

FOOD AND DRINK

Continued from page 16

set funnel directly into the next jar.

Leave the right amount of headspace to get a proper vacuum seal.

HEADSPACE RECOMMENDATIONS:

¼ inch or 0.5 cm — jams (including freezer jams), jellies, and marmalades.

½ inch or 1 cm — high-acid food, low-sugar jams, preserves, fruit butters and chutneys, pickles, relishes, tomatoes, and canned fruit.

1 inch or 2.5 cm — vegetables and low-acid foods. Preparing lids and sealing

Before preserves are finished cooking, heat new self-sealing lids by placing in a saucepan of hot water (82 C) to soften the sealant.

Keep lids in hot water until use.

Rings do not need to be heated or sterilized as they do not come in contact with the food. They are applied at room temperature.

PROCESSING JARS

Transfer jars to the canner as soon as they are filled.

After processing for the required time, remove jars from water, lifting straight up without tilting. For canned fruit and pickles, turn off heat and let jars rest in water for five minutes before removing.

Place jars on a clean tea towel on the counter and allow to cool.

You will hear a 'popping' sound when the lids are drawn down by the vacuum. Once jars cool completely, test seals and refrigerate any jars that did not seal.

To test seal, press with your finger on the centre of the lid, it should be firm and not move.

If you tap the centre of the lid gently with the back of a teaspoon, it should have a ringing sound if sealed.

Once jars are sealed and cooled, remove rings and wipe the outside of the jar and inside of the ring to re-

move any food residue that can cause moulding.

If desired, replace rings but fasten only until they are lightly-snug.

The rings are not actually necessary once jars are sealed.

Over-tightening rings can cause the seal to weaken or release, allowing leakage or spoilage.

STORAGE AND LABELLING

Store jars in a cool, dry, dark area to preserve flavour and prevent discoloration. The ideal temperature is four to 10 C.

Label jars with the name of the preserve and the date they were made.

If properly stored, jars will keep good quality for more than a year, though it is recommended to use them up within a year.

This article is part of Make Preserving Your 'Jam', a series that explores ways to preserve fresh produce, from farm or garden, for year-round consumption.

COMMUNITY

CULTURE DAYS GOING AHEAD – WITH A TWIST

An event designed to be a participatory experience faces some big challenges during a global pandemic.

It is not deterring the organizers of Culture Days, though. The national celebration of arts and culture, being held locally for the fifth time, will go ahead this fall. Usually a one-week event, it will expand to a month, from Sept. 25 to Oct. 25.

The annual event is adapting by finding creative ways to bring activities to participants, including livestreams, pre-recorded digital events, self-guided activities and in-person events with pre-registration to control the number of people participating.

Halton Hills event organizers have been recognized both provincially and nationally for their Culture Days programs. This year, they will have an opportunity to create both digital and physical events.



Norval Community Association

The Norval Community Association won the Ontario Culture Days People's Choice Award for its Kairos Blanket Exercise, which covered more than 500 years of history in a two-hour workshop led by First Nations leaders.

The theme for this year's Culture Days is 'Unexpected Intersections.' Any local group wanting to create an arts and culture experience for Culture Days is asked to register it by going to the dashboard on the Culture Days website. The website also offers resources for anyone looking to create an event.

The Town of Halton Hills is supporting arts and culture with the creation of professional development opportunities and the funding of new artwork to help the recovery from the financial effects of COVID-19. An arts and culture forum has been scheduled, with two available sessions, July 22 and 28.

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