

## **The Best Time of the Year – for Lemons**

By Sari Cochran

UCCE Master Food Preserver of El Dorado County

A winter garden is beautiful, especially to a UCCE Master Preserver. The season's bounty can be found in a search among the gothic branches and bramble of the haunting foothills and our unpruned gardens. Rosehips and kiwi are at their best, but both put up a fight so wear long gloves. Another garden warrior that requires armor, in the form of safety glasses, is arguably the biggest prize, the lemon.

The lemon is a frequent subject of the Master Food Preservers organization. The recipe below was recently brought up at a general meeting by the educational and generous Pati Kenney. Limoncello's diversity includes uses in baking, cooking, and sipping; often when baking and cooking. A beautiful spring colored batch is often brewing on the countertops in Italian households. Now it can be preserved in yours.

### **Limoncello**

*Yield: 7 cups*

- 10 lemons
- 3 ½ cups water
- 1 (750-ml) bottle vodka
- 2 ½ cups sugar

Using a vegetable peeler, remove peel from lemons in long strips.

Using a small sharp knife, trim away white pith from lemon peels; discard pith.

Place lemon peels in a 2-quart pitcher. Pour vodka over peels and cover with plastic wrap. Steep peels for 4 to 6 days at room temperature.

Stir water and sugar in a large saucepan over medium heat until the sugar dissolves, about 5 minutes. Cool completely.

Pour sugar syrup over vodka mixture. Cover and let stand at room temperature overnight.

Strain Limoncello through mesh strainer. (Save peels in freezer for future use.) Transfer to a bottle, seal and refrigerate for 4 hours and up to one month.



The UCCE Master Food Preserver 2016 series of classes has begun. The next class is a class with the Master Gardeners, Saturday, March 19 from 9-noon at 2850 Fairlane Court, Building C, in Placerville. View the online calendar can be viewed at: [http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.edu/Master\\_Food\\_Preservers/Classes/](http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.edu/Master_Food_Preservers/Classes/).

UCCE Master Gardener Zack Dowell will show you how to choose the right varieties, deal with insects and diseases, care for and harvest your tomatoes. UCCE Master Gardeners and Master Food Preservers Cindy Young and Judi Johnson will teach how to preserve your tomato harvest to enjoy throughout the year. They will discuss how to safely can tomatoes, the benefits and uses of dehydrated tomatoes, and how to freeze tomatoes. In addition, Cindy and Judi will talk about food safety and discuss the various pieces of equipment used in preserving.

UCCE Master Food Preservers are also available to answer home food preservation questions; leave a message at (530) 621-5506. For more information about the public education classes and activities, go to the UCCE Master Food Preserver website at <http://ucanr.edu/edmfp>. Sign up to receive our international E-Newsletter at <http://ucanr.org/mfpnews/>. Find us on Facebook too (UCCE Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County)!



## UCCE Master Food Preservers of El Dorado Country

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