



CONSUMER

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  EXTENSION

# food safety

## WSU Extension - Guidelines for Using Pouches to Preserve Food

WSU Extension does **NOT** recommend the use of pouches, regardless of the material used to make the pouches.

Some of the issues and concerns with using pouches to preserve foods at home are listed below.

1. Pouches should not be used in home canners:
  - There is a risk of pouches bursting and causing serious injury.
  - The pouches tend not to stay upright.
  - Consumers over-pack the canners with the pouches to hold the pouches in place. This affects heat penetration into the product.
2. The material of the pouches doesn't matter. Data is not available to show that any of these bags are safe for home preservation use.
3. Researched processing times for home preservation processes are not available.
4. In industrial food processing pouches are often over-pressurized to achieve safe results. In home-processing, this can result in side seams opening and pouches bursting, which can cause burns and other serious injuries.
5. There are many recommendations on the internet to tightly package pouches together in a pressure canner. This slows down heating, and can increase the rate of bursting pouches, which can result in injury.
6. In contrast to jars, cold spots in the pouches can easily move around. Special equipment would be needed to keep pouches in the same positions.
7. Home canners would need to know how to carefully control fill weights and may need a special holder for each type of pouch to keep it in the proper position.
8. In general, the process of heat penetration, and how that happens in these pouches, would be entirely different than in jars. Since this process has not been researched, there is no safe or recommended process at this time.

