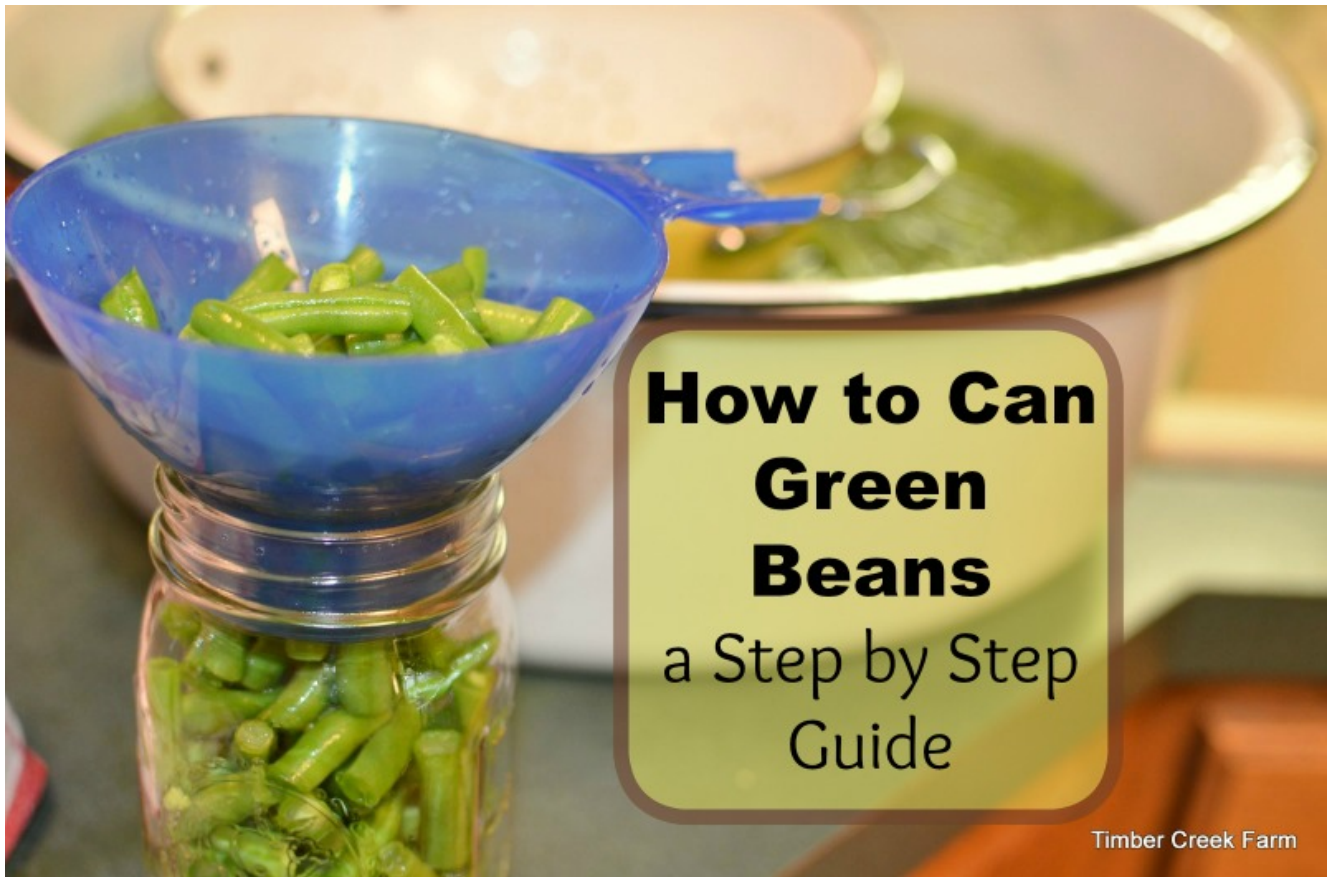


Canning Green Beans from the Harvest



Canning green beans brings back memories of long summer days and warm sun. Listen for the fresh snap as you prepare the beans for canning, right from harvest. Every speck of work needed for canning green beans will be worth it when you eat fresh all winter long.

First, let's review some of the basics of preparing vegetables for [canning recipes](#). Vegetables almost always need to be [pressure canned](#). The hot water bath canner that is used to as a food preservation method for many fruits and pickles, does not reach a high enough temperature to [preserve the lower acid vegetables](#). The investment made in a quality pressure canner will last a lifetime.

What Will You Need for Pressure Canning?

Gather your canning utensils and canning jars, and fill the

canner to the recommended level according to the instructions. [Pressure canners](#) do not need to be filled to cover the jars as the hot water bath canner does. Make sure you use only jars intended for canning. Reusing other glass jars in a pressure canner can lead to unpleasant breakage and food loss.

Start with [clean, sterile glass canning jars](#) from a reputable canning jar company. Look for chips around the rim, cracks and any abnormalities or signs of stress on the glass. These jars should only be used for dry storage or recycled with your household recycling. Gather enough two piece lid pairs. Keep separate. The flat disc lids will need to be clean and possibly sterilized. Wash the rings in warm soapy water, rinse completely and air dry.

What is a Five Piece Canning Tool Set?

In addition to the green beans, the canning jars, lids and the canner, you will want to have a [canning tool set](#). This includes tongs made to lift the hot jars in and out of the canner, a funnel for filling the jars, a magnetic lid grabber and a packing tool. Use the packing tool to assist you in getting the vegetables packed into the jar and measure the required head (air) space above the liquid. Jars come in various sizes and styles. Usually, for green beans, pints and quarts would be selected. Salt is needed, in small amounts in each jar. Be sure to use a pure salt or a salt labeled for canning.

Always Start with Clean Jars

Prepare the jars, before beginning to work with the fresh vegetables. You can choose from two acceptable methods of sterilizing the jars before filling with food to be canned. One method is to run the regular cycle on your dishwasher, which heats the jars and the wash water to a high enough temperature for sterilizing. The other method requires two steps. Wash the jars in warm, soapy water. Fill the canner with enough water to cover the jars, bring the water to a

simmer and heat the jars on simmer for 10 minutes.

Add the flat lids and a small saucepan of water. Bring the water to simmer and keep the water simmering until you use the lids. Do not boil the water. The boiling water could damage the rubber seal. Wash the ring portion of the two piece lids in hot soapy water, rinse well and set aside to dry.



Timber Creek Farm

Preparing the Vegetables

When you are canning green beans start by preparing the

vegetable. Wash the beans and drain. Snap off the ends of the beans and either leave whole or cut into smaller, bite size pieces. At this point, you have two methods of proceeding with the canning. One method is called Hot Pack and the other is referred to as Cold Pack.

Hot pack is preferred for dense vegetables like green beans. It makes it easier to pack them into jars. Cold pack or Raw pack is used for more fragile vegetables that might be too soft if pushed into a jar. This method calls for the food to be packed in the jars cold, then boiling water is added to the jar.

Blanche and Pack the Beans

In preparing for canning green beans, place the beans in a large pot, cover with water and bring to a boil. Boil the beans for five minutes. The beans will still feel firm, but will be more pliable for packing into the jars. Begin filling the glass jars with the beans using a slotted spoon and the canning funnel. I like to use [this scoop](#) I found online to fill my jars. It holds one cup so usually two scoops fills the jar.

After the jars are full with a one inch head space, add boiling water to cover the beans. Maintain the one inch head space at the top of the jar. Add one teaspoon of salt to each quart jar and a half teaspoon of salt to each pint. The salt does not need to be stirred into the beans. It can sit on top of the vegetables. The salt will filter down as the liquid is reheated in the canner. Using the head space tool, run the tool around the inside of each jar, along the sides to help release any air bubbles. After all the jars are filled, using a dry cloth, wipe the rim of each jar. This will help ensure a good seal when the lid is added.



Getting the Jars Ready for the Pressure Canner

Using the magnetic wand, grab one lid from the saucepan and place it on the rim of the filled jar. Using a towel or pot holder to steady the jar, screw on the metal bands that you hand washed and set aside. Finger tighten the bands. This does

not have to be as tight as you can possibly make it, but just snug. Using the jar tongs, place each jar into the canner which has the required amount of water in the bottom. (refer to your canner's instruction manual.)

Usually the amount of water in the bottom of a pressure canner is only a couple of inches deep. Always read the instruction manual for operation of the canner. The steps from this point are similar but may vary slightly with each manufacturer's model.



Basic Pressure Canner Operation for Canning Green Beans

Place the filled jars down into the pressure canner. Apply the canner's lid and set into place. Bring the water in the canner to a boil. Allow the steam to begin to add pressure. DO NOT attempt to open the canner after the water is boiling. Most canners now have safety mechanisms in place that prevent you from opening a canner under pressure.

While the water is heating and the pressure is building, the steam vent is left open. The steam is left to vent for approximately ten minutes, then the weight is applied that came with the canner. The weight closes the steam vent, allowing the pressure to build. At a point, the vent will close and the canner will lock. The pressure should build and the gauge will move up in pressure. Do not start timing the processing until the pressure has built up to 10 pounds and is stable at that level. Begin timing the processing time at that point and adjust the heat to keep the pressure steady. This does take some practice, but you will soon know what works best with your stove and your canner.

Canning green beans require 20 minutes at 10 pounds of pressure for pint size jars and 25 minutes for quart size jars. Always check processing times for your altitude.

The Processing Time is Up

When the time for processing at 10 pounds of pressure is over, turn off the heat. Do not attempt to open the canner. Leave the canner on the stove to cool completely. As it cools, the pressure will dissipate. When the canner is no longer under pressure the locking mechanism will release. The canner will still be hot! Some people leave the jars in the canner overnight and remove them the next morning.

Find a space on the counter to place the jars. Using the jar lifter tongs, place the jars on a towel to cool and rest. Stacking or moving the jars too much at this point could break the seal on the jar, resulting in product that cannot be stored long term. The recommendation is to leave the jars undisturbed for about twelve hours. Safe canning requires that you check the seals on the jars before putting the jars away. To check the seal you press on the center of the lid. If it does not move up and down under pressure from your fingers, the lid has sealed. When you remove the metal ring, the lid does not move or shift. If any jars did not seal, refrigerate

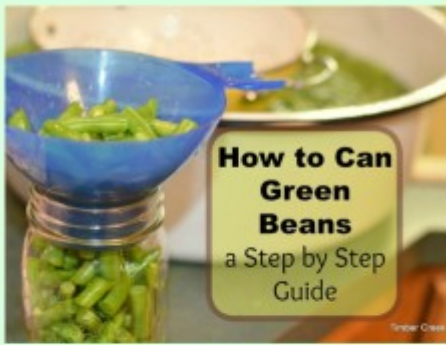
and use the contents soon.



How Long Will the Pressure Canned Food Last?

The canned food shelf life is about a year for green beans. Optimize the storage by keeping the jars stored in a cool, dark, dry space. The recommendation is to store the jars without the metal ring portion of the lid and do not stack the jars on top of each other. Stored this way, there is less chance of the jar having a false seal and staying preserved safely. When ready to serve, empty the contents into a saucepan, add enough liquid to cover and gently boil for 10 minutes.

Once you enjoy the fresh taste of your garden all year long, you will be canning green beans every year. How do you like canning green beans? Here's a link to more methods for [preserving green beans](#). I suggest you try the Dilly Green Beans! Do you have a favorite vegetable that you can for eating later?



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