COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS
FNH-00731

Remaking Soft Jams or Jellies

by Julie Cascio

If Your Jelly Doesn't Gel…

Sometimes the jellied product we just made is soft or runny. Before remaking jellied products, it is best to wait three days while the product rests in a cool place; jellying sometimes takes time.

When jelly fails to gel it is either because there was not enough pectin present or because of inaccurate measuring, insufficient cooking, over-cooking or a doubled recipe prevented the pectin from doing its job properly. Recooking may remedy the situation. If it doesn't, use the jelly as pancake or waffle syrup or spoon over ice cream, or as a dessert topping.

If powdered or liquid pectin was used in the original jelly, add more of the same pectin and follow the proportions and instructions as follows.

Remake a trial batch using 1 cup of jam or jelly first. Do not remake more than 8 cups at a time.

Remaking Soft Cooked Jams or Jellies

To Remake Soft Jam or Jelly with Powdered Pectin

Measure jam or jelly to be recooked. Work with no more than 4 to 6 cups at a time.

For each quart of jam or jelly, mix ¼ cup of sugar, ½ cup of water, 2 tablespoons of bottled lemon juice, and 4 teaspoons of powdered pectin. Bring to a boil while stirring. Add jam or jelly and bring to a rolling boil over high heat, stirring constantly. Boil hard for 30 seconds. Remove from heat, quickly skim foam off jam or jelly, and fill hot, sterile half-pint or pint jars, leaving ¼ inch headspace. Wipe rims of jars with a dampened clean towel. Adjust new lids and process 5 minutes in a boiling water canner.

If at altitude 1,001 to 6,000 feet, process 10 minutes; above 6,000 feet process 15 minutes.

To Remake Soft Jam or Jelly with Liquid Pectin

Measure jam or jelly to be recooked. Work with no more than 4 to 6 cups at a time. For each quart of jam or jelly, measure ¾ cup sugar, 2 tablespoons bottled lemon juice, and 2 tablespoons liquid pectin; set aside.

In a large saucepan, bring just the soft jam or jelly to a boil over high heat while stirring. At the boil, remove from heat and quickly add the sugar, lemon juice, and pectin. Bring to a full, rolling boil, stirring constantly. Boil hard for 1 minute. Quickly skim off foam and fill hot, sterile jars, leaving ¼ inch of headspace. Wipe rims of jars with a dampened clean towel. Adjust new lids. Process 5 minutes in a boiling water canner.

If at altitude 1,001 to 6,000 feet, process 10 minutes; above 6,000 feet process 15 minutes.

To Remake Soft Jam or Jelly without Added Pectin

Measure jam or jelly to be recooked. Work with no more than 4 to 6 cups at a time. For each quart of jam or jelly, add 2 tablespoons bottled lemon juice in a large saucepan.

Bring to a boil over high heat while stirring; boil 3 to 4 minutes. Use a gel test to determine jelly doneness. Remove from heat, quickly skim off foam, and fill hot, sterile jars, leaving ¼ inch headspace. Wipe rims of jars with a dampened clean towel. Adjust new lids. Process 5 minutes in a boiling water canner.

If at altitude 1,001 to 6,000 feet, process 10 minutes; above 6,000 feet process 15 minutes.

To Sterilize Jars

All jams and jellies processed less than 10 minutes should be poured into sterile empty jars. To sterilize, place jars right side up on the rack in a boiling water canner. Fill the canner and jars with hot water to 1 inch above the tops of the jars. On high heat, bring to full rolling boil. Boil 10 minutes at altitudes less than 1,000 feet. At higher elevations, boil 1 additional minute for each additional 1,000 feet elevation. Remove and drain hot sterilized jars. Fill jars with food, add lids, finger-tighten screw bands.

Remaking Soft Uncooked Jam or Jelly

To Remake Freezer Jam or Jelly with Liquid Pectin

Measure jam or jelly to be remade. Do not remake more than 8 cups at a time. Mix jam or jelly in a bowl and for 1 quart jam or jelly add ¾ cup sugar and 2 tablespoons lemon juice. Stir well until sugar is dissolved (about 3 minutes). Add 2 tablespoons liquid pectin and stir until well blended (about 3 minutes). Pour into clean containers. Cover with tight-fitting lids. Let stand in refrigerator until set. Store in refrigerator or freezer.

Suggestion - Remake a trial batch using 1 cup of jelly or jam first. Mix jam or jelly in a bowl and for each 1 cup of jam or jelly add 3 tablespoons sugar and 1½ teaspoons of lemon juice. Stir well until sugar is dissolved (about 3 minutes). Add 1½ teaspoons liquid pectin per cup of jam or jelly and stir until well blended (about 3 minutes). Pour into clean containers. Cover with tight-fitting lids. Let stand in refrigerator until set. Store in refrigerator or freezer.

To Remake Freezer Jam or Jelly with Powdered Pectin

Measure one quart of soft jam or jelly in a small bowl. Stir ½ cup sugar into it until dissolved, about three minutes. Set aside. Heat ¼ cup water and two tablespoons powdered pectin in saucepan over low heat, stirring until dissolved.

Add heated pectin to sugar and fruit mixture, stirring until thoroughly blended, about three minutes.

Suggestion - Remake a trial batch using 1 cup of jelly or jam first. In a bowl, mix 1 cup jam or jelly with 2 tablespoons of sugar. Stir well until dissolved (about 3 minutes). Set aside. Pour into clean containers.

Cover with tight lids. Let stand in refrigerator until set. Store in refrigerator or freezer.

Measure 1 tablespoon of water and 1½ teaspoons of powdered pectin. Place in a small saucepan over low heat, stirring until pectin is dissolved. Add this heated pectin mixture to the sugar and fruit mixture and stir until thoroughly blended, about 3 minutes. Pour into clean containers.

Cover with tight lids. Let stand in refrigerator until set. Store in refrigerator or freezer.

References

USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning. Online version: *https://nchfp.uga.edu/resources/category/usda-guide*

Fundamentals of Consumer Food Safety and Preservation. Washington State University Extension https://pubs.extension.wsu.edu/

www.uaf.edu/ces or 1-877-520-5211/907-474-5211

Julie Cascio, 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, educational institution and provider and prohibits illegal discrimination against any individual: www.alaska.edu/nondiscrimination.

11-21/JC/11-24

Revised October 2024