2026 UC Master Food Preserver Reappointment Study Guide and Quiz Questions

While this document contains many links to websites and other files for your learning pleasure, ***all answers to the reappointment quiz are in this study guide – use only this document as your reference for the questions.*** You may log up to 2 hours towards continuing education for studying and taking the quiz. **A minimum score of 85% is required to pass.** The correct answers are given at the end of the quiz; use them as a learning opportunity if you retake the quiz and research the correct answers to the questions you miss. The goal is to learn and become more familiar with UC MFP Resources.

Submit the quiz online at https://link.ucanr.edu/2026mfpquiz. **Due date is June 30, 2026.**

Contents

What can I process in half-gallon canning jars?

General Canning FAQs - National Center for Home Food Preservation

At least one canning jar manufacturer is selling half-gallon canning jars. That manufacturer has a printed note on the top that says half-gallon jars are only used for some highly acidic foods in a boiling water canner, with instructions to call a toll-free number for the instructions. When we last called, the only choices are grape juice and apple juice, as we also recommend.

The only processes that USDA, the National Center for Home Food Preservation, and the University of Georgia recommend for half-gallon jars are for very acidic fruit juices (and juice only): Apple Juice (Canning Apple Juice- NCHFP) and Grape Juice (Canning Grape Juice- NCHFP). This process time is not to be used for tomato juice, for example.

There are no other research-tested processes for half-gallon jars. Boiling water processes for other foods for jars larger than those published with recipes (usually pints and/or quarts) cannot be extended by any formula to a larger jar.

We are aware that there are historical recommendations for canning foods in half-gallon jars. However, these are not currently accepted or endorsed by the USDA, Cooperative Extension System or U.S. manufacturers of home canning jars.

How to Use an Atmospheric Steam Canner

How to Use an Atmospheric Steam Canner, Updated: March 17, 2025

Excerpts from the original article

Differences between a Steam Canner and a Pressure Canner

- Generally, these canners are simply referred to as a steam canner or a pressure canner. However, a pressure canner is a sealed unit that produces temperatures higher than the boiling point of water. When the pressure canner is vented for ten minutes, air is driven from the canner and the jars are surrounded by steam. Applying a weight or pressure regulator builds up pressure, and the temperature inside the canner reaches 240°F at 10 pounds pressure in a weighted gauge canner or 11 pounds pressure in a dial gauge canner. This is adequate to inactivate C. botulinum spores that can cause the serious illness, botulism. A pressure canner is absolutely essential to process low-acid foods, including all meats and vegetables (except acidified tomatoes or pickled products).
- A steam canner operates in the surrounding atmosphere. When the canner has been vented as described below, the remaining steam inside the canner will be 212°F, which is the same temperature as boiling water.

Use only research-tested recipes developed for a boiling water canner.

- Approved recipes are available from sources such as the National Center for Home Food Preservation or from Penn State Extension. Sources of hard copy recipes include the books *So Easy to Preserve*, (Andress, E. and Harrison, A.; University of Georgia, Bulletin 989, 2014) and *Preserving Food at Home Resource Guide* (Penn State Extension, 2022).
- Follow a research-tested recipe using the steam canner instead of a boiling water canner at the processing step.
- Avoid using recipes in the instruction guide that comes with the atmospheric steam canner because some guides include untested recipes.

After Processing

- When processing is complete, turn the heat off the burner and allow the jars to sit in the covered canner 5 minutes. (This 5-minute wait time reduces siphoning.)
- Remove the cover and place jars on a cloth-covered counter or wooden board or rack away from drafts.
- Caution: the steam and water will be hot!

Temperature Sensor Test

- If your canner has a temperature sensor, you should test it yearly and when you change the elevation of its use according to VKP Brands.
- Place 4 quart jars filled with water in prepared canner—no need to place lids on jars.
- Bring to canning temperature.
- When the lid starts lifting, rattling, or spitting water from around the edges, the temperature is almost up to the desired level. Slowly turn the heat down until these actions stop.
- Continue watching the sensor until the needle stops rising. The needle should reach the green area for your zone, but it can vary from just reaching the green area to going far inside it.
- Mark this maximum point on the sensor or make a note of its position. This is the boiling point at which it is safe to start the processing time.

That Leftover Pickling Brine

National Center for Home Food Preservation, June 26, 2018

A frequent question lately has been about re-using that leftover pickling brine when making homemade quick pickles. Sometimes quick pickles are made by heating cut or sliced vegetables in a vinegar solution to acidify them. If this is done prior to filling jars, we refer to that as a hot pack method for canning: heating vegetables in the pickling liquid before filling them into your jars and covering with the hot liquid. Other times, quick pickles are made by the raw pack for canning: prepared raw vegetables are placed directly into the jars and then the hot pickling liquid is filled over them into the jars.

Once you heat, or even soak, your vegetables in your pickling solution, pH changes start to happen. (Heating makes the interaction happen faster.) The vegetables become more acidic, which is what we want to happen in pickling. However, the pickling solution then becomes less acidic. So if your recipe is a hot pack for canned pickles, and you have heated your vegetables in the pickling solution ("brine"), then you should not use leftover brine from filling jars for another round of the recipe. The expected ratio of acid to low-acid ingredients and ultimate pH adjustment in the next recipe will not be the same.

If you are making a usual raw-pack recipe for canned pickles and have leftover vinegar or pickling solution, then that could be used for another round of the recipe if you have a significant amount left over. An example of this type of raw pack would be pickled dill green beans, or quick dill cucumber pickles. The beans or cucumbers are never combined with the vinegar solution until it is filled over them in the canning jars. The initial boiling may have concentrated the vinegar (and other ingredients like salt or sugar) just a little, but that does not make it less safe. If you boiled it quite a bit to concentrate the mixture, you may not want to use it for its effect on flavor, however.

In some recipes, sliced raw cucumbers are soaked for hours in the pickling liquid (vinegar, sugar and/or salt, for example). Then the liquid is drained off the cucumber slices into a pan. The soaked raw slices are filled into jars while the liquid is then heated and poured over them. Even though this is a raw pack in terms of filling jars, this vinegar solution had its original pH (acidity) altered from that initial soaking before it was heated and poured into jars. It should not be used again for a canned pickle recipe since it is now of unknown acidity.

Leftover solutions from preparing a canning recipe could be used to flavor some veggies that only get stored in the refrigerator. This would be similar to marinating for flavor. Not knowing each recipe and situation, I cannot give you a definite storage time for this new mixture in your refrigerator. I would treat it as a fresh vegetable salad and consumer it within several days in most cases. And remember, home refrigerators should keep foods at 40 degrees F or lower!

Unfortunately some of our "legacy" USDA pickling recipes, as well as those from other sources, and especially those using whole pickling cucumbers, do result in some leftover brine after filling jars. Different varieties of pickling cucumbers have varying diameters and lengths and will not always fit into canning jars to the same degree. Therefore, there are more uncertainty and variable results in issuing recommendations for general use.

Do realize that the safety of pickle recipes for home canning in boiling water will depend a great deal on the ratio of ingredients and preparation steps including piece size. And not all pickle recipes

produce the same final, equilibrated, pH in the vegetable and brine. Even though safe for boiling water processing, the length of the process time needed for keeping them on the shelf at room temperature can vary depending on the actual acidity.

Jams and jellies with reduced sugar

National Center for Home Food Preservation, June 26, 2018

Jellies and jams that contain modified pectin, gelatin, or gums may be made with noncaloric sweeteners. Jams with less sugar than usual also may be made with concentrated fruit pulp, which contains less liquid and less sugar. See Guide 7 of the USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning for recipes.

Two types of modified pectin are available for home use. One gels with one-third less sugar. The other is a low-methoxyl pectin which requires a source of calcium for gelling. To prevent spoilage, jars of these products must be processed longer in a boiling-water canner. Recipes and processing times provided with each modified pectin product must be followed carefully. The proportions of acids and fruits should not be altered, as spoilage may result.

Acceptably gelled refrigerator fruit spreads also may be made with gelatin and sugar substitutes. Such products spoil at room temperature, must be refrigerated, and should be eaten within 1 month.

UC Master Food Preserver Program Note: *Per our Resources & Recipes Used for Outreach | UC Master Food Preserver page, any commercial pectin can be used as long as you follow USDA processing and recipe recommendations. Some manufactures collect recipes from the public and some include open kettle canning instructions, which we don't recommend and use in our educational outreach.*

Is it safe to jar already canned food?

National Center for Home Food Preservation,

Often people think that they can save money by buying larger containers of canned food, transferring the contents (or leftovers from the first use) to smaller jars and re-processing it. Others wonder if this is a way to save leftovers from any size can for a longer time than they will keep in the refrigerator.

There are several problems with these practices:
(1) We have no safe tested processes to do this. In some cases, the way the heat is distributed throughout the jar during canning will be very different if you start with already canned/cooked food than with fresh. Excessively softened foods will pack more tightly into a jar, or arrange themselves differently and the process time recommended for fresh foods will not be enough for the already canned foods. Underprocessing can lead to foodborne illness or at the very least, spoilage and loss of product. You definitely could not just transfer the food and "seal" the jar. You would need some heat treatment known to destroy any organisms transferred with the food.

(2) The expense and time of recanning foods far exceed the cost savings of bulk or large-quantity packaged foods. To re-can food, you now add the expense of a jar and lid as well as the energy to re-can the food.

(3) Most likely the quality of the food will be greatly reduced in canning the food for a second time. The

heat of canning does cause loss of some nutrients, and a second round of canning will further reduce the nutritional value. Textural changes from heating will be added to those already produced.

Without tested processes for re-canning foods, there is no way to know how to reduce the canning process and the default (although not a recommendation) is to process for the full time and temperature as if starting from scratch. When you consider you are not even saving money and resources, it does not seem worth the loss of food quality to practice this re-canning of commercially canned food. Our recommendation is to not plan to do this.

Why Experts Say "No" to pH Meters in Home Canning

NewsFlash | National Center for Home Food Preservation

pH is a scale from 0 – 14 that measures how acidic or basic a substance is. Using a pH meter at home may sound like a good idea, but it can actually make your food less safe. Here's why:

1. *pH Meters Aren't Reliable Enough for Home Use*
   - Home (consumer-grade) pH meters can give readings that are off by a large margin.
   - Even a small error can make the difference between a safe and unsafe product.
   - This is especially risky for acidified foods like salsa or pickled vegetables, where pH must be precisely below 4.6 to prevent botulism.
   - It is not just the liquid portion of the product that must be measured. Measuring pH of solids and liquids must be completed with the correct procedures (i.e. drain solids, record weights, blends solids, dilute with distilled water if needed, etc.)
   - Home pH meters cost between $10 and $150 and are less accurate while professional ones range from $1000 to over $5000.

2. Professional Meters Need Regular Calibration
   - True food-testing pH meters must be calibrated daily with fresh, lab-grade buffer solutions.
   - Most home users don't have access to the correct calibration materials or the training to use them properly. An uncalibrated meter = inaccurate readings, which can lead to false confidence in unsafe products.

3. Temperature Affects Accuracy
   - pH readings change with temperature.
   - Measuring hot or cold samples can give false results unless the meter automatically compensates for temperature — most home meters do not.

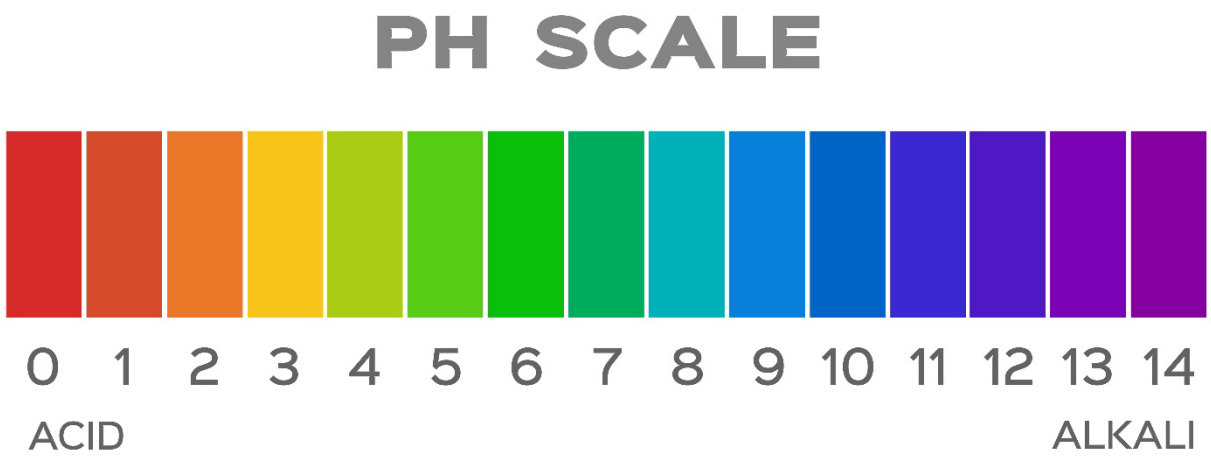
4. Cleaning and Maintenance Are Critical
   - The pH probe must be cleaned, stored, and maintained correctly.
   - If not, the sensor can become contaminated or damaged, leading to wrong readings or even cross-contamination between samples.

5. pH Isn't the Main Safety Factor for Low-Acid Foods
   - For low-acid foods, the time and temperature combination during processing, not pH, determines safety.
   - Using a pressure canner, tested recipes, and correct processing times are what protect against Clostridium botulinum (botulism).

- pH is one of the factors used to set the targets for the amount of heat required during water bath processing, pH itself is not the target. Recipe validation requires a heat penetration study in order to determine the processing time, not just a measurement of pH.
- The thickness of the mixture and size of the pieces also affects safety.

The Safe Choice

- Always use research-tested recipes from trusted sources like the National Center for Home Food Preservation (NCHFP) or other Extension services.
- Follow directions for processing time, pressure, and elevation adjustments.
- If a recipe depends on acidity, rely on measured ingredients (like vinegar or lemon juice), not home pH meters.
- A pH of 5.0 in vinegar does NOT mean 5% vinegar to be used in canning.



New law for sell-by dates

Food Date Labeling

AB 660 (Irwin) requires food manufacturers to use uniform terminology when labeling products with "quality" or "safety" dates and bans the use of consumer-facing "sell-by" dates.

Starting July 1, 2026, this bill prohibits the sale of any food item (except eggs and infant formula) for human consumption in California that is not labeled for quality using the terms "best if used by" or "best if frozen by" or labeled for food safety using the terms "use by" or "use or freeze by." Also starting July 1, 2026, this bill prohibits the use of consumer-facing "sell by" dates, alternatively allowing coded "sell by" dates that retain stock rotation information for retailers while eliminating the source of consumer confusion that results in the disposal of wholesome, nutritious food.

Why Is Food Date Labeling Important?

AB 660 co-sponsor **Californians Against Waste** reports that more than 50 differently phrased date labels have been used in the U.S., resulting in confusion and food waste. The California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (**CalRecycle**) reports that 2.5 billion meals worth of unspoiled food is thrown away each year, contributing to the organic waste that is 48% of what Californians send to landfills. As organic waste decomposes in landfills, it accounts for 41% of the state's methane emissions, a greenhouse gas with 84 times the power to heat the climate as carbon dioxide. Wasted food also reduces what can be saved for food banks and impacts Californians' wallets by throwing good food away too soon.

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) in consultation with the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) acknowledges that bringing clarity to food date labels would greatly aid in curbing food waste that often is discarded prematurely. The **U.S. Department of Agriculture** (USDA) and **U.S. Food and Drug Administration** (FDA) are partners in this effort.

Legislative History

AB 954 (Chiu, Chapter 787, Statutes of 2017) required CDFA, in consultation with CDPH, on or before July 1, 2018, to publish information to encourage food manufacturers, processors, and retailers responsible for the labeling of food products to voluntarily use uniform terms on food product labels to communicate quality dates and safety dates and required the department to promote the consistent use of those terms. The bill required CDFA to encourage food distributors and retailers to develop alternatives to consumer-facing "sell by" dates. It also established the Consumer Education Account in the Department of Food and Agriculture Fund for the deposit of nonstate funds from public and private sources to educate consumers about the meaning of quality dates and safety dates.

Step-by-Step Guide for Reappointment for Volunteers

Step-by-Step Guide for Reappointment for Volunteers | UC Master Food Preserver

Annual reappointment is a requirement for all volunteers working with UC Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR). Please read this update thoroughly and direct any questions regarding the reappointment process to your program's UC Master Food Preserver Coordinator, Advisor, or County Director. Reappointment takes place from June 1 through June 30 across the state of California. The process for reappointment can be done in 5 easy steps!

Step 1: Select "Please Complete!" in VMS

- Login to VMS, https://vms-mfp.ucanr.edu.
- Select "Please Complete!" from any of the prompts on the right of VMS home screen
- Note: This prompt will NOT appear on the VMS home screen of volunteers listed in the roster as Trainees. Graduates of the UC Master Food Preserver Program who do not see these prompts on or after June 1 should request that their coordinator change their achievement level be changed to "First Year Master Food Preserver".

Step 2: Complete all five sections to fulfill county requirements for participation

- A new window will open showing the status from the previous year's reappointment.
- Click on each Release to bring up the online form to complete. Click the blue accept button for each form.
    1. Annual Volunteer Agreement and Request for Reappointment:
        - **Recent Graduates:** Select the option 1st Year Volunteer. This states that you agree to complete the minimum of 50 volunteer hours during your first full program year.
        - **Everyone else:** Select the option that matches your situation.
            - *Completed Hours and Seeking Reappointment:* You have met your minimum hours requirement and want to continue in the program.
            - *Not Completed Hours and Seeking Reappointment:* You are short some of your volunteer or continuing education hours and will make them up during the next program year.
            - *Seeking Limited Active Status:* Outstanding personal situations are temporarily preventing you from fully participating. You are requesting to still retain Active status without being required to meet the minimum hours requirements during the next program year.
            - *Do Not Wish To Be Reappointed:* We're sorry to see you go.

    2. Code of Conduct/Responsibilities and Rights
        - Read the code of conduct. The document is included in training application. It is used for all adult volunteers within UC ANR.
    3. Proof of California Driver Licenses and Automotive Liability Insurance
        - If you plan to drive as part of your volunteer duties (hauling supplies to farmers markets, fairs, outreach events, etc.) and have the minimum amount of insurance required by UC ANR (50/100/50), select TRUE and list your Driver's License expiration date. If you get in an accident during one of these types of volunteer trips, you'll verify that you have the minimum amount of insurance required by UC ANR and then the secondary insurance kicks in to cover out-of-pocket expenses.
        - If you're not planning on driving as part of your volunteer duties or if you don't have the minimum insurance coverage, select FALSE.

    4. Waiver of Liability
        - This form explains that you understand that there are risks involved in participating in UC Master Food Preserver Program activities and will not sue if you get injured while performing your duties.
        - Remember, we have a secondary personal insurance to cover out-of-pocket expenses up to $10,000 if injured at official program events and the UC ANR third party insurance to cover other volunteer work-related issues.

    5. Preparing/Serving Food Release Statement
        - This form releases the University of any liability if you don't follow proper food safety procedures when preparing tasters.
        - Volunteers still need to follow their county's Environmental Health requirements for serving food at program events.

Step 3: Verify Date Completed; Print a Copy for your Records

- Once you complete the five forms, the reappointment window will no longer appear on your VMS screen.

Step 4: Complete the annual reappointment quiz with a minimum score of 85%.

- You may take the quiz more than once to complete. The links to the study guide, questions and online quiz are on the VMS home page and on the statewide website in the Volunteer Resources page.
- Current year students are not required to complete the reappointment quiz but may do so for the additional learning opportunity.

Step 5: Submit Insurance Fee (if required in your county)

- The UC Master Food Preserver Program assesses a $6.00 fee to cover accident and injury insurance.
- This fee is either collected locally by county personnel, paid for by county fundraising, or combined with a county membership fee.
- Contact your local UC Cooperative Extension program Coordinator, Advisor or County Director for more information about their county requirements and, if required, how to submit a payment.

Quick Tips and FAQs:

How many hours do I need to volunteer for reappointment?

- Minimum hours required to remain an Active certified UC Master Food Preserver:
- 25 hours – Volunteer
- 12 hours - Continuing education
- Note: First year UC Master Food Preserver volunteers are required to complete a minimum of 50 volunteer hours (no continuing education requirement) during their first full year as UC Master Food Preserver volunteers. Participants in the new volunteer certification program may begin to accumulate volunteer hours during their training program if they are accompanied by a certified UC Master Food Preserver Volunteer and are working on/at an official program event.

I did not complete my minimum required volunteer and continuing education hours during the current program year. I want to continue. Am I still eligible for reappointment?

Volunteers always have the option of reappointing even if they have not completed the mandatory minimum volunteer and continuing education hours. Individual circumstances may vary. Read through the options below and connect with your UCCE Master Food Preserver Program Coordinator to determine which course of action is most appropriate for your situation:

- Volunteers may select the “Not Completed Hours, Seeking Reappointment” option when completing their reappointment process. These volunteers work with their coordinators to makeup hours, as appropriate during the subsequent program year.
- Some volunteers may be experiencing barriers to participation that will not immediately resolve. These volunteers may select the “Seeking Limited Active status” option when completing their reappointment process. Limited Active volunteers must complete reappointment (including submission of their insurance fee and completing the reappointment quiz), but are not required to complete the minimum hours during their Limited Active year.

Limited Active status is good for one year with no expectation of 'making up' hours once back on active status. Contact your coordinator if you need to extend your Limited Active status beyond one year.

What type of insurance coverage do I have when acting as a UC volunteer?

- UC Master Food Preserver volunteers are offered insurance coverage for incidents or accidents that occur while they take part in or attend an approved/sanctioned program activity. Volunteers are also covered while traveling directly between home and a group meeting place for scheduled activity, except if an auto injury. For details about the insurance provided volunteers and how to submit a claim, visit UC Master Food Preserver Hartford Volunteer Insurance.
- Supplemental auto insurance is available to those who meet insurance minimums in case of qualifying accidents. See the "Proof of California Driver License and Automotive Liability Insurance Form" for more information. (This form will automatically appear on the VMS home screen beginning June 1).

Where do I find insurance information and cost of insurance fees?

- The UC Master Food Preserver Program assesses a $6.00 fee to cover accident and injury insurance. This fee is collected locally by county personnel (see note below).
- All active, limited-active volunteers should contact their local UC Cooperative Extension program Coordinator, Advisor or County Director for more information about how to submit a payment.
- Note: Some programs assess fees in excess of $6.00 in order to support volunteer programming. Other programs choose to pay insurance fees on behalf of volunteers.

I am also a UC Master Gardener volunteer. Do I have to pay the insurance fee twice?

- If you are also a UC Master Gardener Volunteer, you only pay one insurance fee through the UC Master Gardener Program.
- 4-H volunteers have a separate insurance program with a separate fee.

Copyright

UC Master Food Preserver Image Guidelines

As both creators and users of images, presentations, videos, and illustrations it is important that we understand how to responsibly use them under US copyright law. "Copyright, a form of intellectual property law, protects original works of authorship including literary, dramatic, musical, and artistic works, such as poetry, novels, movies, songs, computer software, and architecture. Copyright does not protect facts, ideas, systems, or methods of operation, although it may protect the way these things are expressed."

UC Regents retains a non-exclusive license to use images, video, and educational content created by UC Master Food Preserver volunteers while acting as agents of UC. Volunteers sign acknowledgment of the copyright statement with the reappointment annual agreement and in the initial volunteer application. The revised copyright statement allows volunteers to maintain copyright ownership of assets created while acting as a volunteer or when sharing personal images, videos, etc. In other

words, volunteers maintain ownership of their work, while granting UC a non-exclusive license to use in perpetuity.

Full rights to photos, videos, presentations, and other assets created by UC staff belong to the university. UC Master Food Preserver staff who hire freelance photographers should ensure that full-usage rights to the images belong to UC Agriculture and Natural Resources, and UC Regents as part of the terms of your request for purchase.

Recipes: According to the US Copyright Office, a recipe cannot be protected by copyright laws because it is a list of ingredients and instructions. *However,* photos accompanying the recipe and substantial literary expression in the form of an explanation or directions can be copyrighted. See the **US Copyright Office's Circular 33** for more information on works not protected by copyright laws.

Copyright Resources

- University of California - Copyright
- Copyright.gov
- US Copyright Office's Circular 33

Elderberry Jelly

Ball Elderberry Jelly Recipe

A deep, jewel-toned jelly with a bright, balanced tang that highlights elderberry's earthy, wine-like flavor.
Note: This recipe is dependent on precise ingredient ratios for shelf stability. A kitchen scale is required to confirm accurate quantities for safe preservation. No reduction in sugar or lemon juice may be made. Ingredient quantities in parentheses are for planning reference only. This recipe was validated in 2025 under the new elderberry safety guidelines.

Makes: About 5 half-pint jars (8 ounces / 250 mL)
Prep: 3 Hours
Processing Time: 10 Minutes

INGREDIENTS
650 grams elderberry juice (about 3 cups)
62 grams Ball® Classic Pectin (about 6 tablespoons)
130 grams bottled lemon juice (about ½ cup)
1,100 grams sugar (about 5 ½ cups)

1. For each cup of juice needed, use about 1 pound (500 grams) of elderberries. Gently wash and drain berries, remove caps and stems, and place berries in a large stainless-steel saucepan with just enough water to prevent scorching (¼–½ cup water per 4 cups berries). Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring frequently. Reduce heat, cover loosely, and simmer 5–10 minutes, stirring and crushing berries until softened. Transfer to a dampened jelly bag or a strainer lined with several layers of dampened cheesecloth set over a deep bowl and let drip undisturbed for at least 2 hours or overnight.

2. Using a kitchen scale, weigh elderberry juice, bottled lemon juice, and sugar.

3. Prepare boiling water canner. Heat jars in simmering water until ready to use, do not boil. Wash lids in warm soapy water and set bands aside.

4. Combine elderberry juice, bottled lemon juice, and pectin in a large stainless-steel saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring to dissolve pectin. Add sugar, stirring until dissolved, and return mixture to a full rolling boil that cannot be stirred down. Boil hard for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Skim off foam if necessary.

5. Ladle hot jelly into a hot jar leaving ¼-inch headspace. Remove any air bubbles. Wipe jar rim. Center lid on jar and apply band, adjust to fingertip tight. Place jar on the rack in boiling-water canner with simmering water (180°F). Repeat until all jars are filled.

6. Water must cover jars by 1 inch. Adjust heat to medium-high, cover canner, and bring water to a rolling boil. Process half-pint jars 10 minutes, adjusting for altitude. Turn off heat and remove cover. Let jars cool 5 minutes. Remove jars from canner; do not retighten bands if loose. Cool 12-24 hours. Check lids for seal, they should not flex when center is pressed.

Working with Youth

https://ucanr.edu/site/uc-master-food-preserver-coordinators/article/working-youth

The UC Master Food Preserver Program is dedicated to promoting food safety and encouraging a love for preserving food among youth. Engaging with young people is a vital part of our mission, and we are committed to ensuring these interactions follow UC ANR policy and are safe, educational, and enriching.

Policy Overview

UC Master Food Preserver volunteers are encouraged to work with youth but must adhere to specific guidelines to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants. The key policies are as follows:

1. **Partnership requirement:**
   - All youth projects must be conducted in partnership with schools, parents, 4-H, CalFresh, or other youth-focused programs or organizations.
   - UC Master Food Preserver volunteers should never be responsible for youth; a partner organization or adult guardian must have responsibility for the care and custody of youth.

2. **Project approval:**
   - Projects involving youth must be approved by the UC Master Food Preserver coordinator.

3. **Supervision:**
   - A teacher, principal, parent, 4-H personnel, EFNEP or CalFresh Health Educator must be present at all times during youth activities.
   - **UC Master Food Preserver volunteers must never be alone with or responsible for the care or custody of youth at any time.**

How to Get Involved

Getting involved with youth-focused projects through the UC Master Food Preserver Program is a rewarding experience that can inspire and educate the next generation. Follow these steps to ensure a successful and compliant program:

1. **Identify a partner:**
   - Connect with schools, parents, 4-H clubs, EFNEP, CalFresh, or other youth-focused organizations to find potential partnerships.
2. **Develop a project plan:**
   - Create a detailed plan outlining the project goals, activities, and the roles of all involved parties.
3. **Get approval:**
   - Submit your project plan to the UC Master Food Preserver coordinator for approval.
4. **Ensure supervision:**
   - Coordinate with your partner organization to ensure a responsible adult is present during all activities.

2026 Reappointment Quiz Questions

***Submit the quiz online at https://link.ucanr.edu/2026mfpquiz*. Due date is June 30, 2026.**

1. What products have been tested to safely process in a boiling water bath canner in half-gallon jars?

   A. Apple Juice & Orange Juice
   B. Apple Juice & Grape Juice
   C. Grape Juice & Cranberry Juice
   D. Grape Juice & Lemon Juice

2. When processing in a steam canner is complete, how long before you remove the lid?

   A. Immediately, same as with boiling water canning
   B. 1 minute
   C. 3-5 minutes
   D. 5 minutes, same amount of time jars sit in a boiling water canner after turning off the heat

3. When testing the temperature sensor of a steam canner, when do you note/mark the location of the sensor needle indicating the boiling point?

   A. When a steady stream of steam is coming out of the vent hole
   B. When a steady stream of steam is coming out of the vent hole for one minute
   C. When the canner lid starts lifting, rattling, or spitting water from around the edges
   D. After the heat is adjusted to stop the canner lid from lifting, rattling, or spitting water from around the edges and the sensor needle stops rising

4. Why should leftover brine from a hot pack recipe *not* be used for another batch of canned pickles?

   A. The flavor becomes too strong
   B. The vinegar evaporates during boiling
   C. The brine's acidity changed and is no longer predictable
   D. The color becomes too dark

5. What is a recommended safe use for leftover brine?

   A. Use it as a marinade for refrigerator stored vegetables
   B. Pour it back into a new jar for shelf storage
   C. Reboil it and use for canning
   D. Add lemon juice to reacidify it

6. Since the preservative effect of sugar is not included in low sugar jams and jellies, what step(s) are taken to prevent spoilage?

   A. Use only Ball, Mrs. Wages, and Sure Jell low-sugar products
   B. Process jars longer
   C. Use the proportions of acids and fruits listed in the recipe without changes
   D. All of the above
   E. Both A & B
   F. Both B & C

7. We recommend canning previously canned/processed leftovers, just follow the original processing instructions.
   A. Yes (True)
   B. No (False)

8. While there are several economic reasons why it is not recommended to re-can commercial bulk canned items, what it the primary food safety reason?

   A. The physical quality of the food is degraded
   B. Lids are less likely to seal
   C. Heat penetration and food density change with reprocessing
   D. Nutrient quality is reduced even further

9. Mrs. Johnson doesn't worry about using tested recipes because she has a home pH meter and uses it every time she cans. What are some considerations you might want to gently point out to her as you discuss why tested recipes are important?

   A. The results of home pH meters vary by a wide margin.
   B. Both liquids and solids must be tested in a recipe to assure it is safe - solids are tested by draining, blending, then testing
   C. pH is not the main determinant of safety for pressure canned (low acid) foods; a tested recipe balances time and temperature to get the correct processing time
   D. All of the above

10. Vinegar with a pH of 5 is the same as 5% vinegar.

    A. Yes (True)
    B. No (False)

11. What change does California AB 660 make to food date labeling beginning July 1, 2026?

    A. All food must be labeled with expiration dates
    B. Food manufacturers must only use standardized quality or safety date labels (ex: "Best if used by" or "Use By")
    C. Retailers must remove all date labeling from packaged foods
    D. All foods must display "sell by" dates only

12. How does the reason AB 660 was created fit with the mission of the UC Master Food Preserver Program?

    A. To increase food sales statewide
    B. To eliminate quality date labeling on packaged foods
    C. To reduce food waste caused by labeling inconsistencies
    D. To require retailers to remove food before peak quality dates

13. Can a student earn volunteer hours while they are training to become a UC Master Food Preserver?

    A. Yes, if accompanied by an MFP
    B. No, not until they graduate from the training program

14. Which elements of a recipe can be used without permission because they are generally not copyrightable?

    A. Ingredient list, quantities and basic process
    B. Creative stories, descriptions, or narrative text
    C. Photographs, videos, and illustrations
    D. Collections of recipes, such as in a cookbook

15. What is the most important consideration when following the recently validated Elderberry Jelly recipe by Ball?

    A. Since elderberries vary in pH, you can choose whether or not to add the bottled lemon juice
    B. You can choose to use either volume measurements in parentheses or weight measurements
    C. You must use a kitchen scale to measure the accurate weight of ingredients- volume measurements are listed for reference only
    D. You can reduce the sugar content if you prefer, but you also have to switch the pectin

16. Which of the following is a true statement regarding when UC Master Food Preservers work with youth participants?

    A. Volunteers may supervise youth independently if parents give permission
    B. Youth events do not require partnerships with parents, schools, or youth-focused organizations
    C. Youth projects can be approved without the coordinator's involvement
    D. An adult responsible for the youth (educator, principal, parent, etc.) must be present during the UC Master Food Preserver activities; volunteers must never be alone with youth.

We need your input! Your responses to the following questions will help with local program development and statewide strategic planning.

17. What are your goals for volunteering during the next program year?

18. What are your plans to maintain/improve your food preservation knowledge and experience?

19. How do you plan to reach your goals for next year, and what support do you need to accomplish your goals either from other volunteers or your coordinator?