

(test with a wooden skewer). Care must be taken with soft juicy fruits to not cook too large a quantity at once, to not break the fruit in filling the jars, and to fill them quickly so that the boiling temperature is maintained until the jar may be hermetically sealed.

Another method is to use equal weights of fruit and sugar and put all into the kettle together. Stir until sugar is dissolved, and allow to boil until a thick jam is the result—this is known as “preserving.”

CANNING BY BAKING.

1. In the oven.—Put the prepared fruit into sterilized jars and pack rather closely. Fill the jars with syrup of the desired sweetness. Cover and set on asbestos or in a pan of hot water and cook in a moderately hot oven until the fruit is soft. If sugar is omitted the jars may be filled with the cooked fruit and placed in the oven again to thoroughly heat through again.

THE AUTOCLAVE.

The autoclave is a utensil in which steam is under pressure, and by which a temperature higher than that of boiling water may be obtained. It is rather difficult to get the correct temperature, and therefore requires careful handling to prevent the blowing up of the apparatus. Since a higher temperature may be reached by this method than by ordinary boiling, it does away with the intermittent cooking. The autoclave is used in some households where canned fruit is sold in jars to realize a profit.

JELLY-MAKING.

Jelly-making involves the principles of canning and preserving, but in fruits for this purpose the pectin has to be carefully considered. Pectin is a carbohydrate which, in some respects resembles gelatin. It dissolves in boiling water, and stiffens on cooling. It is most abundant in the harder parts of the fruit, the core and the skin. The fruits best suited for jellies are apples, quinces, crab-apples, currants and grapes. The ideal jelly should be “a beautifully colored, transparent, palatable product, obtained by so treating fruit juice that the resulting mass will quiver, not flow, when removed from its mold; a product with texture so tender that it cuts easily with a spoon, and yet so firm that the angles thus produced retain their shape; a clear product that is neither syrupy, gummy, sticky nor tough; neither is it brittle, and yet it will break, doing this with a distinct beautiful cleavage that leaves sparkling, characteristic faces. This is that delicious, appetizing substance, a good fruit jelly.”

Points in jelly-making:

It is important for jelly-making that the fruit juice contains pectin and acid. The juices should be extracted by cooking them out of the fruit. The cause of failure in jelly-making is often due to an over proportion of sugar to juice, that is to the pectin in the juice. The correct proportion of sugar varies from three-fourths to an equal measure of sugar to an equal quantity of juice. Danger lies in over cooking the jelly after sugar is added. The time varies according to the proportion of sugar to juice, the proportion of pectin in the juice, and possibly the acidity of the juice. When the proper consistency is reached, the hot jelly should be at once poured into sterilized glasses and when “set,” should be sealed. The addition of vegetable acid to juice which is only slightly acid, will give good results, as in the case of sweet apples. The inner skin of oranges and lemons is an excellent source of pectin, and may be used for strengthening other fruit juices. Apple juice may serve as a basis for other fruit jellies without lessening the flavor of the other fruit.