



## **Canning Crab**

**By Ora Emmerich**

**UCCE El Dorado County Master Food Preservers**

Nothing beats the sweet taste of fresh crab, and many markets offer this tasty treat at lower prices this time of year. Take advantage of this and enjoy as much crab as can be eaten, and then consider canning some for later.

Of course, pressure canning is the only safe method for canning seafood of any kind, and the folks at the Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County recommend that all pressure canners be in good condition and be tested for accuracy. (The MFPs would be glad to make an appointment to test any pressure canner with no charge for the service. Call the number below for more information.)

Some readers may live at an altitude above 1,000 feet. For these home food preservers, a chart listing recommended pressures for higher elevations must be followed to make sure that all pathogens succumb to the high temperatures produced when pressure canning.

A great publication from the Oregon State University Extension suggests that live crabs be kept on ice until canning preparations begin. Cook the crabs in boiling water to which lemon juice has been added at  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup per gallon. Boil whole crabs for 20 minutes. Cool cooked crab in cold water for 10 minutes. Remove backs and clean. Remove meat and rinse in a cool brine of 2 tablespoons salt and 1 cup lemon juice per gallon of water. Gently squeeze meat to remove excess water and pack into pint or half-pint jars, leaving  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch headspace. Add  $1\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoons vinegar per half-pint, (1 tablespoon per pint). Cover with boiling water, leaving 1-inch headspace. Adjust lids and process half pints for 70 minutes (pints for 80 minutes) at 10 pounds pressure (weighted gauge) or 11 pounds pressure (dial gauge). Increase pressure for higher elevations.

Check for the elevation chart and for more information on canning seafood from the OSU Extension at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/pdf/pnw/pnw194.pdf>. Enjoy the great taste of crab year-round by following these easy directions for canning safely.

For questions about safe home food preservation, or to schedule a speaker for organizations or clubs on the topics of food safety or food preservation, call the Master Food Preservers at (530) 621-5506. For more information, be sure to go to the Master Food Preserver website at [http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.org/Master\\_Food\\_Preservers/](http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.org/Master_Food_Preservers/). Sign up to receive our Master Food Preservers E-Newsletter at <http://ucanr.org/mfpenews/>.