

# Preparedness Hints

## Pressure Canners Continued



Handle canner lid gaskets carefully and clean them according to the manufacturer's directions. Nicked or dried gaskets will allow steam leaks during pressurization of canners. Keep gaskets clean between uses. Gaskets on older model canners may require a light coat of vegetable oil once per year. Gaskets on newer model canners are pre-lubricated and do not benefit from oiling. Check your canner's instructions if there is doubt that the particular gasket you use has been pre-lubricated.

Lid safety fuses are thin metal inserts or rubber plugs designed to relieve excessive pressure from the canner. Do not pick at or scratch fuses while cleaning lids. Use only canners that have the Underwriter's Laboratory (UL) approval to ensure their safety.

Replacement gauges and other parts for canners are often available at stores offering canning equipment or from canner manufacturers. When ordering parts, give your canner model number and describe the parts needed.

### Using Pressure Canners

Follow these steps for successful pressure canning:

- Put 2 to 3 inches of hot water in the canner. Place filled jars on the rack, using a jar lifter. Fasten canner lid securely.
  - Leave weight off vent port or open petcock. Heat at the highest setting until steam flows from the petcock or vent port.
  - Maintain high heat setting, exhaust steam 10 minutes, and then place weight on vent port or close petcock. The canner will pressurize during the next 3 to 5 minutes.
  - Start timing the process when the pressure reading on the dial gauge indicates that the recommended pressure has been reached or when the weighted gauge begins to jiggle or rock.
  - Regulate heat under the canner to maintain a steady pressure at or slightly above the correct gauge pressure. Quick and large pressure variations during processing may cause unnecessary liquid losses from jars. Weighted gauges on Mirro canners should jiggle about 2 or 3 times per minute. On Presto canners, they should rock slowly throughout the process.
- When the timed process is completed, turn off the heat, remove the canner from heat if possible, and let the canner depressurize. Do not force-cool the canner. Forced cooling may result in food spoilage. Cooling the canner with cold running water or opening the vent port before the canner is fully depressurized will cause loss of liquid from jars and seal failures. Force-cooling may also warp the canner lid of older model canners, causing steam leaks. Depressurization of older models should be timed. Standard-size heavy-walled canners require about 30 minutes when loaded with pints and 45 minutes with quarts. Newer thin-walled canners cool more rapidly and are equipped with vent locks. These canners are depressurized when their vent lock piston drops to a normal position.
  - After the canner is depressurized, remove the weight from the vent port or open the petcock. Wait 2 minutes, unfasten the lid, and remove it carefully. Lift the lid away from you so that the steam does not burn your face.
  - Remove jars with a lifter, and place on towel or cooling rack, if desired.

### Personal and Family Preparedness

**Vision:** Each family uses principles of provident living in their daily lives.

**Mission:** "Increase awareness and practice of home production and storage."