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## "Dump" Recipes



**Thaw your "dump" meal in the refrigerator or in cold running water prior to cooking.**

As fall and winter get closer there is nothing better than coming home to a hot meal. A "dump" meal may be the answer to complete a busy day.



One definition of a "dump" meal is to freeze all ingredients for a slow cooker meal, thaw completely, then simply dump them into the slow cooker and let the cooking begin.

As long as ingredients are handled properly during preparation, no special safety issues are associated with freezing. Generally what goes into the freezer is what comes out of the freezer. In other words, freezing cannot be counted on to kill bacteria but bacteria (including *Clostridium botulinum*) do not grow at freezing temperatures.

Fresh vegetables should be blanched prior to freezing for best flavor, color and quality. Already frozen or canned vegetables do not require blanching.

Minimally season, if desired, prior to freezing. Save the majority of added seasonings and spices until cooking is almost complete or when serving.

For more information, see <http://bit.ly/14HiBnZ> from Clemson University Extension.

### Now on Facebook and Twitter!

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## Preserving Fall Tomatoes

Fall is almost here and gardeners may still have tomatoes to harvest. But once a frost or freeze occurs, those tomatoes should not be used for canning.

When tomato vines die, the acid level changes resulting in less acidic tomatoes. Even if recommended canning methods are used, these tomatoes will still be unsafe. The tomatoes can still be eat-

en fresh or frozen for later use.

Green tomatoes can be canned as a relish, salsa, or as regular tomatoes. Learn more at [www.ksre.ksu.edu/bookstore/pubs/MF1185.PDF](http://www.ksre.ksu.edu/bookstore/pubs/MF1185.PDF).

## Canning Salsa Safely

Inherited salsa recipes from your family or new creative salsa mixtures make great fresh snacks. But then you wonder: is that unique blend of ingredients safe to can at home? Here's why that's an important question to ask.

Salsas are a mix of acid and low acid ingredients. Overall pH is what determines if a product is safe to be processed in a boiling water canner. If a salsa is not adequately acidified to a pH of 4.6 or below, then processing in a boiling

water canner will not provide enough heat to prevent toxin-production by botulism-causing bacteria. Sufficient, carefully calculated amounts of vinegar or another acid are necessary for acidification.



Source: <http://preservingfoodathome.com/>

## Re-using Pickling Brine



Source: Penn State University

What should you do if you have leftover pickling solution? If the pickling solution is fresh and has not been used to make pickles, cover it and store it in the refrigerator for later use. If

the pickling solution has been in contact with the vegetable or fruit being pickled, don't use it for canning pickles because the liquid from the food will dilute the concentration of the vinegar and it

may not be adequate to control spoilage organisms. It can be stored in the refrigerator and reused in 1 to 2 days for barbecue sauce, coleslaw dressing or a marinade. If mold growth occurs, throw it out.

## Consuming Poppy Seeds—Be Aware!

Poppy seeds are a popular addition to baked goods such as quick breads or kolaches. But did you know that poppy seeds can lead to a positive drug test result for heroin?

It is true! Opiates, such as heroin, morphine, and codeine, can remain in urine samples from 48-60 hours after consuming food containing poppy seeds. Heroin is a derivative of morphine which is the active ingredient in opium from the opium poppy plant. Acetylcodeine in heroin converts to codeine in the body.

Hair analysis for opiates is more accurate than urine sampling, but is rarely used. The opioid in poppy seeds is not in the bloodstream long enough to absorb into hair follicles in large quantities.



Source: <http://bit.ly/15RfSV7>

## Tips for Healthy Web Surfing



While the internet can be a wealth of information at your fingertips, it can also give inaccurate information. Here's some tips for safe web surfing:

- Look for contact information. If not available, use caution.
- Bypass offers of one cure for a variety of illnesses.
- Search for research based information, not claims or testimonials.
- When in doubt, contact your doctor.
- Look for dates for current information.
- Use your common sense and good judgment!



For more tips and resources, see <http://1.usa.gov/139CFYR>.

## Food Safety Matters

September is designated Food Safety Education Month. But food safety is important all year long.

To learn the latest data and consumer insights,

join the International Food Information Council webinar entitled "**Food Safety Matters**". The webinar is free, but registration is required.

Information presented

will include food safety myths; consumer knowledge, attitudes and behaviors; how to apply consumer research in food safety communication and much more.



Register NOW at <http://bit.ly/178sRVW>



USDA Complete Guide to Home Canning

## Venting Pressure Canners Important

Air trapped in a pressure canner lowers the temperature obtained for a given pressure (for example, 10 or 15 pounds pressure) and results in underprocessing. To be safe, USDA recommends that all pressure canners must be vented 10 minutes before they are pressurized.

To vent a canner, leave the vent pipe (steam vent) uncovered (or manually open the petcock on some older models) after you fill the canner and lock the canner lid in place. Heat the canner on high until the water boils and generates steam that can be seen escaping through the open vent pipe or petcock. When a visible funnel-shape of steam is continuously escaping the canner, set a timer for 10 minutes. After 10 minutes of continuous steam, you can close the petcock or place the counterweight or weighted gauge over the vent pipe to begin pressurizing the canner.

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## Pumpkin Facts



**Morton, IL is the self-proclaimed Pumpkin Capital of the World.**

- Pumpkins are grown primarily for processing with a small percentage grown for ornamental sales through you -pick farms, farmers' market and retail sales.



- Around 90 to 95% of the pro-

cessed pumpkins in the United States are grown in Illinois.

- Pumpkins are members of the vine crops family called cucurbits.
- Pumpkins range in size from less than a pound to over 1,000 pounds.
- The name pumpkin originated from "pepon" – the Greek word for "large melon."
- Pumpkins were once recommended for removing freckles and curing snake bites.

Learn more about pumpkins at <http://urbanext.illinois.edu/pumpkins/default.cfm>



## Food Trucks Gain Popularity

In many cities, food trucks may be seen with their quirky décor and personality. They offer convenience and interesting food choices.

Food trucks go where large groups of people gather. Their mobility offers customers spontaneous food choices. While this may take business away from brick-and-mortar restaurants, it is not a large threat. Quick service restaurants may see the most competition.

Of consumers who visit food

trucks, they primarily select snacks or a quick lunch. Menu items include hot sandwiches, Mexican food, cold sandwiches, soups, salads, pasta/Italian foods and more.

Food trucks may be seasonal in some parts of the country. City ordinances and permits may also limit their availability in some locations.

The history of food trucks dates back to the chuckwagon on cattle drives.

Source: NPD Group



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On the Web at  
[www.rrc.ksu.edu](http://www.rrc.ksu.edu)

