Steam Canning Uncovered



LIVE WELL UTAH

Grandma used a steam canner all summer long, but you've heard they are not safe. Read up on what the latest research has to say about steam canning.

In recent decades, atmospheric steam canning has not been recommended for home food preservation. However, recent studies have been published that no longer condemn steam canners. The University of Wisconsin-Madison has published research confirming that atmospheric steam canners are acceptable to use for preserving naturally acidic foods, or acidified-foods such as salsas or pickle varieties. The research comes with assurances that this tool can be used, with conditions that need to be controlled first, such as the following:

High Acid

Foods must register at a pH of 4.6 or below. This includes fruits such as peaches, pears and apples. This method is **not** suitable for vegetables or meats that generally fall into lower-acid categories. It is not recommended to use a steam canner for tomatoes. The exception is for products such as salsa where additional acid is used.

Approved Recipe Use

A research-tested recipe must be used with the atmospheric steam canner. Approved recipes can be found on websites such as the USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning, and the National Center for Home Food Processing and Preservation: nchfp.uga.edu. Standard canning jars and two-piece lids are required. An atmospheric steam canner is approved for use with recipes approved for half-pint, pint or quart jars.

Pure Steam at 212°F

Prior to processing, canners must be vented until a full plume of steam appears. A plume of steam approx. 8 inches coming from the sides of the canner should be visible throughout the entire processing time. When purchasing a steam canner, be aware of features such as a built-in temperature sensor in the lid. The canner should remain at a steady 212°F temperature.

Time is of the Essence

Processing time needs to be adjusted for elevation as required by a tested recipe. The USDA guide is a reliable resource to determine the amount of added processing time needed. With this in mind, processing times must be limited to 45 minutes or less. This includes time modifications for elevation. Time is limited due to the amount of water in the base of the canner. While food is processing, water should **not** be added. If the heat temperature is too high, water can boil dry before processing is complete, and this is deemed unsafe.

Jar Care

Jars must be heated before adding product or processing. It is important not to let much cooling occur prior to processing. After processing, jars should be placed on a rack or towel away from drafts and not force-cooled.

This article was written by Erin Floyd, Intern with USU Extension, and Mealanie D. Jewkes, Extension Associate Professor, Utah State University Salt Lake County Extension.

Source:

http://nchfp.uga.edu/publications/nchfp/factsheets/steam_canne
rs.html

Easy Eats // Create a Fruity Dessert



Have extra fruit on hand? Don't let it go to waste. Follow this guide to make a delicious dessert out of items that are already in your kitchen.

Here's a Fruity Idea

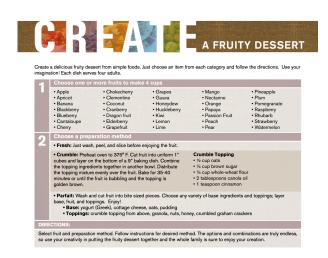
Try making one of these yummy fruity desserts! They are perfect for a casual summer day or a fun neighborhood party. Whatever the occasion, everyone will love what you create!

Just follow these simple directions and you will have a delicious, refreshing and fruity dessert in no time.

For a fun twist, try making your dessert from fruit only

purchased at a farmers market or fruit stand.

Enjoy!



Click below for a printable version! Create a Fruity Dessert

Dads: 4 Tips on Raising Responsible and Confident Children



LIVE WELL UTAH

This week's Family Friday is especially for Dad. These 4 tips will help you raise responsible kids and enjoy fatherhood.

Model Mistakes & Good Problem Solving

As a dad, it is okay for your children to witness small mistakes. This shows them that you are human and also gives you the chance to model good problem-solving skills. For example, on a short hike, you may purposefully leave your own snack at home and say to your kids, "Oops! I forgot to bring my granola bar. I'm hungry. I definitely won't forget next time!"

2. Give Your Children the Chance to Make "Affordable" Mistakes

Consequences of mistakes grow costlier the older children get, which is why it is important to allow your children to make plenty of small, or "affordable", mistakes while they are still young. For example, you may say to your kids, "We are leaving in 30 minutes for a short hike. You get to be in charge of putting together the snacks you would like to take."

3. If a Mistake is Made, Show

Empathy While Holding Your Child Accountable

The most loved and respected dads are the ones who deliver firm consequences with a strong dose of empathy. If a child forgets to bring his/her own snack on a short hike, saying something like "This is so sad. You forgot your snack, and now you're hungry. We can't drive all the way home to get them. Hang in there, I love you." Using an empathetic delivery allows children to stay accountable for their mistakes, but know that you still love them.

4. Give your Children the Same Task Again

Later that week, you may say, "We are leaving in 30 minutes for a short hike. You again get to be in charge of putting together the snacks you would like." When you give your children responsibility for the same task again, without nagging or reminding them of their previous mistakes, this sends a very powerful message: "You are smart enough to learn from your mistakes."

Learn More

Want to learn more concepts like these? Register for a free Fathering with Love and Logic^{\mathbb{M}} course offered by Healthy Relationships Utah. Fathering with Love and Logic^{\mathbb{M}} is a research-based parenting course geared specifically towards fathers and father figures. Courses are available throughout all of Utah. To learn more or register, visit healthyrelationshipsutah.org.

This article was written by Megan Hargraves, Media Specialist with Healthy Relationships Utah, megan.hargraves@usu.edu.

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Creating Staycation Memories



LIVE WELL UTAH

You don't have to drive for days or hop on a plane to have a fun, relaxing break from the daily grind. Check out these expert tips on taking a staycation.

Taking a family vacation is a great way to connect and make fun memories that can last a lifetime, but they can be pricey. Having fun as a family doesn't need to break the bank. Creating fun family memories is possible at a fraction of the cost by taking staycations, or in other words, choosing vacation destinations and activities somewhere close to home so you can reduce the need for hotel stays and other travel costs. Staycations = vacation fun for less \$\$.

Because home is often considered base camp, it may be helpful to set some ground rules as a family to help your staycation feel like a true vacation. Consider the following:

Decide on a budget. Deciding ahead of time how much you can afford to spend can help you decide what activities will fit into your summer without creating financial stress or debt.

Make a plan. Decide when your staycation is beginning and ending and what activities you will be doing. Aim to incorporate something that will be fun for everyone. No matter what you choose to do, just remember that staycations are about spending time together and making memories.

Pretend you aren't home. Although you may sleep or eat some meals at home, pretend you are not at home. For example, if you were on vacation you probably wouldn't be doing house chores, going to a friend's house, or checking work emails, so the same rules should apply to the designated time for your staycation.

Keep it simple. While staycations may mean a full day of travel and activity or even staying overnight somewhere, it doesn't have to. For families with young children, going to a

museum or waterpark close to home and then coming home for naptime or nightly routines may make a much more enjoyable vacation than full day adventures.

Staycation ideas are virtually endless and really depend on your location, interests and budget, but consider these ideas to get you started:

- 1. Get beachy at Bear Lake. Relax on the beach, play in the water, make sandcastles, or rent a kayak. While you are in the area, watch a play, go for a bike ride, check out the Minnetonka Cave or get a famous raspberry shake.
- 2. Go river rafting on the Colorado River, Green River or other river close to home. There are many guided tours available and lunch or admission to other attractions is often included.
- 3. Turn Salt Lake City into a large scavenger hunt as you complete challenges and solve clues to discover overlooked gems in the city and learn about local history. See www.visitsaltlake.com for more information.
- 4. Play in Park City for the day. Take a tram to the top of a mountain to enjoy the view and then hike, zip line or slide down. Check out the Utah Olympic Park freestyle shows and museum or go shopping at the outlets.
- 5. Enjoy a tasty day on a Cache Valley food tour. While in Logan, check out some historical sites, go for a hike in Logan Canyon, or visit the Willow Park Zoo.
- 6. Plan a year of fun with the Connect Pass which allows entrance to 13 select attractions including Discovery Gateway, Thanksgiving Point, Hogle Zoo, Clark Planetarium, The Leonardo, Natural History Museum of Utah, Snowbird Resort, and more.
- 7. Visit Heber Valley to snorkel, swim or soak in the geothermal spring. While you're in the area, take a tour of the Heber Valley cheese factory.
- 8. Check out reduced price days at local arcades/fun centers or movie theatres. Many have special pricing on

attractions for the summer months.

9. Enjoy local free offerings such as movies, art, science, or music in the park, farmer's markets or free days at local attractions. Check out these links for additional information in the Ogden area: http://ogdenamphitheater.com/#, https://scienceintheparks.org/,

http://www.webercountyutah.gov/ramp/.

10. Enjoy the great outdoors. Utah is full of state and national parks, not to mention all the beautiful canyons, lakes and mountain areas. Go for a hike, a bike ride, have a picnic and explore what people come from all over the world to see! Get in to the parks free August 25-28th in honor of the National Park Service Birthday.

Staycations are a wonderful tool to connect with each other and strengthen family relationships while playing and creating treasured memories. Wishing you a wonderful summer of family fun and adventures.

This article was written by Naomi Brower, USU Extension associate professor, Weber County

Summer Food Safety



Summer is the time for barbecues and picnics. The biggest party crasher at summer buffets is foodborne bacteria. You can't see them, you can't taste them — but you sure can feel them if illness occurs hours or days later.

Year after year, we offer the same advice: handle foods carefully in the summer because foodborne illness — also known as food poisoning — is more prevalent in warmer weather.

Foodborne illnesses increase during the summer, generally for two reasons.

First, there are natural causes. Bacteria are present throughout the environment in soil, air, water and in the bodies of people and animals. These microorganisms grow faster in the warm summer months. Most foodborne bacteria grow fastest at temperatures from 90 to 110 °F. Bacteria also need moisture to flourish, and summer weather is often hot and humid.

Given the right circumstances, harmful bacteria can quickly multiply on food to large numbers. When this happens, someone eating the food can get sick.

Second, there are the people causes for the upswing in summertime foodborne illnesses. Outside activities increase. More people are cooking outside at picnics, barbecues and on camping trips. The safety controls that a kitchen provides, such as thermostat-controlled cooking, refrigeration and washing facilities, are usually not available.

Fortunately, people seldom get sick from contaminated food because most people have a healthy immune system that protects them not only from harmful bacteria on food, but from other harmful organisms in the environment. We know foodborne illness increases in warm weather. We also know that consumers can Fight BAC!™ by following these four simple steps to safer

food in the summertime.

WASH — Unwashed hands are a prime cause of foodborne illness. Keep hands and surfaces clean. Rinse all fruits and vegetables before cutting or eating. When unable to wash, be sure to bring substitutes, such as washcloths and moist towels or paper towels to clean hands and surfaces with.

SEPARATE — Cross-contamination during preparation, grilling and serving food

is a prime cause of foodborne illness. Keep raw and cooked foods separate, and wash surfaces before using them.

CHILL — Holding food at an unsafe temperature is a prime cause of foodborne illness.

Keep cold food cold. Keeping food cold is the number one concern when eating and cooking outdoors. Bacteria will multiply quickly. Never leave foods out for more than 1 hour in temperatures over 90 degrees. Store your ice chest in the shade and pack it with plenty of ice. You may need to discard leftovers. When in doubt, throw it out!

HEAT- Food safety experts agree that food is properly cooked when it is heated for a long enough time and at a high enough temperature to kill harmful bacteria that cause foodborne illness. Take your thermometer along and cook to proper temperatures.

- Ground beef 160 degrees
- Whole steaks and roasts -145 degrees
- Poultry 180 degrees

You can enjoy summer picnics and parties, just remember to have safe and healthy food, not food that can cause foodborne illness. Always prepare and store food properly.

This article was written by Erin Floyd and Mealanie D. Jewkes,

Extension Associate Professor, Utah State University Salt Lake County Extension.

Summertime Family Fun — Part 1



Spending time with family is important, but it can also be fun! We've got some great ideas to make your family time fun and memorable in this two-part Summertime Family Fun article. Check out Part 2 for 10 more ideas for family activities.

Family Time

What are your favorite memories from your childhood? Most likely they revolved around spending time with those you love.

Because it is so easy to get caught up in the busyness of life, it is important to be intentional about creating time and experiences together (or it may not happen). According to family expert, William Doherty, families that are intentional about connecting with each other through traditions, special occasions and everyday rituals (such as having family dinnertime) are more likely to create and build strong bonds with each other that will last a lifetime. What fun things can you do with family members this summer to connect and create memories?

Ground Rules

Start by creating ground rules as a family such as:

Make a plan. Pick an activity and set a date and time to do it. If you like to be a bit more spontaneous, just plan the date and time and then randomly select ideas from a jar of fun activity ideas that you have chosen together. Be sure to take turns selecting the activity so everyone can participate.

Focus on each other. This is about connecting with each other; friends, work and other distractions can wait. Having a no electronics rule may help to reinforce this.

Keep it simple. Spending time together doesn't have to be elaborate or require a lot of time or energy. For those with small children, going to a park together or writing on the sidewalk with chalk can be just as much fun as doing something that requires far more effort.

Get ready...get set...play!

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Pick a theme and do activities related to the theme. For example, go to a museum to see unique rocks, then go on a hike and collect some of your own. Or go to a car show, then set up a race track at home for matchbox cars.
- 2. Get outdoors. Have a picture nature scavenger hunt, track the phases of the moon, go on a hike, have a picnic in the backyard, fly a kite, blow bubbles together or anything else to get outside and enjoy the fresh air.
- 3. Share your talents. Write new lyrics to familiar tunes, create your own dances to favorite songs or host your own Olympics with unique events such as an obstacle course, miniature golf or javelin (foam noodle) toss. Award prizes.
- 4. Get board. Have a board game party or put a puzzle together.
- 5. Camp in your backyard. Find constellations, tell stories or make shadow puppets on the side of the tent or house. If you have a fire pit, light a fire and roast marshmallows and make s'mores. If not, improvise using a gas stove, barbeque or microwave.

Check out Summertime Family Fun — Part 2, and see 10 more great ideas for summertime family fun!

This article was written by Naomi Brower, USU Extension associate professor, Weber County

Reference: Doherty, William (1997). The intentional family: Simple rituals to strengthen family ties. HarperCollins: New York, NY.

Tips for Tackling Summer Cleaning



LIVE WELL UTAH

Summer is a great family time and also a great time to teach kids cleaning skills. These tips will help jobs move along smoothly. After cleaning, plan a fun activity as a reward for participation. Your family will love it!

- Always clean top to bottom. When you dust, start at the top and work your way down.
- Take all your cleaning tools with you into each room to avoid unnecessary trips back and forth.
- Turn off the phones and TV.
- Eliminate clutter. An uncluttered home looks better than one that is dust-free, but strewn with odds and ends.
- Clean as you go! It takes a lot less time to remove new dirt than old and to put things away as you use them than it does to clean and store the piles that accumulate.
- A house that smells fresh will give the impression of cleanliness. Leave baking soda on carpeting for the night to absorb musty odors and vacuum in the morning.
- Keep a doormat or big astro-turf mat on the porch to cut down on tracked in dirt.
- Keep a basket in the kitchen for mail, newspapers, car keys, etc. to help reduce clutter.
- Keep a laundry hamper in every bathroom.
- Put family members in charge of making their own beds and picking up after themselves.
- Always pick up the TV room before bedtime, and start the dishwasher.
- Prioritize and decide what is most important.
- Delegate by getting the entire family involved.
- Make a checklist, and when a job is completed, check it off so you can see how much you've accomplished.

This article was written by Carolyn Washburn, Utah State University Extension associate professor, carolyn.washburn@usu.edu.

Ask an Expert: Tips for the Perfect Picnic

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LIVEWELLUTAH

Whether you're throwing together a quick picnic or planning an outing in advance, we've got some great tips to make your summer picnics a success.

Picnic Season is Here

The summer season brings plenty of opportunity for fun, and picnics are a perfect way to get out and enjoy the outdoors without going too far or spending a lot of money. Picnicking can fit almost any budget and be as simple or elaborate as you want it to be. Some of the best picnics happen on the spur of the moment and don't need a lot of planning. No picnic basket? No problem. Anything that will hold your supplies will do.

Pack Your Picnic with Food Safety in Mind

If you will be gone longer than 2 hours from departure to eating, plan to pack a cooler. After 2 hours at room temperature (1 hour if temperatures are around 90 F), harmful bacteria that cause food poisoning rapidly multiply. USDA guidelines say cold foods should be kept as close to 40 F as possible and hot food should be kept above 140 F.

Cooler Tips

If you are planning to make picnics a mainstay of your summer activity, consider investing in a cooler-on-wheels for portability. To help keep foods cold, chill them in the refrigerator before packing and keep them in the cooler until serving time.

Get double duty from your cooler space. Fill empty drink bottles half full of water or juice and freeze. The frozen

drinks will act as ice packs to keep the picnic cool in transit. At your destination, top off the bottles with water or a drink to sip through your meal.

Location, Location, Location

When planning your picnic food items, consider where you are going. Even if it's just to the park, it will help you prepare by considering the setting. Avoid anything that gets drippy, limp or wimpy in warm weather. Gelatin salad is a perfect example of what not to take, and even tossed salads will wilt if left in the sun or warm weather very long.

Menu Tips

For a no-fuss menu, have a fix-your-own sandwich bar. Fill plastic containers with pre-sliced sandwich fixings, such as lettuce, tomatoes, cheeses, meats, bell peppers, olives, mushrooms, onions and spinach. Set out hearty breads, crusty rolls or tortilla wraps and condiments. To add a gourmet touch, splurge on a couple of interesting spreads, such as pesto, tapenade or flavored soft cheese. Everyone can build a custom sandwich for a fraction of what you'd pay at the deli.

Sometimes the fun of a summer picnic is the spontaneity, and having fruits and vegetables on hand makes packing a breeze. Simple finger food, like carrots, celery, sliced jicama and sliced bell peppers are a great cool, crispy addition to any picnic plate and a great way to bring in vegetables. Add a vegetable dip and you have a quick and easy side dish.

If you plan to picnic frequently this summer, make a standard packing list for spur-of-the- moment jaunts, and keep your pantry stocked with food that is suitable for a picnic.

Basic Picnic Supply List

- Napkins, plates, cups, dinnerware
- Garbage bags
- Plastic bags (like Ziploc)
- Serving utensils and cutting knives
- Can opener
- Cutting mat or cutting board
- Salt and pepper, packets of condiments
- Blanket to sit on
- Hand sanitizer, wet wipes or a wet washcloth in a plastic bag
- Paper towels
- Insect repellent
- Extra water
- Balls, games, Frisbees, etc.

This article was written by Teresa Hunsaker, Utah State University Extension educator, teresa.hunsaker@usu.edu, 801-399-8200

Ask an Expert: Four Tips for Summer Safety



Stay safe this summer! Check out these four ways to keep yourself and your family safe.

Now that school is out, many families are heading outdoors for recreation and activities. Whether in the water or hills, the ballfield or backyard, precautionary measures should be taken so kids and all family members are safe from sun, insects and injuries. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has a portion of their website dedicated to family health. A summary of their tips for family summer safety are included below. For additional information, visit http://www.cdc.gov/family/kids/summer/.

Tip 1. Master water safety.

Swimming in the pool and playing in the sprinklers are favorite summer activities. However, drowning is the leading cause of death among children ages 1 to 4. Water safety tips from CDC include:

- •Always supervise children in or around water. A responsible adult should constantly watch young children.
- Teach kids to swim. Formal swimming lessons can protect young children from drowning.
- Learn CPR. Knowing this skill can be critical in a time of need.
- Install a four-sided fence around home pools.
- When boating, always wear a properly fitted life jacket.

Tip 2: Beat the heat and sun.

Overheating and sunstroke can occur in healthy children, youth and adults if they participate in strenuous activities during hot weather. If someone shows signs of heat exhaustion or heat stroke, move him or her to a cool location and seek medical help. A list of specific signs is included on the CDC website. To avoid over-heating:

- Never leave infants, children or pets in a parked car, even if the windows are cracked open.
- Dress infants and children in loose, lightweight, lightcolored clothing.
- Schedule outdoor activities in the morning and evening hours.
- Keep cool with cool showers or baths.

Also, just a few serious sunburns can lead to skin cancer in the years ahead. Tanning is the skin's way of trying to protect itself from harmful UV rays from the sun. To prevent sunburn:

- Cover up. Clothing that covers the skin helps protect against UV rays.
- Use sunscreen with at least SPF (sun protection factor) 15 and UVA (ultraviolet A) and UVB (ultraviolet B) protection every time you and your child go outside.

Tip 3: Keep ticks and mosquitos from causing harm.

Protect yourself and your family from bites and diseases. Zika, West Nile Virus and Lyme disease can all be transmitted by insects. To help with protection:

- Use an effective insect repellent. Products containing DEET, picaridin, IR3535 as well as some natural oils provide long-lasting protection.
- Some pesticides (acaricides) can reduce the number of ticks, but these should not be relied on for providing full protection.
- Check yourself and your children for ticks after being

outdoors, especially if you have been camping or hiking. Instructions for effectively removing ticks are available on the CDC website.

Tip 4: Prevent injuries.

Nearly everyone is more active and spends more time outdoors this time of year. Falls at home and on the playground are common sources of injuries and visits to the emergency room. To avoid injury:

- Make certain playgrounds are well maintained and have soft landing spots underneath.
- When participating in summer sports, be sure appropriate protective gear is used.
- Parents and teens should be able to perform basic first aid.

Enjoy fun in the sun, but remember to make safety a top priority so that summer is incident and accident free.

By: Kathleen Riggs, Utah State University Extension family and consumer sciences professor, kathleen.riggs@usu.edu or 435-586-8132

Introducing: the Smoothie Bowl

INTRODUCING:

THE SMOOTHIE BOWL



LIVE WELL UTAH

We've talked about smoothies here before, but now let's talk about something new — the smoothie bowl.

What is a smoothie bowl?

A smoothie bowl is a thick smoothie served in a bowl and topped with fresh or dried fruit, nuts, seeds or granola. It's a nutrient-dense option for breakfast or lunch, and a great way to get in a few extra servings of vegetables. Here are six tips to turn your favorite smoothie into a satisfying, delicious smoothie bowl.

- Use frozen fruits. Frozen fruits will make your smoothie cold, thick and extra delicious.
- Try vegetables. Throw in a handful of carrots, spinach, kale, chard, red cabbage or an avocado.
- Add protein. By adding a tablespoon of nut butter, a scoop of plain yogurt, or milk or nut milk, you add a boost of protein to your smoothie bowl.
- •Blend with a high-power blender. Blending thick smoothies can be rough on your blender. If you make smoothies often, you may want to invest in a high-power blender that can handle frozen fruits and fibrous vegetables.
- Add chia seeds. Stir in a teaspoon of chia seeds after blending your smoothie, and let it sit for a few minutes. Chia seeds absorb water, and will naturally thicken your smoothie.
- Top it off. Sliced banana, fresh berries, unsweetened shredded coconut, toasted almonds, crunchy granola...if you can imagine it, you can put it on your smoothie bowl. Shop your pantry and get creative!

Looking for a smoothie recipe to turn into a smoothie bowl? Check out these Food \$ense smoothie recipes, or create your