

February 15, 2017



### **Food Preservation - Fulfilling the Purpose**

By Sue Mosbacher, UCCE Master Food Preserver

Preserving food at home has a purpose: to provide safe long-term food storage for future meals. For optimum quality, eat canned food within a year. You canned it to eat it, right? But what happens if you get caught up in the thrill of trying new recipes and find yourself with a cupboard filled with 40 jars of fruit spreads? A person can only eat so many helpings of toast and pb&j sandwiches!

Think outside the bread box.

Mix jam with yogurt or oatmeal in the morning. Heat up and thin jam to serve on pancakes or French toast.

Have an abundance of jelly made from gleaned wine grapes? Add some grape jelly to your favorite spaghetti sauce for a burst of flavor. Make cocktail meatballs by mixing a ½ pint of grape jelly, two bottles of chili sauce, ¼ cup of Worcestershire sauce and adding it to your favorite meatballs in a crockpot. Mix and simmer for an hour – delicious!

Use grape jelly in a tasty bean dish. In a crockpot mix 2 pints of canned pinto beans (with the liquid), ½ pint of grape jelly, 1 cup of chopped onions, some ham or bacon pieces, plus salt and pepper to taste. Cook on low for several hours until the beans and onions are soft. The grape jelly gives the bean dish a smooth sweetness.

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Do you have jars of pepper jelly? Add pepper jellies or spicy jams to glazes for meat, including chicken and pork. Did you experiment with tomato jam? (It's delicious!) Use tomato jam in meatloaf instead of ketchup; use it as the T in a BLT sandwich; add it to lentil soup; use it in baked beans for part of the molasses, or mix it with mayonnaise for a burger's secret sauce.

Use jams to make a tangy salad dressing. Mix ½ pint strawberry jam, ¼ pint jalapeno jelly, ½ teaspoon of lemon juice and a dash of pepper with oil and vinegar to make a batch of delicious sweet vinaigrette for salads.

Make a berry sauce for pork chops. After browning and removing pork chops from the skillet, add 1½ cups of chicken broth and simmer, scraping up the pork bits. Whisk in ½ cup berry jam and 2 tablespoons of Dijon mustard. Cook for several minutes to get a soft sauce. Turn off the heat and whisk in 1 tablespoon of cold butter. Add a couple of tablespoons of chopped parsley and pour the sauce over pork chops. Garnish with fresh berries and serve a stunning and flavorful dinner to your family.

Like pulled pork? Add your favorite jam (or fruit preserve) to pulled pork before baking.

By incorporating jams and jellies into meals throughout the day, hopefully you'll use your large stash of fruit spreads in time to start making more this spring and summer.

New to canning but want to try your hand at making jams & jellies to use in these recipes? Come to the Canning Basics class on Saturday, February 18 at the Bethell-Delfino Ag Building from 9-Noon. Want to learn to preserve your own broth and beans with a pressure canner? Register for the February hands-on Pressure Canning workshop at <http://ucanr.edu/pcworkshop>.

UCCE Master Food Preservers are available to answer home food preservation questions; leave a message at (530) 621-5506 or email us at [edmfp@ucanr.edu](mailto:edmfp@ucanr.edu). For more information about our program and events, visit our website at <http://ucanr.edu/edmfp>. Sign up to receive our E-Newsletter at <http://ucanr.org/mfpenews/>. Find us on Facebook too (UCCE Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County)!