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HOME CANNING TOMATOES--COLD-PACK STYLE

The home canner may pack tomatoes raw, or she may pack them hot, before processing in the water-bath canner. Each way of packing has points in its favor. Laboratory tests in the Bureau of Human Nutrition and Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, show that raw-packed tomatoes hold color and shape better than hot-packed. Not much difference is found in flavor. An advantage of the hot-pack is that more tomatoes can be put in each jar.

Whichever way of packing is chosen, the Bureau's home canning specialists say it is important to follow directions that are correct for that method of packing from start to finish. Tomatoes not heated sufficiently in canning will spoil in storage.

In the pictures on the opposite side of this sheet, Shirley Wilson, food specialist in the Bureau, shows how to can tomatoes cold-pack style. Editors and writers may obtain 8 by 10 glossy prints from Press Service, Office of Information, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

- (1) Job number one, when the home canner tackles a batch of tomatoes, is to inspect every tomato, selecting only the ripe firm ones, free from spoiled spots. Shirley Wilson sits down to this task.
- (2) The washed tomatoes are put in a wire basket, or a thin cloth, then into boiling water for about one-half minute, covering the pan with a lid. Then they are dipped quickly into cold water. Here Shirley Wilson dips the washed tomatoes into a kettle of boiling water.
- (3) The hot and cold treatment makes tomato skins slip off easily. But before peeling, Shirley Wilson cuts out the stem ends. The peeled tomatoes may be left whole for canning or cut into quarters, as desired.
- (4) Taking one hot, clean jar at a time, the home canner packs it with the raw tomatoes, pressing down gently to fill spaces. She fills jars to one-half inch of the top. (No water is added.) She adds salt - one-half teaspoon to a pint jar; 1 teaspoon to a quart.
- (5) A small step - but important - is to remove air bubbles by working a tableknife blade down the sides of the jar. If needed, more tomatoes are added to fill the jar again to one-half inch of top.
- (6) Next steps are to wipe the jar rim and rubber ring - if the closure includes one - with a clean, damp cloth. Food on the sealing surface may prevent an air-tight seal. Then the jar cap is adjusted, as its type requires.
- (7) When the jar caps are adjusted, Shirley Wilson places the jars in the water-bath canner, which already contains some hot, but not boiling, water. She will then add boiling water, if needed - enough to cover the jar tops by one or two inches. But she is careful not to pour the boiling water directly on the jars - they might crack. The cover is put on the canner, and jars are processed in the boiling water bath - pint jars, 35 minutes; quart jars, 45 minutes.
- (8) When processing time is up, jars are removed from the canner and the jar seal is completed at once, if the closures are not the self-sealing type. The jars are left to cool, top-side up, on a thick cloth or paper, or a rack, away from drafts.
- (9) Next day, Shirley Wilson tilts jars to test for leaks. Good jars get labels - "Tomatoes, cold pack, lot 1," and the date. Last job of all is to store the good jars in a cool, dry place.

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