

## Pressure can vegetables

ST CLOUD, Minn. (8/24/2015) In recent preservation classes home food preservers shared that they processed home canned beets and chicken in a boiling waterbath. They did not know that safe home canned vegetables and meat require processing in a pressure canner.

Vegetables and meats contain too little acidity to prevent the growth of *Clostridium botulinum* bacteria and must be pressure canned. Botulism is a food poisoning most commonly found in improperly processed home canned vegetables, such as beets, carrots, green beans, potatoes and mushrooms, as well as other low-acid foods canned at home, including soups, meats, fish and poultry. Because these bacteria grow only in the absence of air, they are harmless on fresh foods.

The spores of *Clostridium botulinum* can only be destroyed by canning the food at a temperature of 240° F or above for a specific period of time. Since this temperature is above the boiling point of water, it can only be reached in a pressure canner. If canned food isn't processed properly, spores of the bacteria aren't killed.

Acid foods, such as fruits, pickles, sauerkraut, jams and jellies contain enough acidity to block the growth of botulism bacteria and can safely be processed in a water bath canner.

For pressure canning directions and recommended processing times, visit [www.extension.umn.edu](http://www.extension.umn.edu) and search food preservation. It is critical to use up-to-date research-tested methods when home canning.

Freezing, pickling, or drying are safe and tasty alternative methods of preserving low-acid vegetables if you do not have a pressure canner.

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