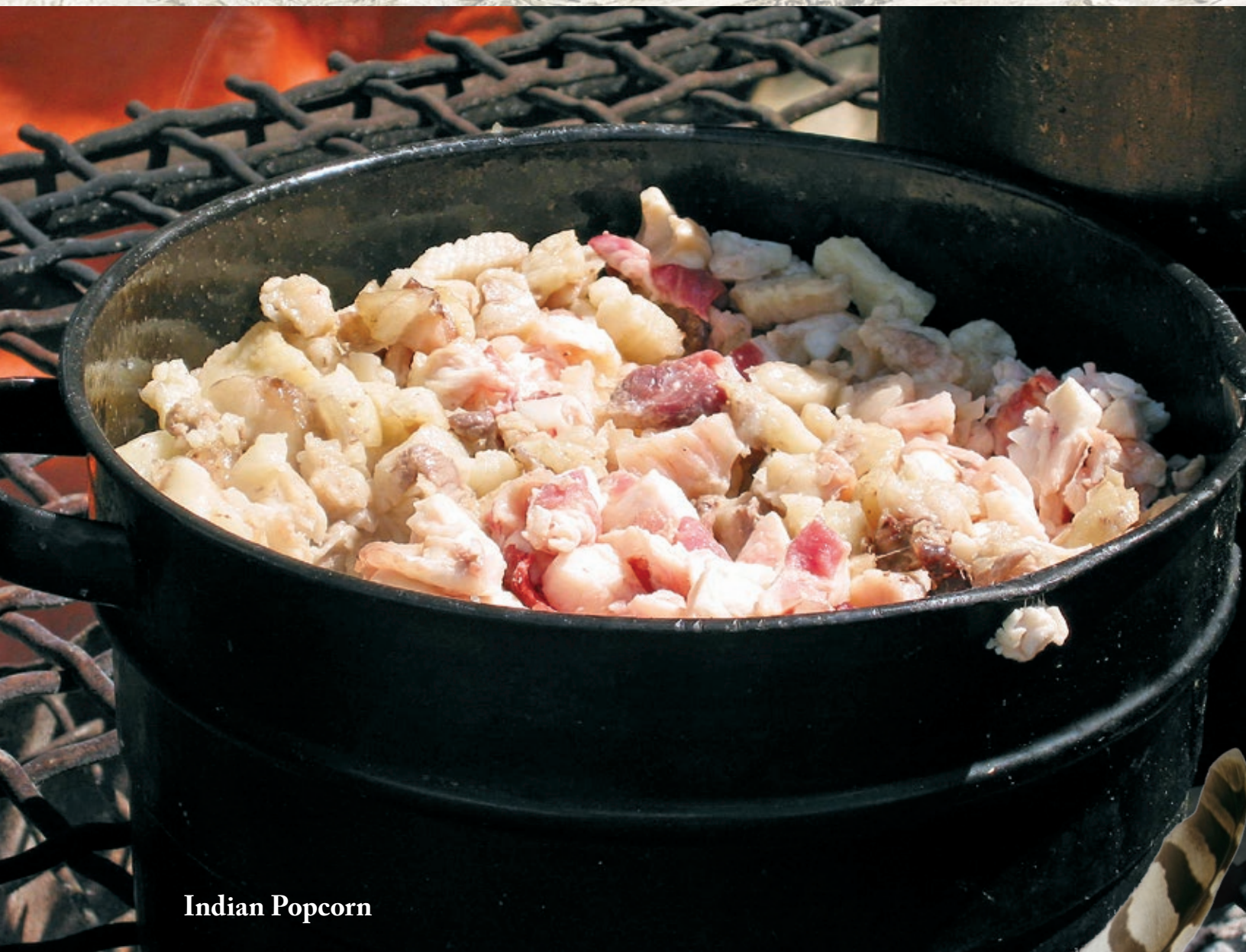
You can also freeze fresh fish this way.







# MISCELLANEOUS RECIPES



Indian Popcorn



# HISTORY OF MISCELLANEOUS FOODS

Many of the recipes in this section were nutritionally beneficial to the First Nations people who ate them in the past. Using or consuming all parts of the animal was also a common practise. Although these foods contained high levels of fat, they were sometimes the only source of fat. First Nations people were much more physically active in the past, living a hunting and gathering lifestyle. Due to this active lifestyle, high levels of fat from foods like Indian popcorn, homemade grease or animal lard were needed for energy.

Today, people are much less active and therefore require smaller amounts of fat from animal sources. Healthier fats are now available from other sources including plant and vegetable oils. Animal fats found in Indian popcorn, homemade grease or animal lard contain higher levels of less healthy fats and therefore should be limited to special occasions such as feasts or gatherings. Selecting lean, traditional meats and wild game from moose, elk, deer, etc., and a variety of fats from vegetable and plant oils will help maintain a healthy lifestyle.

"ELDERS LIKE TO HAVE TRIPE, INTESTINES AND "THE BIBLE" A PART OF THE INTESTINE THAT IS NOT COMPLETELY CLEAN. IT MUST BE BOILED WELL, BUT THERE IS BETTER FLAVOUR THAN IF THEY WERE CLEANED VERY WELL... INTESTINES FROM DIFFERENT ANIMALS GIVE A DIFFERENT TASTE."  
RUSSELL CATTLEMAN, ELDER - MONTANA FIRST NATION

# MISCELLANEOUS RECIPES

## Muskrat in the Oven

**Florence Youngchief, CHR - Kehewin First Nation and  
Isabelle Smallface, Elder - Beaver Lake First Nation**

Skin and clean 1 muskrat. Cut into pieces.

Put muskrat in a small roaster with a lid.

Add ½ cup (125 ml) water.

Cook in oven at 350°F (175°C) for 1 hour.

After 1 hour, add:

- 3 small carrots, sliced
- 4 small potatoes, cubed
- 1 small onion, chopped
- ½ cup (125 ml) water

Cook in oven until vegetables are soft and meat is thoroughly cooked.

Serves 4 people.

## Gophers

**Russell Cattleman, Elder - Montana First Nation**

*Although gophers are not safe to eat anymore due to pesticides, many people remember eating them when they were young. At that time, gophers were only eaten in the early spring because they were the cleanest to eat.*

Burn hair off.

Cut it into pieces.

Boil gopher, changing the water frequently.

Gophers can also be deep-fried.



## MISCELLANEOUS RECIPES...CONTINUED

### Squirrels

Margaret Marshall, Elder - Horse Lake First Nation

Skin the squirrel the same way you would skin a rabbit.

Once the squirrel is skinned, take the thighs/legs out.

Clean the thighs/legs thoroughly with water.

To get the wild taste out of the squirrel, you may place in water and vinegar overnight by putting ½ cup (125 ml) or less of vinegar with the meat and add water to cover.

Refrigerate immediately.

The amount of vinegar will depend on how much water is needed.

Too much vinegar will make the meat taste like vinegar.

Place thighs/legs in roasting pan with a little bit of salt and pepper.

Add barbeque sauce and onions if desired.

Add a little water so the meat will not burn.

Do not add too much water since you will boil the meat instead of roasting it.

Cook in oven for ½ an hour at 350°F (175°C).

To check if meat is cooked, cut into the meat near the bone.

Meat should not be pink.

*The author of this recipe recommends that the best time to eat squirrels is in December, January and February during a cold winter.*

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *It is recommended that meat should be cured and marinated overnight in the refrigerator and never at room temperature. This is done to reduce the possibility of contracting a food-borne illness.*

## MISCELLANEOUS RECIPES...CONTINUED

### Moose Nose

**Wilfred Belcourt, Elder - Horse Lake First Nation**

Cut the nostrils of the moose nose open so it lies flat.

Build a fire using young, dry poplar wood.

Over the open fire, burn hair off the moose nose.

Scrape the singed hair off with a sharp knife.

Place the nose over the fire again and singe remaining hair. Scrape again.

Repeat until all the hair is completely removed.

Nose will be yellow when done.

Wash thoroughly.

Cut into pieces and place in a large pot.

Add water to cover and boil for 45-70 minutes.

After 45 minutes, check to see if it is cooked.

Continue cooking until the nose is soft.

Moose nose can be served with bannock, potatoes or whatever you prefer to eat with your moose nose.

Keep leftovers in the refrigerator for 1-2 days.

### Moose Liver

**Margaret Bulldog, Elder - Beaver First Nation**

Thoroughly wash moose liver.

Roll in flour.

Fry in a pan, with onions if desired.



## MISCELLANEOUS RECIPES...CONTINUED

### Duck Intestines

**Delphine Williams, Elder - Woodland Cree First Nation**

When cleaning the duck, take the intestines only up to the “Y” (the place just before the intestines leave the body).

Squeeze along the intestine to remove the waste inside.

Wash the intestines thoroughly.

Place on a stick and roast over an open fire.

Eat as is.

### Moose Heart

**Margaret Bulldog, Elder - Beaver First Nation**

Clean moose heart with cold water.

Stuff the moose heart with breadcrumbs, salt, pepper and sage (like a turkey stuffing).

Bake in the oven until cooked thoroughly.

Refrigerate any leftovers immediately.

### Sweet and Sour Sauce

**Margaret Bulldog, Elder - Beaver First Nation**

In a saucepan, mix together:

½ cup (125 ml) of vinegar

7 tablespoons (105 ml) ketchup

7 tablespoons (105 ml) brown sugar

1 tablespoon (15 ml) soya sauce

1 tablespoon (15 ml) cornstarch to thicken.

Bring to boil. Cool. Use on ribs. May also be frozen.

### Partridge, Beaver or Rabbit in Syrup

Wilfred Belcourt, Elder - Horse Lake First Nation

*This is done in the spring while out hunting or trapping.*

Prepare the bird, beaver or rabbit.

Pluck the bird; singe off any fine feathers or skin it; gut and clean it.

Skin the beaver or rabbit and wash.

You can just use the beaver tail if you want.

Make a 2 foot (60 cm) cut down the side of a poplar tree.

Make a second cut on the other side of the tree.

Remove the bark to make 2 pieces that will form a dish and a lid.

Gather sap by scraping upward with a knife along the tree where the bark was removed.

Put sap in the bottom of the bark dish about ½-1 inch (1-2½ cm) deep.

Place the meat into the dish on top of the sap.

Cover meat with enough sap to coat it.

The sap will tenderize the meat and give it a sweet taste as it cooks.

Place the other sheet of bark on top of the dish.

Tie the 2 pieces of bark together using snare wire or other wire that will not burn.

Bury the bark in the coals of a fire.

Re-build the fire above the coals.

Cook for 20-25 minutes or until meat is thoroughly cooked.

Remove the bark from the fire and peel away the lid.

Eat right away.

Refrigerate any leftovers immediately.



## MISCELLANEOUS RECIPES...CONTINUED

### Honey Mustard Dressing

Margaret Bulldog, Elder - Beaver First Nation

In a small bowl, mix together:

- 2 teaspoons (10 ml) of prepared mustard
- 2 tablespoons (30 ml) of vinegar
- 2 teaspoons (10 ml) of oil
- 2 teaspoons (10 ml) of honey
- ¼ teaspoon (1.25 ml) of celery seed

Mix well.

Use on salad or ribs.

### Baked Bannock

Sylvia McDonald, CHR/Elder - Enoch First Nation

In a large bowl combine the following:

- 6 cups (1.5 L) of flour
- 2 tablespoons (30 ml) baking powder
- 1 tablespoon (15 ml) salt

Add 3 cups 1% milk. Use warm milk or remove the chill from milk as this prevents clumping of the dough.

Add about ⅓ cup oil. (Oil helps make the bannock softer and it helps keep it longer).

*NOTE: If you use whole milk do not add oil.*

Gradually stir as you pour milk and oil, to form dough.

Knead dough about 20 times.

Once altogether, knead until you can hold in your hand so it does not flop over the sides of your hands.

Spread out onto a cookie sheet using a rolling pin, until about 1 inch (2.5 cm) thick.

Bannock will not rise much more than this.

Cook in the center of a regular oven at 400°F (204°C) for 20-22 minutes, until golden brown. (Bannock does not require flipping).

If recipe is followed exactly, bannock should be perfect.

## Ways of Cooking Bannock

Judy Belcourt and Margaret Marshall, Elders - Horse Lake First Nation



Once the bannock dough has been prepared, these are different ways to cook it.

### BY THE FIRE: (using hot coals and heat from the fire)

Flatten bannock dough and place in a cast iron frying pan.

Place the pan on hot coals beside the fire.

Prop the pan a little at an angle toward the fire so that the heat cooks the one side and the coals cook the bottom.

Be sure to turn bannock so it will cook evenly.



## MISCELLANEOUS RECIPES...CONTINUED

**OVER AN OPEN FIRE:** Roll the dough like a wiener.

Place dough on a stick and put over the fire.

Keep turning the stick with dough until it is dark brown.

Be sure to roll the dough so it is not too thick or too thin.

Cook slowly - if cooked too fast, the bannock will be cooked on the outside but not on the inside.



**TIP**

*Cooking bannock without extra oil or grease, such as baking it or cooking it over an open fire, will add less fat to the bannock. This makes it a healthier way to eat it.*

## MISCELLANEOUS RECIPES...CONTINUED

### Indian Popcorn

**Rachel Betty Hoof, Elder - Kainai First Nation**

Take all the fat from meat.

Chop fat in a food processor.

Bake in oven at 150°C (300°F) until brown and crispy.

Eat immediately.

Refrigerate any leftovers.

### Tallow/Indian Popcorn

**Delphine Williams, Elder - Woodland Cree First Nation**

Wash the fat from the kidneys of a moose.

Cut fat into small pieces and place in a pot.

Heat grease on low so as not to burn yourself or have the grease splash around.

Add 1 cup (250 ml) of water while it is cooking.

Keep stirring while cooking.

Before it hardens, crush cleaned and washed Partridge berries (dry, orange-red berries with seeds that partridges eat).

Mix berries with the grease.

Add some salt or sugar for taste.

Pour into muffin tins until it hardens.

Once it hardens, store in a bag in the deep freezer.

The leftover rendered fat can be used for crackling.

Add salt.



## MISCELLANEOUS RECIPES...CONTINUED

### Homemade Lard/Indian Popcorn

**Veronica Waskahat, Nancy Trottier, Elders - Frog Lake First Nation,  
Lena Waskahat, CHR - Frog Lake First Nation, and Charlene Gadwa, CHR - Kehewin First Nation**

Cut beef fat into small cubes.

Put fat in a roasting pan and cover.

Cook on top of the stove or in the oven, stirring occasionally until crisp. Be careful not to burn yourself.

Drain fat into containers and store in the refrigerator or freezer.

This also gives you Indian popcorn.

### Moose Lard Grease

**Margaret and Albina Bulldog, Elders - Beaver First Nation**

Fall moose have more fat.

Take fat from moose.

Put fat in a pot and bring to a boil.

Once boiled, cool slightly, then pour into containers.

Refrigerate or freeze immediately.

### Heart Lining Bag

**Mary Rain, Elder - Paul First Nation**

Take lining of heart out and wash it well.

If you do not have any paper around to place lining on, you can place on clean moss.

Shape the heart like a basket.

After you put food in it, sew it up with thread or sinew.

Refrigerate immediately.

## MISCELLANEOUS RECIPES...CONTINUED

### Container for Wild Meat Sausage

Mary Rain, Elder - Paul First Nation

Use cleaned out intestines as a bag or sack.

Dry them out.

Fill with dried meat, pemmican or lard made from wild meat fat, then sew it up.

Refrigerate or freeze.

### Moose Lard (from rump)

Maggy Noskiye, Elder - Woodland Cree First Nation

Take the fat from the rump of a moose.

Wash the fat thoroughly.

Dry for one day.

For faster drying, cut the fat into strips.

Dice into small pieces.

Place in a large pot and cook over high heat until the fat has melted.

Be sure to stir constantly to prevent burning.

The fat will be white in colour when done.

**Be careful: the oil gets very hot when cooking.**

This can be stored in a prepared bag such as a moose bladder, or in other clean containers.

Refrigerate or freeze.

Moose lard can be served with dry meat and pemmican.

Leftover lard from cooking is called Indian Popcorn and can be eaten later.



## MISCELLANEOUS RECIPES...CONTINUED

### Lard Storage Bag

Maggy Noskiye, Elder - Woodland Cree First Nation

Wash the bladder of the moose thoroughly.

Blow the bag up and hang to dry in the sun.

There is no need to cook it.

When dry, fill the bag with lard/tallow.

Once filled, tie the bag with string or sinew.

Tallow will keep for a long time in this bag.

These bags were only used for storage purposes.

### Homemade Grease

Mary Rain, Elder - Paul First Nation

Remove the meat from the leg bones of any animal (deer, moose, elk or cow).

Crack the bones and boil for several hours in a large pot of water.

Remove from heat and let the mixture cool overnight.

The grease and marrow will rise to the top.

Skim the fat off the top and place it in another pot.

Boil the grease again, and then put it into storage containers.

Refrigerate or freeze immediately.

Use like butter for cooking, frying or to spread on bannock.



*Elk fat hardens very quickly. Children were not allowed to eat it because it was believed that it hardened in the mouth and throat and could choke them. Since adults drank hot liquids like tea, it was not a concern for them.*

## MISCELLANEOUS RECIPES...CONTINUED

### Moose Lard (from heart and kidneys)

**Maggy Noskiye, Elder - Woodland Cree First Nation**

Take the fat from around the kidneys and heart of a moose.

Wash the fat thoroughly.

Dry in the sun for approximately 1 day.

Dice into small pieces and place in a large pot.

Cook the pieces over medium heat in large pot with 1-1 ½ cups (250-375 mL) of water.

Stir constantly.

Let cool when cooked.

Refrigerate or freeze immediately.

### Storing Homemade Grease

**Mary Rain, Elder - Paul First Nation**

*Although not done today, this is how Mary Rain's grandmother did it.*

Remove waste from inside animal's intestines.

Wash thoroughly with water.

You can put the end up to the tap and run water through it until it is clean.

Do not dry the intestines.

Fill with grease and tie each end with sinew.

Store in plastic containers and refrigerate.

It keeps for a long time.

Use lard for cooking or serve with dry meat and pemmican.

It can also be used as soap.



## MISCELLANEOUS RECIPES...CONTINUED

### Beaver Tail

**Margaret Marshall and Wilfred Belcourt, Elders - Horse Lake First Nation**

Make a fire using willows or white poplar for best flavour.

Clean the beaver tail.

Put it in the hot coals of the fire to get the top layer off.

Once the top layer is off, cut the tail into long strips about 1½ inches (4 cm) wide.

Place tail on a sheet of tin foil.

Add salt and pepper, barbeque sauce and onion (if you wish).

Wrap together in the foil and then wrap a second sheet of foil around it.

Place in the oven for approximately 20 minutes.

Check to see if it is done.

If not, put back in the oven for 25 or 30 minutes.

**OR:**

Once wrapped in foil, place the beaver tail under the hot coals of a fire.

Add more wood on top to keep the fire going.

Cook for approximately 20 minutes.

Refrigerate any leftovers immediately.

### Intestines

**Albina Bulldog, Elder - Beaver First Nation**

Turn intestines of a large animal (moose, deer, or cow) inside out.

Wash thoroughly with water.

Hang to smoke or cook in oven or over fire.

Intestines turn crispy when ready to eat.

## MISCELLANEOUS RECIPES...CONTINUED

### Lining around Stomach and Intestines

**Richard Rabbit - Montana First Nation**

Clean lining around stomach and intestines thoroughly with water.

Cook in the oven or dry in the sun.

They can also be cooked on an open fire.

Eat as is or use as storage for grease.

### Margaret's Stuffing

**Margaret Bulldog, Elder - Beaver First Nation**

Wash vegetables with clean water to remove microorganisms and dirt.

Grate onion, carrots and potatoes.

Brown lean hamburger in a large frying pan.

When done drain in a strainer.

Add vegetables to pan and return to heat.

Cook until vegetables are soft.

Mix bread crumbs in separate bowl.

Moisten crumbs with water.

Mix bread, meat, and vegetables together.

Add salt, pepper and poultry seasoning to taste.

Stuff into the cavity of any bird you want.

For prairie chicken, bake 1-2 hours at 375°F (190°C).

For duck, bake 2-2½ hours at 375°F (190°C).

Ensure meat is cooked thoroughly.



## MISCELLANEOUS RECIPES...CONTINUED

### Baby Rattle

**Julia House, Elder - Paul First Nation**

Take grouse or chicken.

Cut out the throat containing the stones.

Wash out the throat leaving the stones inside.

Fill with air and tie the opening.

Hang to dry.

Once dry, it can be used as a baby rattle.

*EDITOR'S NOTE: This could be a choking hazard for infants and toddlers. There is also a concern with giving dried-up chicken parts to a baby who may suck on the rattle.*

### Birch Bark Syrup

**Maggy Noskiye, Elder - Woodland Cree First Nation and  
Evelyn Noskey, CHR - Loon River First Nation**

Make a 'V' shape cut near the bottom of a large birch tree.

A second 'V' can be made on the other side of the tree.

Put a small stick at the 'V' cut in the tree.

Put a large container or pail at the bottom of tree to collect the sap.

You will need approximately 10 gallons (40 L) of sap to make ½ gallon (2 L) of syrup.

Make hooks with wire or sticks and attach to a smoke rack. Build a fire under the rack.

Hang smaller pails of sap on the hooks.

Boil sap until it gets dark and thick.

Store syrup in clean washed plastic pails or cans, not in jars.

The syrup can be served with bannock.

*NOTE: This is best done in early spring before the leaves are out.*

## MISCELLANEOUS RECIPES...CONTINUED

### Sugar Candy

**Delphine Williams, Elder - Woodland Cree First Nation**

Put 1 cup (250 ml) of white sugar in a skillet (not a non-stick pan) on low heat or at 250°F (120°C) in an oven.

Stir constantly with a wooden spoon until all the sugar is melted.

Add 1 heaping teaspoon (5 ml) of maple syrup.

Continue stirring.

Remove from heat.

Add 1 tablespoon (15 ml) of flour to the mixture of sugar and syrup.

Stir until cool.

If desired, add peanuts before it hardens.

Make sure to take the pan off the heat while it is still warm.

**Do not spill or handle with bare hands until completely cool.**

Store in the fridge or in a cool place.

Eat as a snack.

Take some with you on a long hike to keep your energy level up.

### Birch Bark Baskets

**Mary Rain and Julia House, Elders - Paul First Nation**

Make a line in a birch tree for the amount needed to make 1 basket.

Peel bark as much as needed.

Use while bark is still soft.

Make holes around the edge of the bark with a leather or hole punch.

Fold sheet in half.

Fold the corners like those on a Tetra pack juice box or like wrapping a present.

Use embroidery thread or sinew and  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch (2 cm) square needle to sew the edges and corners to make a pocket.

Berries or other foods can be stored in these baskets.

The top can be sewn shut or left open.





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