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College of Agriculture

# Pickles and Relishes

*for the  
family table*

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# Pickles and Relishes

**W**E make quick pickles and relishes from fruits and vegetables that have not been through a brining or fermenting process. Some recipes call for an overnight soaking in salt water. Some require soaking a few hours in ice water. Pickles made this quick way are not so high in quality as the brined product; but you save both time and labor, and the results are quite satisfactory. We rarely make fruit pickles and relishes from brined products; hence they belong to the quick-pickle class.

Pickles and relishes have a tart, spicy flavor which adds zest and variety to meals. Because of this, they are valuable assets to lunches and dinners. Used in small amounts they serve to create and stimulate the appetite. Since they are made from fruits and vegetables, they are sources of some minerals and such vitamins as A and C. Pickles retain the vitamin content because they are highly acid unless processing requires undue cooking.

## PICKLE POINTERS

**DO** use modern-day pickle recipes. Grandmother's recipes may call for too much vinegar because the vinegar of 25 years ago had less acetic acid than today's. Variations in the strength of vinegar was the homemaker's biggest problem in pickling. Today you need not be plagued by uncertainty. Buy a standard 40 to 60 grain strength. This means that the vinegar contains 4 to 6 percent acetic acid.

Distilled, white vinegar is first choice for pickling. It safeguards the original color of the foods. You may prefer cider vinegar for its mellow flavor and aroma even though the preserved foods may be slightly darkened. This is particularly true when making fruit pickles.

**DO** use pure granulated salt. Table salt has added lump-preventing materials that may be undesirable. Salt, when added to fruits and vegetables, draws out their juices, hardens the tissues, and checks the action of organisms which may cause spoilage. If the salt solution is too weak, spoilage bacteria grow and cause soft or slippery pickles.

**DO** use soft water if possible. Large amounts of calcium and other salts found in many "hard" waters may interfere with the fermentation and

pickling processes. High iron content in water may cause pickles to darken. If hard water must be used, boil and let stand 24 hours. Remove scum.

DO use whole spices to give a clear, undarkened product. Use fresh spices and tie loosely in a bag to get the full flavor from them. Lift them out before packing the pickles. Use just enough sugar and spice to bring out the flavor of the pickle. White sugar gives a clearer color than brown, but some recipes call for brown sugar to give extra flavor.

Don't use coloring agents. Well-selected cucumbers, properly processed will be olive green in color. This is the correct color for pickles, not bright green or blue green. Don't heat cucumbers in a copper kettle to give a dark green color. Heating vinegar in copper produces poisonous copper acetate. Use enamelware, aluminum or stainless steel utensils. Don't add copper sulfate or vitriol.

Cucumbers suitable for pickling are firm and crisp with an even green color throughout and free from defects. Gather and brine them within 24 hours or less. Letting them stand too long between gathering and brining may cause hollow pickles.

In general, pickles keep better if sealed airtight for storage. Don't use zinc lids. The vinegar may unite with the zinc to form a poisonous compound.

Good cucumber pickles may be whole or in pieces of fairly uniform size. They have a clear, uniform olive green color with no white or off-color spots. They are crisp and firm throughout with no soft or shrivled parts. The flavor is piquant and pleasing. There is no excessive acid, spiciness, sweetness, or any off-flavor.

### **Crisp Pickle Slices**

4 quarts sliced cucumbers (medium sized)	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup salt
6 medium white onions, sliced	3 cups distilled white vinegar
1 green pepper	5 cups sugar
3 cloves garlic	$1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons turmeric
1 sweet red pepper	$1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons celery seed
	2 tablespoons mustard seed

Choose medium-sized cucumbers. Wash them thoroughly. Slice thin. Add sliced onions, peppers cut in narrow strips, and the whole garlic cloves. Sprinkle the salt over the layers as you work. Now mix a tray of ice cubes thru the pickles. Put another trayful on top. Let stand 3

hours. You may need more ice. It's the ice-salt mixture that helps to make the pickles especially crisp.

Drain cucumber slices thoroughly; discard the icy salt water. Combine distilled white vinegar, sugar, and spices. Pour over cucumber slices. **Heat just to boiling.** That's all the cooking that's required!

Ladle the pickles into hot sterilized pint jars and seal. This makes 8 pints.

### **Mixed Mustard Pickles**

2 quarts tiny cucumbers	4 green peppers cut in narrow strips
2 quarts tiny onions	
2 heads cauliflower (chunked)	2 red peppers cut in narrow strips

Prepare vegetables, sprinkle with 1 cup salt and let stand overnight. Wash and drain thoroughly. Combine:

4½ cups brown sugar	½ oz. turmeric
¼ lb. dry mustard	2 quarts vinegar
1 cup flour	2 teaspoons celery seed

Mix this into a paste with one cup of cold water. Bring vinegar to boil and add dry ingredients. Add vegetables, bring to boil, and pack in glass jars. Seal.

### **Lazy Housewife Pickles**

4 quarts small cucumbers	1 cup sugar
1 cup dry mustard	1 cup salt
1 gallon vinegar	

Wash and examine the cucumbers, then pack in glass jars. Mix the sugar, salt, and mustard together; then add the vinegar slowly, stirring well. Pour the brine over the pickles and seal. Let stand for at least a week before using. The brine is not heated.

### **Garlic Dill Pickles**

Wash 20 to 25 dill-sized cucumbers. Let stand in cold water overnight. Drain. Pack in sterilized quart jars. Add to each quart:

⅛ teaspoon alum	2 whole black peppers
2 or 3 garlic cloves	Plenty of dill heads
¼ dry red pepper	

Heat together:

3 quarts water	1 cup salt
1 quart vinegar	

Pour hot over the packed pickles in the jars. Seal. Makes 6 to 8 quarts depending on size of cucumbers.

## RELISHES

A good relish has an attractive color and appetizing appearance. Catsup is smooth, thick enough to prevent separation and yet not so thick that it will not pour. Chili sauce is about the same thickness as catsup, but it is not smooth as it is made of chopped ingredients.

Most relishes are crisp, fairly uniform pieces of vegetables with a very small amount of liquid. The relish is moist but not watery.

### Sweet Pickle Relish

4 quarts green tomatoes	2 bunches celery
4 quarts onions	2 oz. mixed pickling spices
24 sweet red and green peppers	5 lbs. sugar
	2 quarts vinegar

Cut and seed the tomatoes. Halve the onions and peppers. Let the tomatoes, peppers, and onions stand overnight in salt water. The next day, grind these vegetables with the celery. Squeeze out as much juice as possible. Tie the pickling spices loosely in a cloth bag. Bring the sugar, vinegar, and spices to a boil; then add the other ground, drained vegetables. Cook until the onions are tender and the mixture is clear. Remove the spice bag. Pour into hot, sterilized jars and seal.

## FRUIT PICKLES

Pickled fruits are clear but colorful and bring color to a meal. They are tender and plump with no broken skins or shrivled flesh. They are free from excessive acid, spiciness, sweetness or an over-cooked flavor.

To achieve this perfection you will cook them much like preserves. Long cooking may impair the texture, color, and flavor. You may find the best method is to let them stand overnight in the sweet-sour sirup, after the first cooking. Then drain the sirup from the fruit, boil it down separately, and pour again over the fruit. This way the fruit has a chance to slowly absorb the sirup without shriveling or breaking.

### Basic Sirup for Spiced Pickled Fruits

2 parts sugar, brown or white	1 part cider vinegar
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For each cup vinegar add:

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup mixed pickling spices	1 stick cinnamon
	1 tiny piece ginger root

Tie the spices loosely in a cheesecloth bag. Cook with sugar and vinegar until the sugar is thoroughly dissolved and the sirup is clear. This takes about 5 minutes.

Add the prepared fruit and simmer until clear and tender. Allow about 7 pounds of fruit for each quart of vinegar. Let stand overnight. Carefully pack the fruit in sterilized jars. Reboil the sirup 10 minutes. Then pour into jars to cover the fruit. Seal and process 5 minutes in a hot water bath.

### **Pow Wow Sauce**

12 Winesap or Jonathan apples	½ teaspoon ground cloves
9 onions	3 cups brown sugar
12 tomatoes	2 teaspoons salt
3 green peppers	1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 quart vinegar	1 teaspoon ginger

Put unpeeled apples, onions, tomatoes, and green peppers through the food chopper. Add all other ingredients and simmer 1 hour. Seal while hot.

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**JAMES E. KRAUS, Director**

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