



Lewis County

Master Food Preserver

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

Food Safety and
Preservation



Lewis County
17 SW Cascade Ave.
Chehalis, WA 98532

Julie Pirtle 360-740-1212
<https://extension.wsu.edu/lewis/mfpmaterials/>

Preserving Washington's Wild Berries

Harvesting wild fruits and berries may seem tedious, but the results can be interesting gifts to friends and neighbors or a real treat for your own family.

FREEZING WILD BERRIES

All of the wild berries freeze very well. Berries should be frozen soon after picking. Wash in cold water, a small amount at a time. Drain. Freeze whole berries by placing them on a cookie sheet and place into the freezer. As soon as they have frozen solid, package them into recommended freezer bags or cartons (moisture, vapor proof containers protect the delicate flavor and prevent freezer burn). Or, the prepared berries can be spread in a shallow pan. Sprinkle with sugar to taste. Gently turn berries over to evenly distribute sugar. Pack into moist, vapor proof containers. Seal and freeze at once.

For Crushed or Pureed Berries

Sort, wash, and drain. Crush or press berries through a fine sieve for puree. Add sugar to taste. Stir gently until dissolved, pack into containers, leaving headspace. Seal and freeze.

CANNING WILD BERRIES

Raw Pack

Wash berries and drain well. Fill clean, hot jars, to ½ inch of top. For a full pack, shake berries down while filling jars. Cover with boiling syrup, leaving ½ inch headspace. Adjust lids according to directions. Process in boiling water bath.

- 15 minutes – pint jars
- 20 minutes – quart jars

(For light syrup, use 1 cup sugar to 2 cups water)

Hot Pack

Wash berries, drain well. Add ½ cup sugar to each quart of fruit. Cover pan and bring to a boil. Shake pan to keep berries from sticking. Pack hot into hot, clean jars. Adjust lids. Process in boiling water bath.

- 15 minutes – pint jars
- 20 minutes – quart jars

To Can Juice for Berry Beverages

Wash, crush fruit. Heat to simmering; strain through cloth bag. Add sugar if desired. Add about 1 -2 cups sugar to 1 gallon juice. Reheat to a simmer. Fill hot, clean jars to $\frac{1}{4}$ inch of top with hot juice. Adjust jar lids. Process in a boiling water bath for 15 minutes for both pints and quarts.

Making Jams and Jellies

Commercial pectin can be used with wild berries. The product usually has better consistency than made with the long boil method. Riper berries can be used so the flavor is richer and the color brighter. Results are more uniform.

If the berries you wish to use seem too seedy for jam, simply press all or part of the berries through a sieve to remove seeds. Then use the pulp and juice.

For all blackberries, blueberries, and elderberries, follow directions given with the liquid or powdered pectin. Flavor and color of the blueberry jelly is improved by adding lemon juice- use juice of one lemon with 4 cups of blueberry juice.

For berries not listed in directions, try this recipe:

General Wild Berry Recipe

- 4 cups prepared juice
- 1 package powdered pectin
- 6 cups sugar

Prepare juice. Add pectin and bring to a boil. Stir constantly. Add sugar all at once. Bring mixture to a boil and time boiling for 1 minute. Pour into clean, hot jars. Seal with metal lids and bands. Process in a boiling water bath canner for 10 minutes.

Wild Berry Syrup

For pancakes, ice cream, etc. May be made with juice or puree

- 4 cups juice or puree
- 4 cups sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup lemon juice (if desired)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ or less packaged powdered pectin (if desired)

Mix juice and sugar (also pectin and lemon juice if used) and heat to boiling. Boil rapidly 2 minutes if using puree, stir to keep from sticking. Remove from heat, skim off foam and pour into $\frac{1}{2}$ pint or pint canning jars to within $\frac{1}{2}$ inch of top.

Adjust lids and process in boiling water bath for 10 minutes. (Water should cover tops of jars by at least 2 inches). Remove from canner and let cool.

Check lids, label, and store with canned foods in a cool, dark cupboard.

The amount of pectin will vary the consistency. Above recipe will make it thin like maple syrup. Above recipe with boysenberry juice and ½ package powdered pectin will make consistency somewhat jellied. With huckleberry puree and lemon juice, no added pectin, consistency will be medium like corn syrup.

Blueberries and Huckleberries

Blueberries and huckleberries are closely related fruits belonging to the Vaccinium family.

The red huckleberry, *V. parvolum* (Smith) is a bright red, acid berry which may be eaten raw or used for jam, jelly, preserves, pie or pudding. Red huckleberries combine well with other berries needing a little tang or sharpness. The erect shrub has a light green leaf.

The evergreen huckleberry, *V. ovatum*, has glossy evergreen leaves, producing a rather strong flavor berry. The branches are used by florists as filler and background foliage in floral arrangements.

The recipes that follow use either the wild or domesticated blueberry, usually available from nearby areas.

Spiced Blueberry Jam

Simmer for 5 minutes:

- 2 pounds blueberries (4 ½ cups)
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon (optional)
- ½ teaspoons cloves (optional)
- 7 cups sugar
- Grated rind of 1 lemon

Remove from fire and add 1 bottle commercial pectin. Skim. Fill clean, hot jars to 1/8 inch of top. Seal jars with hot metal lids and rings, screwing bands down firmly. Process in a boiling water bath canner for 5 minutes.

Huckleberry Supreme Jam

- 2 pounds Huckleberries
- 1 orange and 1 lemon, rind, pulp, and juice
- 5 cups sugar
- 1 package powdered pectin

Wash huckleberries and crush. Set aside. Remove skins from orange and lemon. Remove white membrane and put rind through a food chopper or cut into fine shreds. Add ¾ cup water to the rind and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove membrane from the fruit sections and add fruit pieces and juice to the partially cooked rind. Simmer covered for 15 minutes. Place berries in a larger pan, add cooked rind and pulp. Add pectin. Place over high heat. Stir constantly until it comes to a full, rolling boil. Add sugar. When a full rolling boil is reached, start counting the time and let the mixture boil 1 minute. Pour into clean, hot jars. Seal with lids and rings. Process in a boiling water bath canner for 5 minutes.

Blubarb

4 cups whole blueberries (fresh or frozen)
4 cups rhubarb (fresh or frozen) cut into ¼ thick pieces
¼ cup (1/2 package) powdered pectin
1 Tablespoon fresh lemon juice
5 ½ cups granulated sugar

Combine blueberries and rhubarb with ¾ cup water in a 6-quart kettle. Cover and simmer, with occasional stirring, for 15 minutes or until rhubarb breaks up into a sauce and blueberries are slightly soft.

Add pectin; stir well. Place over high heat and bring to a boil, stirring constantly. Add the sugar and mix well. Continue stirring vigorously and heat to a full rolling boil. Add lemon juice. Boil exactly 4 minutes, stirring constantly.

Remove from heat. Let boiling subside. Cool for approximately 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Pour into clean, sterilized jars. Seal with metal lids and bands. Process in boiling water bath canner for 5 minutes. Yield: 8 – ½ pint glasses.

Elderberry

The deep blue, purple, almost black, berries are bland in flavor. Lemon juice may be used to bring out flavor.

Red elderberry recipes have not been included because there seems to be differences of opinion about their use. Some red elderberries west of the Cascades can be toxic and should not be eaten. There have been reports of digestive upsets from eating red elderberries. Blue elderberries combine well with rhubarb, grape or crabapple.

Blackberries

Blackberries are the most readily available. Himalayan blackberries produce large berries that are sweet when eaten fresh. Some claim them too seedy to be good for cooking. In this case you may wish to press them through a sieve to remove all or part of the seeds. They are excellent for jams, jellies, and desserts.

Evergreen blackberries are a favorite for pies, jellies, and jams. The small native trailing blackberry is outstanding and highly prized for fresh or cooked eating. The trailing blackberries grow well in logged over forest areas. The Pacific trailing blackberry is our only native blackberry.

Wild Blackberry Jam

Especially nice for gifts are small jars of preserves, neatly labeled with name, cook's name, and date. The recipient of this jam will be particularly fortunate.

4 cups blackberries, not too ripe
3 cups sugar
¼ teaspoon salt

Wash and crush berries, add sugar and salt. Cook about 20 minutes or until thick. Pour immediately into

clean, sterilized jars. Seal with lids and rings. Process in a boiling water bath for 5 minutes. Check commercial pectin recipes for additional blackberry recipes.

Rose Hips

Wild rose fruits, called rose hips, make good jam, jelly, fruit beverages and puree. The fruit is ruddy ripe in October. Rose hips may be packed into tight containers and frozen to be used later for making jam.

Rose hip jam is a pleasant rust-red color and has an unusual flavor. Try it sometime with wild game meats. Wash; remove tails, of one pound of rose hips. Add 3 cups boiling water, simmer 30 minutes. Strain to remove seeds. This gives 4 cups puree. Then follow your favorite raspberry jam recipe or:

4 cups prepared puree
Or 1 cup apple juice and 3 cups puree
6 ½ cups sugar
1 – 3 ounce liquid pectin pouch

Rose Hip Jam

Prepare: 4 pounds (8 cups) puree
2 lemons – rind and juice
3 cups sugar

Slice lemon rind very thin and cook in small amount of water one minute. Combine puree, lemon, sugar, and cook until thick and clear. Pour into clean, hot jars. Seal with metal lid and ring. Process 5 minutes in a boiling water bath canner.

Oregon Grapes

Those little clusters of blue berries growing on a low shrub with holly-like leaves are Oregon Grapes, particularly prized for flavor in jelly. They taste sour. The high acidity makes them excellent for combining with bland fruits like blueberries.

Salal Berries

The shrub is a common one in the woods and is increasingly popular as cultivated shrubbery. It grows well in sun or shade, from one to six feet high. A member of the heath family, it has the dainty, white, closed bell-shaped flowers which are characteristic of its relatives, the heather and blueberry.

The blue-black berries are smooth, filled with small seeds and may be bitter, flat or dry if eaten raw. They develop in a row in the lower side of the stem on which they grow.

The small black Salal berries are a bit flat in flavor when used alone, but combined with red currants, huckleberries, or other tart berries they produce a good jelly.

Elderberry Jelly, Oregon Grape Jelly or Salal Berry Jelly

(with commercial pectin)

4 cups juice (approx. 2 – 3 pounds berries)
1 package powdered pectin
6 cups sugar

Wash the berries and place in a kettle with an equal volume of water. Mash and stir as they come to a boil. Simmer 2 – 3 minutes. Place in a jelly bag to extract juice. Measure extracted juice. Mix juice with pectin and place on high heat, stirring constantly. Bring to a full boil and add sugar all at once. Continue stirring. Bring to a full rolling boil and boil 1 minute. Fill sterilized jars o 1/8 inch from top. Seal with metal lids and bands. Process in boiling water bath canner for 5 minutes.

Elderberry Jelly or Oregon Grape Jelly

(no pectin)

2 quarts berries
1 ½ to 2 cups sugar

Wash and shred from stems, 2 quarts berries. Place in a pan and barely cover with water; simmer for 10 minutes; mash well and continue cooking for a few minutes longer or until all the juice is extracted. Strain through a jelly bag. Measure juice and add ¾ cup sugar to each cup of juice. Stir until sugar is dissolved. Boil rapidly until jelly stage is reached. Pour into sterilized glasses and seal. Process in boiling water bath canner for 5 minutes.

Try substituting 1 cup apple juice for 1 cup of the Oregon grape juice in either one of the recipes.

Rose Hip and Rhubarb Jam

Cut rose hips and remove seeds with point of knife. Add 1 cup rose hip pulp to 4 cups finely cut rhubarb. Boil with 1 cup water and 1/8 teaspoon salt. When soft add 2 cups sugar and 1 Tablespoon grated lemon rind. Bring to a boil. Pour into hot jars leaving 1/8 inch at top; seal with metal lids and bands and process for 5 minutes in boiling water bath.

Dried Rose Hips

Cut rose hips in two and remove the seeds. Dry quickly in a cool oven or warming closet. They may be added to cereal cooked with fruit, or pulverized and added to baked products.

Note: The flavor of rose hips is enhanced by combining it with some tart fruit juice. Be sure roses have not been sprayed, especially if using home grown roses.

Other Wild Berries Are:

Wild Flowering Current – Barely edible, resin dotted black fruit.

Salmon Berry – Very juicy berry, good eaten fresh, and makes passably good jelly.

Service Berry – “So-so”, small, purple berries; edible, but not too exciting.

Thimble Berry – Crunchy, flattish, scarlet berry, related to raspberry. Insipid taste can be used for jelly.

Blackcaps – Are excellent either fresh or cooked. Use in any blackberry recipe.