

The Fairest Fruit of All
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With record breaking heat in September it didn't actually feel "fall like" outside. Even so, I am anxiously awaiting the change of seasons which is all the more reason to look through my canning books for some of the fall seasons wonderful bounty.

Did you know that apples originated in Asia eventually making their way to Europe along with a myriad of spices and other goods as trading expanded? And the anecdote of "an apple a day" "for better health also dates back many centuries to Norse folk lore. In any case, apples are one of my family favorites because they are so versatile and just downright delicious!

The recipe below is one we enjoy because it can be turned into a quick pie or galette when company is coming, or is delicious over vanilla ice cream.

Preventing Fruit from Browning

Apples and pears are especially known to turn brown when exposed to air. One method of preventing this is to submerge the fruit in a mixture of ¼ cup lemon juice to 4 cups of water. Commercial produce protectors such as Ball Fruit-Fresh, containing ascorbic acid or a mixture of ascorbic acid and citric acid, may also be used but follow manufacturer's instructions.

Ascorbic acid can be purchased in several forms:

- Pure powdered form: Use 1 teaspoon per gallon of water.
- Vitamin C tablets: Buy 500 milligram tablets; crush and dissolve six tablets per gallon of water.
- Citric acid powder: Sold in supermarkets but less effective in controlling discoloration. Follow manufacturer's directions.

The recipe below calls for blanching which is a technique usually used for vegetables. Blanching is a method that will inactivate certain enzymes that may cause a loss of flavor, color or texture.

Canned Apple Pie Filling

12 cups sliced, peeled and cored apples*
2-3/4 cups sugar
3/4 cup ClearJel® cooking starch
1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp ground nutmeg
2-1/2 cups unsweetened apple juice
1-1/4 cups cold water
1/2 cup lemon juice

1. Prepare boiling water canner or steam canner. Heat jars in simmering water until ready for use. Do not boil. Wash lids in warm soapy water and set aside with bands.

2. Blanch apple slices, working with 6 cups at a time, in a large pot of boiling water for 1 minute. Remove with a slotted spoon and keep warm in a covered bowl.
3. Combine sugar, ClearJel®, cinnamon and nutmeg in a large stainless steel saucepan. Stir in apple juice and cold water. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring constantly, and cook until mixture thickens and begins to bubble. Add lemon juice, boil for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Drain apple slices and immediately fold into hot mixture; heat, stirring, until apples are heated through.
4. Ladle hot apple pie filling into hot jars leaving 1 inch headspace. Remove air bubbles. Wipe rim with a clean wet paper towel to be sure all syrup has been removed. Center lid on jar. Apply band until fit is fingertip tight. Place jar in boiling water canner. Repeat until all jars are filled.
5. Process jars for 25 minutes, adjusting for altitude. Turn off heat, remove lid, let jars stand 5 minutes. Remove jars and cool 12-24 hours. Check lids for seal, they should not flex when center is pressed.

Source- <https://www.ballmasonjars.com/blog?cid=apple-pie-filling-recipe>

Did you miss our “Pumpkins & Pommies” class in September? Stop by our office at 311 Fair Lane in Placerville to purchase our 22 page class handout full of great information and recipes with beautiful original artwork by UC Master Food Preserver Volunteer Barb Simpson for just \$4.

The UC Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County are a great resource for answers to your preserving questions. Leave a message at (530) 621-5506 or email us at edmfpc@ucanr.edu. For more information about our program, events and recipes, visit our website at <http://ucanr.edu/edmfpc>. Sign up to receive our eNewsletter at <http://ucanr.org/mfpcsenews/>. Find us on Facebook, too (UCCE Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County)!