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Wise Notes for Consumers

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Summer Canning Safety

If your summer includes plans to can your home grown vegetables, I hope you also find time to test your pressure canner dial gauge.

The pressure canner is used to process foods under pressure at temperatures higher than boiling. A pressure canner is the only safe method for processing low acid foods such as vegetables, meat, poultry and fish. The pressure canner can supply enough heat to destroy spores of bacteria that causes botulism as well as other types of spoilage.

To have your pressure canner tested, bring the canner lid to the Extension office located at 206 S. State Street in Decatur. The test will help you determine the accuracy of your pressure canner and therefore be confident in your ability to properly can food.

Pressure canners with a dial gauge, should be checked once a year before the canning season. Also check it during the season if you use the canner frequently. If you do not have an instruction book for your canner, write for one.

The weighted pressure control on canners does not need to be checked. Keep it clean and rust free. In most canners there is a gasket. These gaskets are made of rubber or rubber-like compounds to keep steam from leaking out around the cover. You can remove and replace most gaskets as needed. Some only need to be turned to ensure a tight seal. Replace a worn, stretched or hardened gasket with a new one. Refer to the canner instructions for directions.

Extension programs serve people of all ages regardless of socioeconomic level, race, color, sex, religion, disability, or national orientation. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

For more information on testing your pressure canner or for tips on canning your summer produce, call the Extension office at 940/627-3341.

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