

Canning Caribou, Deer & Moose

Canning caribou, deer (venison) or moose meat has some real advantages. For instance, the tough cuts of meat are tenderized by the canning process, and meals can be ready in minutes using canned meat and serving it over rice, adding barbecue sauce and serving it on a bun, or using it to make a quick stew by adding canned vegetables.

PREPARE THE MEAT AND JARS

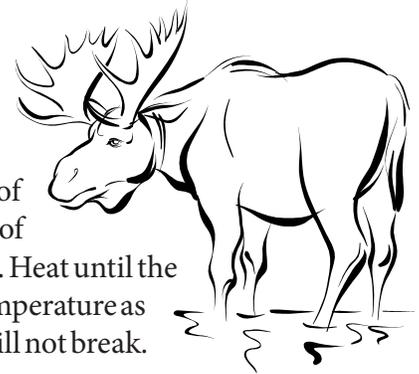
Choose high quality meat. Trim meat of gristle, bruised spots and fat before canning. Cut meat into 1-inch-wide strips, cubes or chunks.

Hot Pack — Precook or brown meat to the rare stage by roasting, stewing or browning in a small amount of fat. Pack hot meat loosely into hot jars, leaving 1 inch headspace. Add ½ teaspoon salt to pints and 1 teaspoon to quarts, if desired. Fill jar to 1 inch from top with boiling meat juices, broth, water or tomato juice (especially for wild game). Remove air bubbles by running a plastic or rubber knife-like utensil around the edge of the jar, gently shifting the food so that any trapped air is released. Wipe jar rims. Adjust lids and process as directed below.

Raw Pack — Add ½ teaspoon salt to each pint jar and 1 teaspoon to quart jars, if desired. Pack raw meat in hot jars, leaving 1 inch headspace. Do not add liquid. Wipe jar rims. Adjust lids and process as directed in chart on page 2.

PREPARE THE CANNER

Put 2 to 3 inches of water in the bottom of the pressure canner. Heat until the water is the same temperature as the jars so the jars will not break.



PROCESS THE JARS

Put the jars on a rack in the bottom of the canner. Put the canner lid on and fasten securely. Let the steam come through the vent hole or open petcock for at least 10 minutes. Close the vent or petcock. After the pressure reaches 11 pounds on a dial-gauge canner or the 10 pound weight begins to jiggle or rock on a weighted-gauge canner, start timing. Regulate heat to maintain a steady pressure. If you have a weighted-gauge canner, check canner manual to determine the amount of jiggling or rocking necessary for 10 pounds pressure.

Pints should be processed for **75** minutes and **quarts** for **90** minutes at **10** pounds of pressure in a weighted-gauge canner or **11** pounds of pressure in a dial-gauge canner.*

**Note: If the game meat is canned at an altitude greater than 1,000 feet above sea level, these times/pressures may be insufficient. In this case weighted-gauge canners should be processed at 15 pounds of pressure. Consult your local Extension agent for recommended times/pressures for dial-gauge canners.*

**You must use a PRESSURE
CANNER to can meat.**

After the processing time is up, turn off the heat and let the pressure go down to zero. Then remove the weight from the vent port or open the petcock. Wait 2 minutes, then remove the pressure canner lid, tilting the far side of the lid up so that the steam does not go in your face.

TEST THE SEAL

Take the jars out of the canner using tongs or a jar lifter. Place on a towel or wood surface. Cool the jars at room temperature. As the jars cool, they will seal. Test the seal after the jars have cooled for 12 hours. Test the seal by tapping the jar lids with a metal spoon. A ringing metal sound is caused by a vacuum inside the jar. The center of the lid should be pulled down. It should not move when pressed with a finger.

If a jar is not sealed, refrigerate and use the meat within one week. Or, you may freeze for future use if you adjust headspace to 1½ inches. Meat may also be reprocessed using a new lid. First, check the jar sealing surface for tiny nicks. If a nick is found, use a new jar as well as a new lid.

USING CANNED MEAT

There are many ways to serve canned meat in tasty hot dishes. Most of the recipes given here can be varied to suit your family preferences and to use what you have available. Spices, herbs, chopped onion or green pepper, different vegetables or celery may be used if desired. Rice, potatoes, macaroni or noodles work equally well. Use what you like best; the amount depends upon how far you need to stretch the recipe.

Recommended process time for strips, cubes or chunks of meat in a DIAL-GAUGE pressure canner

| Style of pack | Jar size | Process time | Canner gauge pressure (PSI) at altitudes of | | | |
|---------------|----------|--------------|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | | | 0-2,000 feet | 2,001-4,000 feet | 4,001-6,000 feet | 6,001-8,000 feet |
| Hot and raw | Pints | 75 minutes | 11 pounds | 12 pounds | 13 pounds | 14 pounds |
| | Quarts | 90 minutes | 11 pounds | 12 pounds | 13 pounds | 14 pounds |

Recommended process time for strips, cubes or chunks of meat in a WEIGHTED-GAUGE pressure canner

| Style of pack | Jar size | Process time | Canner gauge pressure (PSI) at altitudes of | |
|---------------|----------|--------------|---|------------------|
| | | | 0-1,000 feet | Above 1,000 feet |
| Hot and raw | Pints | 75 minutes | 10 pounds | 15 pounds |
| | Quarts | 90 minutes | 10 pounds | 15 pounds |

When milk is called for, you may use mixed nonfat dry milk. Or add the nonfat dry milk as a powder to the flour before mixing in any water when you are making biscuits, dumplings or bread. Remember to increase the amount of water you add by whatever measure the dry milk called for.

Dried onion, pepper or celery flakes may be used. Dried vegetables are easy to store and are quite flavorful. About 4 tablespoons of flakes soaked in $\frac{1}{3}$ cup cold water will make $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the vegetable. Dried potatoes or potato flakes may also be used instead of fresh. If you and your family like a particular flavor, add more.

Use the liquid in which vegetables or meat were cooked or canned instead of water.

RECIPES FOR CANNED MEAT

To be extra safe, **boil home canned meat before eating or using in recipes.** Remove meat from the jar, place in pan, add water, if needed; be certain meat is covered with water, then boil for 10 to 15 minutes.

Mom's Day Off

$\frac{3}{4}$ pound macaroni
1 can cream soup
1 cup milk
1 pint jar (2 cups) canned meat
 $\frac{1}{4}$ pound grated cheese

Cook macaroni according to package directions. Drain. Mix macaroni with cream soup and milk in a casserole. Stir in cut-up canned meat and grated cheese.

Bake at 350°F until bubbly. This takes about 15 minutes. Serves 6.

Meat Stew

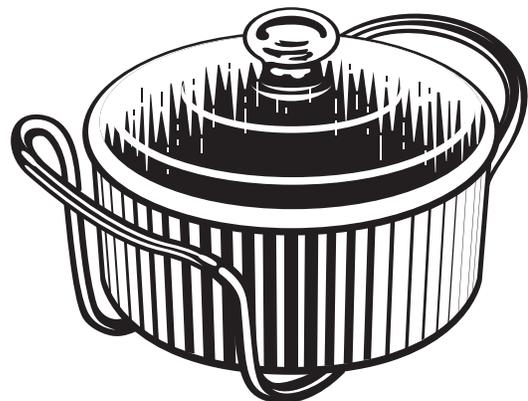
6 hot cooked vegetables
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup flour
1 cup cold water or milk
1 pint jar (2 cups) canned meat
dash salt
dash pepper

Place vegetables and meat in a large pot with enough water, meat juice or vegetable juice to cover. Boil at least 10 minutes. Thicken with flour mixed with cold water or milk. Add leftover gravy if available. Season to taste. Serves 6.

Macaroni and Beef Bake

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped onion
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped celery
2 tablespoons fat
1 pint jar (2 cups) canned meat
1 pint jar (2 cups) canned tomatoes
dash salt
dash pepper
1 cup cooked macaroni

Cook onion and celery in fat. Add meat and tomatoes. Season with salt and pepper. Combine mixture with cooked macaroni in a casserole. Top with grated cheese, or bread crumbs if desired. Bake for 15 minutes at 350°F. Serves 6.



Quick Stew

1 pint jar (2 cups) canned meat
1 pint jar (2 cups) canned potatoes
1 pint jar (2 cups) canned carrots
1 pint jar (2 cups) canned tomatoes
1 chopped onion
1 tablespoon fat
salt to taste
¼ cup flour
½ cup water

Melt fat in a 4-quart saucepan. Add onion and cook until soft. Add meat, potatoes, carrots and tomatoes. Combine flour in water. After the mixture boils for at least ten minutes, add the flour and water mixture and cook until thickened. Season to taste. Serves 6.

Research on food preservation is an ongoing process. Recommended process times for this publication were taken from the electronic version of the USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning, currently available at www.uga.edu/nchfp/publications/usda/utah_can_guide_05.pdf

The United States Department of Agriculture and the Cooperative Extension Service continuously apply new research findings to their recommendations for food preservation techniques. The guidelines in this publication may be revised at any time additional knowledge is gained that may increase the margin of safety or improve the quality of home preserved products.

Please consult your local Cooperative Extension office annually for updated information.

www.uaf.edu/ces or 1-877-520-5211

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