

## **Planning on canning? Prep now for safely preserving garden foods**

K-State food scientist encourages recipes validated by research

Gardeners are making their plans, and in some areas, vegetables and other foods are already being planted. A Kansas State University food scientist figures those are pretty good signs that food preservation season is not far away.

“Now is the time to check canning equipment and make repairs needed or replace worn items,” said Karen Blakeslee, who is also coordinator of [K-State’s Rapid Response Center](#) for food science. “Examine jars and take damaged ones out of your canning supply. Canning lids were in short supply last year, so be patient as those supplies get replenished.”

Blakeslee said that K-State Research and Extension offices across the state can check several brands of dial gauge pressure canners – including Presto, National, Maid of Honor and Magic Seal -- to make sure they are working properly. This service is free.

“If you are new to canning, practice using your equipment now before you want to can food,” Blakeslee said. “Learn how the canners work with your stovetop. Use water-filled jars as substitutes to process through the canners. Also, be aware that some canners should not be used on flat, glass stovetops. Always follow the canner and stove manufacturer’s directions.”

Blakeslee also encouraged using canning recipes that have been validated by research.

“Following those recipes and directions will help insure a safely canned food,” she said. “A majority of food preservation failures occur due to user errors. And don’t forget to adjust your processing for our location’s elevation.” For the Twin Creeks area, our elevation ranges from 2536 to 3113 feet above sea level. This means all canning recipes will need to be adjusted accordingly.

Several recipes, how-to videos and publications on food preservation and canning are available online through the Rapid Response Center.

“Take the time to get educated before you start,” Blakeslee said. “This will help guide you to making safe food and reducing waste.”

As mentioned above, we encourage you to check your dial gauge pressure canners each year. This can be done in our Extension offices for free. For your convenience I would recommended to call and make an appointment so that we will can test the gauge and inspect your lid’s gasket quickly.