

August 21, 2019



Double Onion Marmalade on crostini

The Wonderful World of Onions

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Onions are the workhorse vegetable of the kitchen. We use onions in so many different ways—they add an underlying note of sweetness to dishes from Italian, Asian, French and of course American. But for many people preparing them to be used in a dish is the less than desirable part as their fragrance can be tear inducing; my mother in-law keeps a pair of swimming goggles handy for just such moments! For some people getting this unpleasant task done in one fell swoop is also a big-time saver. You can chop several pounds worth of onions and put them into small serving size zip lock bags, remove as much air as possible and freeze. For longer storage and to prevent freezer burn place these small bags into a larger 4 mil freezer bag and seal tightly.

Another way to keep onions handy is to dehydrate them. One word of warning- you may want to move your dehydrator outside as their fragrance will be quite intense. You can slice them into ¼” rings, place on dehydrator trays at 130° for 6-8 hours. Alternatively, you can also chop them into ¼ -½ inch pieces and dry for 6-8 hours (The Dehydrator Bible, 2009). They should be dried to the brittle stage. Then place in the freezer for two days to pasteurize before packaging. The heat from a dehydrator is not high enough to kill bug eggs. Freezing the dried produce for 48 hours kills any bug eggs that may be on the product. At this point they can be stored in the pantry for up to one year safely.

Now for those of you feeling a bit more adventurous I have a fantastic recipe that is perfect for end of summer barbeques. It will go great on a burger or sandwich but would be a perfect topping for pork chops as well!

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Double Onion Marmalade

Yield about 6 half-pint jars

- 1 ½ cups each thinly sliced red onion & Vidalia onion
 - ¼ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
 - 1/3 cup apple cider vinegar (5% acidity)
 - 1 tbsp black peppercorns
 - 2 bay leaves
 - 2 ½ cups unsweetened apple juice
 - ½ raisins
 - 6 tbsp Ball Classic pectin
 - 4 cups sugar
1. Combine onions, sugar, and vinegar in a stainless-steel pot. Stirring often, cook over medium heat until liquid evaporates (13 minutes).
 2. Place peppercorns and bay leaves on a 5-inch square of cheesecloth; tie with kitchen string, and add to onion mixture.
 3. Add apple juice and raisins; stir in pectin. Bring to a rolling boil that cannot be stirred down over high heat, stirring constantly.
 4. Hold spice bag to one side of pot with tongs. Add sugar, stirring until dissolved. Release spice bag. Return mixture to a full rolling boil. Boil hard for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat; remove and discard spice bag. Skim foam, if necessary.
 5. Ladle hot marmalade into hot jars, leaving ¼-inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe rims with a dampened clean paper towel; adjust two-piece metal canning lids.
 6. Process in a boiling water or atmospheric steam canner for 15 minutes at 0-1,000 feet elevation, 20 minutes at 1001-3,000 feet, 25 minutes at 3,001-6,000 feet, 30 minutes at 6,001-8,000 feet, and 35 minutes at 8001-10,000 feet.

Source: Ball Complete Book of Home Preservation, 2012.

Join the UCCE Master Food Preservers and Master Gardeners in a combo class about Garlic and Onions on Wednesday September 11th 9:00 A.M. This will be held at the Cameron Park Community Center, 2502 Country Club Dr., Cameron Park.. More information here: <http://ucanr.edu/edmfpclasses>

UCCE Master Food Preservers are available to answer home food preservation questions; leave a message at (530) 621-5506 or email us at edmfpc@ucanr.edu. For more information about our program and events, visit our website at <http://ucanr.edu/edmfpc>. Sign up to receive our ENewsletter at <http://ucanr.org/mfpnews/>. Find us on Facebook, too (UCCE Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County)!