

Canning Tomatoes?

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The University of California recommends acidification (addition of lemon juice or other acid) to home processed tomato products. To ensure adequate acidity of tomato products, the addition of two teaspoons of bottled lemon juice or ¼ teaspoon of citric acid per quart is recommended. For pints, use one teaspoon bottled lemon juice or 1/8 teaspoon citric acid. Commercial vinegar (5% acetic acid) may be used to acidify tomato products, however, since acetic acid is a less effective acidulant, three teaspoons of vinegar should be added per quart. Flavor changes with addition of vinegar may occur.

Add lemon juice, citric acid, or vinegar directly to the jars before filling with product, or add to the top after packing. Add sugar to offset acid taste, if desired.

Processing

To prevent spoilage, acidic foods such as fruits and tomatoes need to be heated to temperatures which destroy yeasts, molds, and bacteria. This heat treatment can be achieved either in the water bath canner or by a brief process in a pressure canner.

Any large kettle or pot may be used as a water bath canner, if it is deep enough to allow water to cover the tops of the jars. Jars should be placed on a rack in the canner. Allowing jars to come in direct contact with the bottom of the canner may result in breakage. Add enough water to cover the tops of the jars by at least an inch. When water comes to a gentle boil, begin to count processing time as indicated on the chart below. When processing time has passed, remove jars from canner and let cool, undisturbed, at room temperature. When cool, check jars for tight seal. Store in a dark, dry, cool place.

Product	How to Prepare	Processing Pint (Minutes)	Time Quart (Minutes)
Tomatoes	Sort, picking out any that are spoiled. Do not can overripe tomatoes. If tomatoes are excessively dirty, wash with a solution containing four teaspoons chlorine bleach in each gallon of water. Dip in boiling water long enough to crack skins (about one minute). Dip in cold water. Peel and remove cores. Save any juice to add to the tomatoes when heating. To Pack Hot: Bring whole, peeled tomatoes to a boil. Pack immediately into clean, hot jars. Cover with the hot liquid in which the tomatoes were heated. Add one teaspoon salt (optional) and two teaspoons bottled lemon juice or ¼ teaspoon citric acid to each quart. Seal. To Pack Raw: Pack raw, whole, peeled, tomatoes tightly to the tops of hot jars. Press tomatoes down after each two tomatoes are added to release juice and to fill spaces. Add one teaspoon salt (optional) and two teaspoons bottled lemon juice or ¼ teaspoon citric acid per quart. Seal. To pressure process: Follow instructions for hot pack. Seal jars. Vent pressure canner for 10 minutes. Begin timing process when canner has reached 5 pounds pressure (228 degrees F). Follow canner manufacturer's instructions.	30	30
Tomato Juice Cocktail	Extract juice for tomato juice. For each quart, add two teaspoons salt (optional), ½ teaspoon grated onion, one teaspoon grated celery, ½ teaspoon prepared horseradish, 1/8 teaspoon worcestershire sauce, and two tablespoons lemon juice. To pack hot: Same as for tomato juice.	15	15
Minnesota Stewed Tomatoes	12 cups peeled, cored, and quartered tomatoes 1 cup chopped celery ½ cup chopped onion ½ cup chopped pepper 1/3 cup bottled lemon juice (Optional 3 teaspoons salt) Simmer the vegetables for 10 minutes, add lemon juice, then ladle into clean, hot pint jars. Leave ¾ inch of headroom; adjust lids. Process in gently simmering water bath. Makes 7 pints. <small>Taken from: <i>Putting Food By</i>, University of Minnesota, 4th edition.</small>	40	45

Source: George K. York, Ph.D. Emeritus, Food Technologist, Department of Food Science, University of California, Davis

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