



UC Master Food Preserver Certification Course Syllabus

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Welcome!

The University of California Master Food Preserver Program extends UC research-based information about home food safety and preservation to the public. The UC Master Food Preserver Program is a public service and outreach program under [UC Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program \(UC SAREP\)](#) within the [University of California Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources](#) (UC ANR) administered locally by participating UC Cooperative Extension county offices and a statewide online delivery program.

The UC Master Food Preserver Program’s mission is to keep Californians safe and well as they use culturally appropriate, research-based practices to safely preserve food in the home, reducing food waste, increasing food security, and providing engaging ways for Californians to explore healthy food.

This statewide UC Master Food Preserver Program certification course provides detailed information on preserving food safely at home with the final goal of using this knowledge to provide educational outreach for our in-person and online communities.

This syllabus is subject to change and may be updated as the course progresses and information is added or clarified. Students will be notified if/when a new version is provided.

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Explain and demonstrate how and why the core food preservation methods work: cold storage, dehydration, canning, pickling, fermenting.
2. Explain the mission of the UC Master Food Preserver Program and how their local program implements the mission.
3. Understand that the role of volunteers is to educate our community, and that teaching, in one form or another, is expected of all UC Master Food Preserver Volunteers.
4. Identify educational outreach projects in which to participate at least quarterly as active UC Master Food Preserver volunteers. You joined this program so you can teach others, right?

Course Format

Phase 1

Phase 1 consists of online classes conducted with students from multiple programs throughout the state offered during two different times per topic paired with in-person hands-on labs scheduled separately at local county offices. Students meet online after completing assignments which include reading from the course books, watching online videos, passing a quiz, and reviewing resource materials. Each participating program provides mentors to guide students through the training program.

All online classes are either on a Thursday from 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm, or on a Friday from 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm. Specific dates and topics are listed in the [Course Schedule section](#). Lab dates and times are determined by the local program; contact your mentor or local program coordinator.

Phase 2

Phase 2 involves integration into the local or statewide program's educational outreach activities. This phase is program-specific with the goal of introducing students to as many program projects as possible to show the volunteer opportunities available and to introduce the new volunteers to the existing program members.

Overall Course Expectations

What you can do to support your success	What we will do to support your success
Keep up with readings and assignments, as each one builds on the previous one.	Only assign work that is vital to the course
Be an active participant in discussions and activities	Be prepared and bring our enthusiasm for teaching to each session
Communicate with your local coordinator if you determine that a deadline cannot be met due to extenuating circumstances	Consider requests for adjustments and will make reasonable exceptions available to all students when approved
Let your coordinator know if you need any special accommodations.	Work with you to make all reasonable efforts to accommodate your needs.

Course Materials and Tools

Text/Readings/Other Material

- Fundamentals of Consumer Food Safety and Preservation Master Handbook, WSU, Rev. 2019
This is the UC Master Food Preserver Program training manual. You will have a reading assignment from it before most classes.
- So Easy to Preserve, Sixth Edition, University of Georgia, 2014, Reviewed and reprinted 2020
This book contains the latest U.S. Department of Agriculture recommendations for safe food preservation, along with step-by-step instructions and in-depth information for both the new and experienced food preserver.
- USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning, Rev. 2015
This online manual is invaluable resource book for persons who are canning food for the first time. Experienced canners will find updated information to help them improve their canning practices. Download free PDFs of each chapter at: <https://nchfp.uga.edu/resources/category/usda-guide>.
- Statewide UC Master Food Preserver Resources website: <https://mfp.ucanr.edu/Resources/>
This website includes links to many public resources including food preservation videos, recipes, and publications from university extension websites throughout the country.

Technology Requirements

- Internet and personal email access: used for class events and communication.
- Zoom: used for online interactive classes; will be recorded and posted for students and MFPs only.
- Google Classroom: used for class assignments, course communication, and sharing additional resources. You should have already received an email from your local coordinator with instructions to log into Google Classroom for MFP Training, including how to use your existing email address.
Note: we are using the free version of Google classroom, which is not for schools. If your email address is a school address, you will need to use a personal email address; Google Classroom will not allow us to add students with school email addresses.
- YouTube: used for pre-recorded class videos private to the training program by counties and the online delivery program.
- VMS (Volunteer Management System): used by local programs to track member roster, schedule events, log hours, and volunteer for specific events; will be introduced during the first class.

Assignments, Projects, and Scoring

Pre-class assignments include (in recommended order of completion):

- readings from the training manual and optionally additional sources
 - each reading assignment will include a list of 3-4 core concept questions for you to briefly discuss in a small breakout room – simple questions with quick answers
- online quiz on reading assignment; open-book
- pre-class videos on reading assignment topic
- attend one public MFP class, either in-person or online

Summary of Final Online Course Score

Assignment	Points	2025 Due Date
Final Exam Score	70	Posted May 9; due May 23
All class assignments completed (ungraded)	5	Within 2 weeks of class
Attend online or in-person live MFP class	5	May 9
Complete all case studies	20	May 2
	100	

Grading Procedure

- The only truly graded assignment is the final exam, which requires a minimum score of 85% to pass. It is online, open-book, and you can edit it multiple times. As a reinforcement to ensure our responses come from our research-based resources, you'll list the reference source for each answer.
- Each quiz lists the number of questions to correctly answer to pass; you can retake any quiz. The goal is to learn the material, so if you get an answer wrong, please research the question so you understand why we're looking for a different answer.
- Although you aren't penalized for completing assignments late, it will help your learning experience to stay current with the assignments and actively participate in the online discussions. During the first class you'll be instructed on how to mark the assignments as completed. We trust you to be honest.
- You will have four Case Studies to complete with your mentor, including either a food safety scenario or general internet recipes to identify potential food safety issues, plus a series of questions about core concepts to answer verbally. Please contact your mentor early to schedule a time to work on the projects. You have one month to complete each Case Study, which should take a maximum of 30 minutes discussion time, often less, and should be done one-on-one to make sure you are comfortable with the topic.
- We want you to experience a public class to have an idea of what you could teach as a volunteer. Check your local program's website for class dates, or the statewide site's event list at <https://mfp.ucanr.edu/Events/>.
 - If you are in a local program, the preference is to attend an in-person class. If your personal schedule prohibits you from attending an in-person class, you can attend an online class, since multiple programs offer them.
 - If you are in the Online Delivery Program, please attend one of their online classes.
 - If you attended a UC Master Food Preserver class before the training, congratulations - you already completed an assignment. *(But feel free to attend another.)*

Attendance and Participation

The online interactive classes are offered on two tracks: Thursday evenings from 6:30 – 8:30 pm, and the following Friday afternoon from 2:00 – 4:00 pm. You registered for a specific track but are welcome to attend either date if an unexpected schedule conflict arises. *(Our preference is to have students attend the same track as often as possible to help us set up program breakout rooms and recruit breakout room helpers; having a general idea of how many people from each program will be at each session makes this effective.)*

Although our goal is for you to attend all online classes, we realize life happens and you may miss a class. All online classes will be recorded and the Zoom recording link will be posted in your Google Classroom. One of your assignments in Google Classroom will be to mark that you attended the live class or watched the recording. The recordings are also available if you want to review content and are available to all UC Master Food Preserver Volunteers.

Please contact your local program coordinator if you are going to miss a class or lab. Some local programs only allow one unexcused absence, and any lab missed must be made up, either at another program's lab, with your mentor, or through some other arrangement with your coordinator. We want you to experience all of the food preservation methods we teach and learn how to teach them.

Most classes will have the following format:

- Welcome given by student emcee
- Small, random breakout rooms with 3-4 students to share answers to the questions associated with the reading assignment
- Interactive discussion/Q&A by program
- Larger breakout room by programs
- Closing with recap and assignments given by student emcee

Please arrange your schedule so you can be at class early because we start on time. Allow yourself a few minutes to deal with any technical issues, open any supporting materials or websites you want to access during class, and get comfortable. We open the Zoom session 10 minutes before class starts, which allows for pre-class questions. We do track who attends and if you are more than 15 minutes late you will miss the opening breakout room discussion and will need to make it up with your mentor.

We want you to actively participate in the class, so please complete the assignments before class and bring your questions. We have a variety of experience in the student group; please ask clarifying questions so we can make sure you are confident in the topic. The hands-on labs will help solidify your knowledge. During the interactive Q&A by program, we'd like you to have your video on. We don't care what your background looks like, blur it if needed. We just want to see your face as we talk with you!

If you struggle with contacting or working with your mentor, please contact your local program coordinator. Sometimes personalities just don't mesh. Sometimes emergencies happen and your mentor may be unable to let anyone know they are unavailable and do not respond to emails and phone calls. Let your coordinator know so adjustments can be made. *(This works both ways. Please have your coordinator's contact info and title in your phone in case you are unexpectedly unavailable so either you or a family member can let the coordinator know of your change in availability.)*

A safety note about attending in-person labs: When you attend the labs, you must have your hair pulled back if it can hang in front of your face; wear a clean apron (check if your local program provides aprons); and wear closed-toed shoes. The closed-toed shoes are non-negotiable, even if it's 100°F outside.

Course Schedule

[Register for Thursday evening classes](#)

[Register for Friday afternoon classes](#)

Week	Date/Topic	Post Class Activities and Due Dates
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Orientation 	Due January 23/24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Chapter Chapter 1: The Basics of Food Spoilage and Preservation Chapter 2: Foodborne Illness and Prevention Food Safety videos (11 video playlist) Food Safety Quiz Review additional class resources Due May 9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend one online or in-person MFP Class
2	Food Safety <i>January 23/24</i>	Due January 30/31 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 8: Cold Storage-Refrigeration Freezing and Root Cellaring of Foods Cold Storage videos (5 video playlist) Cold Storage Quiz Review additional class resources Due February 28 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case Study 1: Food Safety
3	Cold Storage Being a MFP-Part 1 <i>January 30/31</i>	Due February 13/14 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 3: Basic Principles of Home Canning Chapter 4: Canning Acid Foods <i>USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning: Chapter 1, pages 1-27 (Online)</i> High Acid Canning videos (12 video playlist) High Acid Canning Quiz Review additional class resources
4	High Acid Canning <i>February 13/14</i>	Due February 27/28 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 6: Preparation and Canning of Pickled Foods Pickling & Fermenting videos (9 video playlist) Pickling & Fermenting Quiz Review additional class resources Due March 21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case Study 2: High Acid Canning
5	Pickling & Fermenting <i>February 27/28</i>	Due March 13/14 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 7: Making and Preserving Fruit Spreads and Syrups Fruit Spreads videos (7 video playlist) Fruit Spreads Quiz Review additional class resources Due April 4

Week	Date/Topic	Post Class Activities and Due Dates
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case Study 3: Pickling & Fermenting
6	Fruit Spreads <i>March 13/14</i>	Due April 3/4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 5: Canning Low-Acid Foods Low-Acid Foods videos (11 video playlist) Low-Acid Foods Quiz Review additional class resources
7	Low Acid Canning <i>April 3/4</i>	Due April 24/25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 9: Drying and Smoking Foods Dehydration videos (11 video playlist) Dehydration Quiz Review additional class resources Due May 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case Study 4: Low Acid Canning
8	Dehydration Being a MFP-Part 2 <i>April 24/25</i>	Due May 8/9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrated Pest Management: Pantry Pests (https://ipm.ucanr.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7452.html)
9	Kitchen Pest Management <i>May 8/9</i>	Due May 22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Exam Chapter 10: Emergency Preparedness: Food and Water Review additional class resources
10	Emergency Prep Being a MFP-Part 3 <i>May 22/23</i>	Due May 29/30: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 11: Aids for Outreach Education Review additional class resources
11	Being a MFP-Part 4 Wrap up <i>May 29/30</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student projects/presentations: due dates vary by program Review additional class resources

Course Contacts

Statewide UC Master Food Preserver Program Manager and Online Course Lead: Sue Mosbacher, smosbacher@ucanr.edu; 530-621-5543

Participating Programs and Coordinators:

- Amador/Calaveras: Carly Amatisto-Smith, camatistosmith@ucanr.edu, 209-223-6482
- Fresno/Madera/Merced: Sarah Del Pozo, sdelpozo@ucanr.edu & Tara Sweeney, taesweeney@ucanr.edu, both at 209-966-2417
- Far North: Janessa Hartmann, jhartmann@ucanr.edu, 530-224-4900 & Laurie Wayne, lwayne@ucanr.edu, 503-662-2482
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- Sonoma: Deborah Curle, dcurle@sonoma-county.org, 707-565-2305
- Tulare: Aliya Bayless, ambayless@ucanr.edu, 559-684-3343
- UC MFP Online Program: Travis Alexander, tralexan@ucanr.edu, 858-382-4945