



SIMPLE SURVIVAL **CANNING**



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Chapter 1: What is Canning?

Canning was a way of preserving food back when there were no refrigerators to be found. The French were actually the first to preserve food (or “can” it) back in the 1800’s and hence the name “canning.”

People who lived on farms had to have a way of ensuring that what they grew in their gardens or in the fields would be able to sustain them for the winter and beyond. They had to have a way of preserving this food and canning was born.

Canning is a process that is really not done with cans. The correct way to “can” is in Mason jars which are glass. You cook and seal the food into the jars so that there are no bugs, pests, micro-organisms or anything else that wants to grow in the jar and will get in and spoil the food.



This is the same concept that the big food makers in modern times use except that they actually do use cans. That is why canned foods have a long shelf life. The food industry uses this



process to can things such as vegetables, soups, potted meats, fruits, beans, etc.

If you grow a garden, or are fortunate enough to have a larger field with a variety of vegetables, you can preserve the food and know that you are canning it with all the good taste and quality of home grown food.

You will have to purchase the jars, the seals, a large jar boiling pot and other various supplies in order to can. Once you can the food they say it can be stored for approximately a year.

Even if you don't have a garden, a field of vegetables or fruit trees, you can go to your local grocery store and buy these same items and can them as if you grew them. The process is the same. You just bought the food instead of growing it.

Chapter 2: The Benefit of Canning Foods for Your Survival

Canning your own food can be very rewarding. When you can, you are actually taking the steps as your ancestors did to assure your survival.

There is a certain sense of pride when you finish all of your canning to look at what you have accomplished.



You will have a peace of mind knowing that it will mean your means to survival if and when it becomes necessary.

So what are some of the benefits of canning?



Well, the obvious is your food supply if and when you need it. When the grocery stores no longer get shipments because trucks are not coming to resupply the stores what are you going to do?

Don't be left out in the cold or without a food supply. Canning is easy once you get the hang of it and can be kind of fun if you get the family involved to accomplish the task together. It will go faster and they may even want to help the next time!

If you grow a backyard garden, plant in the fields or have a bountiful amount of fruit, this is a great way to preserve the food. You have your own personal stash and know that you grew your own food and what you have stored it away.



There is a certain amount of personal satisfaction that comes with knowing you did this on your own. Want to make jellies and jams as well?

This sounds old-fashioned but this is what your great-grandmother (maybe even your grandmother) did for their families.

For the prepper, you want to make sure that you have enough of all the types of items you will need to survive for a few months or a year.

You might need to trade food items so it is always good to have extra of anything you can. Maybe you didn't think to preserve jellies or jams and your neighbor did. Maybe your neighbor didn't preserve vegetables or fruit.

Bargaining will become a necessity in the future when the power goes off. This applies to not only long-term disasters but short-term disasters as well.

Canning is relatively inexpensive. All you need are either your home grown items or items you bought from the store, plus your time, ingredients and jars.

Look for the mason jars at your local grocery store, online or at the larger food warehouse type markets.



Chapter 3: Materials You'll Need for the Canning Process

You are going to need certain pieces of equipment to can. You can't think that you are just going to be boiling water and jars and throwing some food in them.

Oven/Stove – Obviously 😊

Pressure Canner – You can purchase a small, medium or large canner depending on your preference. Some of the larger models will hold up to 7 jars.



Canning Rack – The rack will fit down into the canner and keep the jars an even distance from one another. This will also prevent them from moving around as the water boils during the pressure heating process.

Canning Jars – The premium type of jars are mason jars. The jars are glass and come in a variety of sizes with a metal plate and band that screw onto the jar. The jars can withstand extreme heat. The seals will keep your food fresh for up to twelve months.

The jars range in size from about four ounces to a quart. Before using any of the jars check to make sure there are no cracks, chips or broken glass anywhere on the jar. That being



said, do not attempt to use previous jars which contained other items you bought at the store such as mayonnaise, pickles, etc. You can only use a lid once.

Funnel – A funnel will assist you in getting whatever it is that you have cooked into the jars without making a huge mess. You don't want to waste one precious drop of the food you have just prepared. The funnel is especially helpful if you are canning liquids or sauces.

Jar Lifter – This contraption looks like a large set of tongs but it is made to withstand the heat and to grab the large size of the jars.



Timer – The timer is necessary as canning is a precise art. You can't overcook or undercook food. It has to be cooked just right (sounds like Goldilocks doesn't it?). Be sure to read and become educated on correct cooking times for canning food.

Miscellaneous Items: Measuring Bowls, Clear Jel, Food Strainer, Plastic Spatulas, Candy Thermometer, Labels—just to name a few items.

Again, you can purchase all of these items online or you most likely already have some of the kitchen items. No need to buy new if you already have these items.



Chapter 4: Type and/or Methods in Canning

There are a few types of canning so we will give you a brief explanation of some of the methods here.

Don't get bogged down if you have never touched a canning jar in your life. It is easier than it appears.



Hot water canning means putting the jars in a large pot on the stove and letting the jars take a nice, boiling water bath (a water bath canner). You can use this method for cooking high-acid foods. You want the water to boil at a minimum of 212 degrees Fahrenheit.

Pressure canning is the opposite of hot water canning and is used for low-acid foods. The water for this type of canning needs to be 240 degrees Fahrenheit at a minimum.

Cold Pack canning is the process of taking uncooked fruits or vegetables and placing them in canning jars. The cold pack canning requires you to fill the jar with hot water and then heat process it. The items are placed in the jars at room temperature as the hot water is poured over the contents.



The jars are then placed in your canner/cooker to preserve the contents rather than cook them.

With the cold pack method not only can you put fruits or vegetables into the jars, you can also store meat, fish and seafood (only if it is pickled or cooked first).

Hot Pack Canning is putting foods that have already been cooked into your jars. This is the method used for common canning that you have probably heard of for years.

This method is used to store stews, broths, pie fillings, jellies, jams, soups.

After you put these cooked foods into the jars, you then proceed with the water bath or hot water canning method.



There are four types of canners:

Water Bath Canner – This pot is used to boil and seal your canning jars. Any large pot that will fit the size of your jars will work. Make sure a canning rack can fit into the pot.

Pressure Canner – This type of canner uses steam to push all the air out of the canner. The steam and the water in the canner are used to reach the high temperatures need to kill harmful bacteria.



Dial Gauge Canner – This is exactly as it states. There is a dial gauge to read the pressure in the pot. Be sure to set the pressure correctly to can your items correctly.

Weighted-gauge Canner – This type of canner comes in your choice of 10 or 15 pound pressure. There is a gauge on the pot that rocks or jiggles to keep the pressure properly maintained.

Chapter 5: What Foods Work Best in Canning

Most of the items that people think of canning are vegetables. Did you know, though, that you can also can fruits and meats?

The canned items that you buy at the store can be stored safely for up to five years under optimal conditions.

By optimal conditions we mean an average temperature of 60 degrees along with the storage areas containing a minimal amount of light.



Canning and storing your own food requires the same optimal space. The last thing you want to happen is for you to



take all the time and effort to can your own food only to find out that you didn't store it properly after canning.

Here then is a list of some popular foods to can:

Tomatoes - Tomatoes are so versatile and can be used in a lot of dishes you will be making when disaster strikes.

The most common type of canned tomatoes include sauces, puree, past, stewed and whole or diced tomatoes.

Soups – Make batches of stew and the store them in the mason jars. Vegetable soups and broths will last up to a year and are easy to prepare.





Fruits – Fruits have been preserved since the times you heard your mother or grandmother talk about canned fruits. Use one of the canning methods mentioned above to store jars of fruit, make jellies and/or jams.

Beans – Beans may not be a favorite with everyone in your family right now but when you are in survival mode, beans are a great staple. Beans are easy to cook and easy to store and there is a large variety of beans you can purchase at the grocery store. For example, make a large crock pot or pan of pinto or navy beans. Cooking beans means putting them in the pot and walking away (except to check to see when they are done). Pour the beans into a mason jar and you have an instant meal along with some of your stored rice.

Sauces - Another item that you can cook and store ahead of time are sauces. Sauces will give some flavor to those otherwise bland meals when disaster strikes. Unless you have grown herbs to give your food some pizzazz, most everything will probably start to taste the same after a while.

Vegetables - Vegetables are the staple of survival life. You can store practically any vegetable and keep it on the shelf for up to a year.

Green beans, squash, corn, cabbage, pickles, etc. Use every inch of your garden (or purchase these items from the store) to keep you and your family supplied with vegetables to add to any of your meals during survival mode.



Chapter 6: Tips on Sterilizing Your Work Area for the Best Results

Sterilizing your work area for canning is probably the single-most item you need to ensure before you even start thinking about canning. Any germs, micro-germs and bacteria can creep into your food/jars and you will become sicker than you can imagine.



The first thing you want to clean are the surfaces where you will be preparing the food. Make sure that your countertops, cutting boards, sink and all the pans/utensils you will be using for canning are clean and sterile.

Cutting boards and countertops contain numerous germs that are just waiting to cling to something.

Use Clorox spray (other disinfectant) to clean the counters. There are also disinfectant wipes. Anything that will ensure you are starting with a clean area is the goal here.

Boil your pots and jars before using them to make sure there are no germs hiding out. Boiling them will ensure a clean, well-prepared item. These are steps that you can NOT skip if you want to ensure your survival. Can you imagine opening a can,



serving the food only to find out that it was tainted because of not taking the time to boil everything before using it?

Put your empty jars in a large pot. Boil them and let them cool before removing. The pot you boil the jars in will probably be the same pot you use to boil the jars once they are filled with your food item (vegetables, fruit, etc.).

Let the jars boil for about 15 minutes. Turn off the heat. Do not leave the jars in the water for longer than an hour. If you do happen to run over an hour you will need to boil them again.

Do NOT boil the canning lids. The canning lids have an adhesive ring and the last thing you want to do is to harm this lid. Instead of sticking the lids in the pot when the jars are boiling, place them in the water about the time you are turning off the heat for the jars that are boiling.

You can't take too much time and/or effort in preparing your work area or your items you will be using to can. Skip over this step and you are not going to like the consequences.

Chapter 7: Storing Your Long-Term Survival Items

There are several items that you need to think about storing for long term-survival besides food. I think we have covered what



you need to do to ensure that you know how to can food. The last thing you need to know how to do is to store it.

The first rule to remember when storing food is to rotate it in and out until disaster strikes. Some foods have a limited shelf life and you don't want to be stuck with a bunch of rotten food when you think you have put food away to last for weeks or months.

Even though some of the food you have stored may not spoil, it might lose some of its nutritional or flavor value. You don't want to be eating food that tastes old or stale.

We touched on a couple of these methods earlier just briefly but we will go into a little more depth here to round out your canning and storage of those foods.

In-Ground Storage – Naturally storing foods is certainly a viable solution. Don't pick everything in your garden but leave some items to be stored naturally. Root vegetables such as carrots, parsnips, lettuce, cabbage and turnips can be left in the ground. If winter strikes cover them with dry leaves, straw or mulch. You can dig them up when you need them.

Root Cellar – The most important aspect of a root cellar is to keep your foods fresh at a very cool and slightly moist environment.





Root cellars work best in areas where winter time is the harshest. You can store fruits and vegetables in the root cellar through the winter time. It is best if there is a dirt floor. Your basement won't do because it is too warm and dry.

5-Gallon Containers – Large 5-gallon containers can be purchased at your local home improvement store. Stack the jars inside the container with bubble wrap or other conduit to absorb any movement of the jars.

Dry crawl space – Do you have an area under your stairs where you could build a small door opening? Store foods in this space as it is excellent for dry storage. DO NOT put food in the attic. An attic can get extremely hot in the summer time and will rot the food.

Shed – This will only work if it is climate controlled. Again, you can't put foods where the temperature is going to be one extreme or the other – hot/cold. Your canned foods are going to need a steady, cool temperature in order to stay protected.

33-Gallon Trash Cans – Yes. You read that right. Some people dig holes in their property and store foods in the large trash receptacles you can purchase at the store. Make sure that the bottom of the barrel is three feet under the surface-grade level. Only leave an inch or two above ground so you can put the lid back on. Try to find a shaded area to bury the cans.