

# Canning at Retail in Pennsylvania

Canning can be a safe and economical way to preserve and add value to fruits and vegetables. The most common biological hazards specific to canning include botulism toxin as well as yeast and mold (mycotoxins).

Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) plans are required for canning at retail in PA. You must follow the PA Food Code when canning in your retail facility. PA follows the most recent edition of the FDA Model Food Code.

This fact sheet highlights important requirements and safety considerations for food facility operators who want to preserve food for storage at room temperature in Pennsylvania.



## Approved recipe and process

You must have and follow an approved HACCP plan. Because of naturally-occurring variations in acidity (pH) between and among fruits and vegetables, it is important that you follow an approved recipe and process when canning these foods.

You may use a standard recipe and process from:

- Ball® Blue Book™
- USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning at [www.csrees.usda.gov/newsroom/news/2011news/home\\_canning\\_guide.html](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/newsroom/news/2011news/home_canning_guide.html)
- National Center for Home Food Preservation at <http://nchfp.uga.edu/>
- A University Extension Service: <http://extension.psu.edu/food/preservation>

You may use a custom recipe and process approved by a competent processing authority. A processing authority is a person or organization having expert knowledge of thermal processing requirements for foods in hermetically sealed containers, and who also has access to a testing facility for making such determinations.

Contact your inspector or a processing authority if you have questions about your recipe and process.

## Commonly Canned Foods

Here are some examples of foods you may can at retail. If you don't see a food you would like to can, contact your inspector.

### *Jams, Jellies & Preserves*

- Raspberry jam
- Pepper jelly
- Strawberry preserves

### *Naturally Acid Foods*

- Raspberries, peaches or plums
- Flavored vinegars

### *Acidified Fruit & Fruit Products*

- Apple butter
- Applesauce
- Watermelon pickles

### *Tomatoes & Tomato Products*

- Crushed or whole tomatoes
- Tomato juice
- Salsa
- Barbeque sauce or ketchup

### *Pickled Vegetables*

- Cucumber pickles
- Pickled beets or peppers
- Dilly beans

### *Fermented Foods\**

- Fermented pickles
- Sauerkraut
- Kimchi

\*You must have an additional and separate HACCP plan for the fermentation process.

## Special requirements

If you want to can low-acid foods, you must follow special requirements found in the Federal Code of Federal Regulations, Title 21 (21 CFR) at

<http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cdrh/cfdocs/cfcfr/CFRSearch.cfm?CFRPart=113>.

Most facilities will not be able to comply with the required equipment standards.

### *Low-acid Food Examples:*

- Beans, corn, potatoes or squash
- Poultry, red meat or seafood

## Documentation

It is highly recommended that you take a Canning and HACCP course. For more information on HACCP Plan development:

<http://www.fda.gov/Food/GuidanceRegulation/HACCP/ucm2006810.htm>

Your recipe and process must be scientifically validated to confirm the process is safe. A HACCP plan is required.

- If your HACCP plan is based on a standard recipe, no additional scientific documentation is required.
- If your HACCP plan is based on a custom recipe, you must provide additional scientific documentation as required by the processing authority and/or the Department. The data must show that your recipe and process provides safe food.

Remember, your recipe and process is part of your HACCP plan and cannot be changed without review and approval. Full labeling is required on all products.

## Standard operating procedures

You must include standard operating procedures (SOPs) in your HACCP plan. SOPs for canning at retail typically include:

- Processing equipment specifications, and pH meter specifications and calibration
- Employee training and hygiene practices
- Container specifications and sterilization
- Fruit and vegetable preparation
- Processing steps
- Preparation of product slurry and pH testing

## Monitoring and corrective actions

### You must have a pH meter to can foods.

You must include a critical limit and corrective action for each critical control point (CCP) in your HACCP plan. For canning at retail, these typically include:

<i>CCP</i>	<i>Critical Limit</i>	<i>Corrective Action</i>
Thermal processing	Times/temperatures in approved recipe	Re-process or discard product
Finished product pH	<b>pH 4.6 or lower</b>	Discard product
Allergen labeling	Allergens identified	Re-label product

## Wholesale, internet or interstate sales

If you want to distribute your product wholesale, or sell your product via internet or across state lines, you may need to meet additional federal and state regulatory requirements.

## Definitions

**Canning** - A process used to preserve food in sealed jars for storage at room temperature.

**pH** - A measure of the degree of acidity or alkalinity of a solution.

**Acid food** - Food that has a natural pH of 4.6 or below.

**Low-acid food** - Any food with a pH greater than 4.6.

**Acidified food** - Low-acid food to which acid or acid food is added to reduce the equilibrium pH to 4.6 or below.

**Fermented food** - Low-acid foods subjected to the action of certain microorganisms, which produce acid during their growth and reduce the pH of the food to 4.6 or below.

**HACCP plan** - A written document, based on the principles of HACCP, and containing the items required in the Food Code.

## For More Information

*Contact PDA, Bureau of Food Safety Regional Offices at:*

### Regional Phone Numbers:

Region 1 – 814-332-6890

Region 2 – 570-433-2640

Region 3 – 570-836-2181

Region 4 – 724-443-1585

Region 5 – 814-793-1849

Region 6 – 717-346-3223

Region 7 – 610-489-1003

Central Office – 717-787-4315

