

UC MFP Helpline Questions: Pickling & Fermentation

These are actual questions that came into a UC Master Food Preserver Helpline. During the Pickling & Fermentation Class Breakout Room, students should give suggestions on where to get information to answer the question, what information they'd give, and how they would phrase it. We get these types of questions via email, phone calls and in-person at events.

Pickling

- Q: I purchased a large jar of pickles and would like to reprocess them into smaller jars so they are shelf stable and do not have to take up room in my refrigerator after being opened. Can I seal them using a food saver or can I re-can them using the water bath method? (Though I am worried re-canning will make them too soft.) The goal is to make them shelf stable in smaller quantities. Please advise. Thank you!
- Q: Hi, I took the habanero golden jelly class on Dec 4th. The recipes says to use white vinegar. Is distilled the same as white and can I use it in this recipe?
- Q: I want to do pickled summer squash, every recipe I see calls for using zucchini. Would it be possible to swap it for another summer squash like Yellow Crook or Patty Pan?
- Q: I canned pickled spring onions from a recipe of UCCE Master Food Preserver. One of four sealed. I thought all four did and they were left out for a few days. I believe they are still edible because of the apple cider vinegar. What do you think?
- Q: Hello, I would like to ask about my pickles. I have been fermenting for over 10 years. I also make bubbly drinks with a ginger based starter~ always a treat! Recently, I did do some pickles: home grown cucumbers, spices and brine. The ferment went as usual, but the result was salty. So, I rinsed the fermented veggies and re-brined them into a brine with a lighter salt and some brown sugar. Returned into the fridge for entire time. It's been about 6 weeks. This ferment has become fizzy...like continuing to fizz like a soda. There is no warning odor or color and texture is fine. Have I made a cucumber bubble brew? Is it safe? Appreciate any input you can offer.
- Q: Hi there....question about my kombucha. I'm new to all of this and I'd like to know if something's wrong with the batch that I've got fermenting. On the top, the "skin" (my word) has white blotches of varying sizes. Is this OK? I can send pictures.