

# Converting Dial Steam Pressure Gauge Pressure Canners to Weighted Gauge Canners

by Sarah R-P. Lewis and Julie Cascio

A pressure canner is necessary to safely process low acid foods such as meat, fish, poultry and vegetables at home. Improperly processing low acid foods in a pressure canner, or processing them in a boiling water-bath canner, can result in botulism which can be fatal. If your pressure canner has one, it is important to have the pressure canner dial gauge (also called a steam pressure gauge) tested annually to assure home-canned foods are adequately processed. If getting the dial gauge tested isn't possible, using your dial gauge pressure canner as a weighted gauge pressure canner is possible with All American and Presto canners.

When converting a dial gauge canner to a weighted gauge canner, it is important to no longer use the reading on the dial gauge to reach and maintain pressure, but to rely only on the action of the pressure regulator weight. The processing time begins once the pressure regulator weight begins to release steam and rattle (for All American) or rock (for Presto), as described in the canner instruction manual. Once the pressure regulator weight is moving and releasing steam, reduce the heat to maintain the level of movement recommended. If the pressure regulator weight is allowed to rock too rapidly, for Presto canners, or too often, for All American canners, the canner will lose excess liquid and may run dry, which could damage the canner.

## All American

Wisconsin Aluminum Foundry is the manufacturer of the All American canner. In 1995 the design of the All American canner changed. The control valve (a spring-loaded part with a small lever that flips up and down, sometimes called a petcock) was discontinued and replaced with a vent pipe and a pressure



Clockwise from top: All American petcock, vent pipe and weighted gauge.

regulator weight.

If you have a pre-1995 All American pressure canner, it is possible to replace the petcock control valve with a vent pipe and a pressure regulator weight. The vent pipe fits in the opening for the control valve and the pressure regulator weight is set on the vent pipe. This conversion makes it possible to operate the canner as a weighted-gauge canner at 5, 10, or 15 pounds of pressure.

The Instruction and Recipe Book for operating the All American canner using the pressure regulator weight can be downloaded from their website. The



**Above, a three-piece pressure Presto regulator. At left, a 15-pound Presto pressure regulator (or "dead weight.")**



All American pressure regulator weight will indicate the correct pressure has been reached by rattling and releasing steam. To maintain the correct pressure the weight needs to release steam only a few times a minute, as designated in the instructions.

If you have questions, contact the All American Customer Service department.

Email: [customerrelations@wafco.com](mailto:customerrelations@wafco.com)

Customer Service Phone: 920-686-2701

Website: [www.allamerican1930.com](http://www.allamerican1930.com)

## **Presto**

Presto pressure canners that have a dial gauge and a 15-pound pressure regulator (sometimes referred to as a "dead weight") can be used as a weighted gauge canner.

Canning at 15 pounds of pressure is required for low acid canning at elevations at 1,000 feet and above. In order to can at 10 pounds of pressure, as most canning recipes require at elevations below 1,000 feet, there is the option to replace the 15-pound pressure regulator with a 3-piece pressure regulator that allows maintaining the pressure at 5, 10 or 15 pounds. This 3-piece pressure regulator fits on the same vent pipe and will need to be purchased separately from Presto.

There are a few older Presto models that originally had control valves (petcocks). These will need to have the vent pipe replaced with a different style in order to use the 3-piece regulator. Contact Presto to learn more about this conversion.

Consider purchasing the Presto instruction and recipe booklet for a 3-piece pressure regulator canner model.

Note: There are a few older models, which originally had petcocks, that will need to have the vent pipe replaced with a different style in order to use the 3-piece regulator. Contact Presto to learn more about this conversion.

If you have questions, contact the Presto Customer Service department.

Presto Customer Service: 800-877-0441

Email available on the website: [www.gopresto.com](http://www.gopresto.com)

**[www.uaf.edu/ces](http://www.uaf.edu/ces) or 1-877-520-5211/907-474-5211**

**Julie Cascio, Sarah R-P. Lewis and Linda Tannehill, Extension Faculty, Health, Home and Family Development.**



Published by the University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Service in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture. UAF is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity employer and educational institution and prohibits illegal discrimination against any individual: [www.alaska.edu/nondiscrimination](http://www.alaska.edu/nondiscrimination)

©2023 University of Alaska Fairbanks.

03-21/JC-SL-LT/06-23

**Revised March 2023**