

Preparedness Hints

Jars and Lids Continued



At higher elevations, boil 1 additional minute for each additional 1,000 ft. elevation. Remove and drain hot sterilized jars one at a time. Save the hot water for processing filled jars. Fill jars with food, add lids, and tighten screw bands.

Empty jars used for vegetables, meats, and fruits to be processed in a pressure canner need not be pressurized. It is also unnecessary to pressurize jars for fruits, tomatoes, and pickled or fermented foods that will be processed 10 minutes or longer in a boiling-water canner.

Lid Selection, Preparation, and Use

The common self-sealing lid consists of a flat metal lid held in place by a metal screw band during processing. The flat lid is crimped around its bottom edge to form a trough, which is filled with a colored gasket compound. When jars are processed, the lid gasket softens and flows slightly to cover the jar-sealing surface, yet allows air to escape from the jar. The gasket then forms an airtight seal as the jar cools. Gaskets in unused lids work well for at least 5 years from date of manufacture.

The gasket compound in older unused lids may fail to seal on jars. Buy only the quantity of lids you will use in a year. To ensure a good seal, carefully follow the manufacturer's directions in preparing lids for use. Examine all metal lids carefully. Do not use old, dented, or deformed lids, or lids with gaps or other defects in the sealing gasket.



After filling jars with food, release air bubbles by inserting a flat plastic (not metal) spatula between the food and the jar. Slowly turn the jar and move the spatula up and down to allow air bubbles to escape. Adjust the head space and then clean the jar rim (sealing surface) with a dampened paper towel. Place the lid, gasket down, onto the cleaned jar-sealing surface. Uncleaned jar-sealing surfaces may cause seal failures.

Then fit the metal screw band over the flat lid. Follow the manufacturer's guidelines enclosed with or on the box for tightening the jar lids properly.

Do not re-tighten lids after processing jars. As jars cool, the contents in the jar contract, pulling the self-sealing lid firmly against the jar to form a high vacuum.

- If rings are too loose, liquid may escape from jars during processing, and seals may fail.
- If rings are too tight, air cannot vent during processing, and food will discolor during storage.
- Over tightening also may cause lids to buckle and jars to break, especially with raw-packed, pressure-processed food.

Screw bands are not needed on stored jars. They can be removed easily after jars are cooled. When removed, washed, dried, and stored in a dry area, screw bands may be used many times. If left on stored jars, they become difficult to remove, often rust, and may not work properly again. If you choose to leave the rings on the bottles, you may wish to loosen them after the bottles have cooled. During storage they seem to get even tighter. Loosening them after they have cooled will prevent this problem.

Personal and Family Preparedness

Vision: Each family uses principles of provident living in their daily lives.

Mission: "Increase awareness and practice of home production and storage."