

REASONS FOR COMMON PROBLEMS

LOSING LIQUID FROM JARS:

- 1). Trapped air bubbles not released prior to sealing jars.
- 2). Food is packed too tightly.
- 3). Jars are filled too full.
- 4). Food is processed at too high of a temperature.
- 5). Fluctuation in pressure during processing.
- 6). Sudden lowering of pressure after processing.
- 7). Leakage of steam between lid and bottom of pressure cooker.

Starchy foods absorb liquid, while juice cooks out of fruit and adds liquid to the syrup. Too much liquid will boil over and siphoning will cause loss of liquid from the jar. If a jar is properly sealed, do not open jar and refill with liquid. This will allow bacteria in, and you would need to process the jar again. Loss of liquid does not cause food to spoil, though the food above the liquid may darken.

BUCKLING LIDS:

- 1). This problem may be caused by tightening the jar rings too tightly before processing the jars. During processing, the flexible metal lid permits the jar to exhaust air, and rings that are too tight will not allow the air to escape during processing.
- 2). Not following the correct pre-heating process for the brand of lids used.
- 3). Filling the jars too full.
- 4). Using the raw-pack method for starchy vegetables.
- 5). A steam leak from the pressure canner lid.
- 6). Cooling the pressure canner with water or cool air.
- 7). Using a jar with a mouth that is too large for the lid (such as a mayonnaise jar).

FOOD SPOILAGE / JARS NOT SEALING:

- 1). Incomplete sterilization; failure to follow exact time tables and recipes.
- 2). Failure to wipe sealing edge of jar clean before placing lid on jar.
- 3). Foods, seeds, or grease lodged between lid and jar.
- 4). If lightening or bail-type jars—clamps not properly adjusted.
- 5). Jars which are nicked or cracked, or have sharp sealing edges.
- 6). If Mason jar and two-piece metal lid – band screwed down too loosely before processing.
- 7). Turning jars upside down while jars are cooling and sealing.

FLAT SOUR:

Flat sour is a type of food spoilage caused by canning overripe food or allowing precooked foods to stand in jar too long before processing. It may be prevented by using fresh products and properly processing, cooling, and storing. Flat sour shows no indication of spoilage until jar is opened.

MOLD:

Mold can only form in the presence of air. Therefore, jars are not sealed if mold is present.

VACUUM IN PRESSURE COOKER:

When you have processed your jars as long as required, turn the heat source off. As soon as the gauge shows zero, carefully remove the pressure regulator weight, and when all the pressure has escaped from the cooker, remove the cover. This is done by removing the wing nuts in the same way as when you first started. If the cooker is allowed to cool without removing the pressure regulator weight when the gauge reaches zero, a vacuum can form inside the cooker which will prevent it from being opened easily. Also, be sure to lubricate the metal-to-metal seal periodically to prevent the cover from sticking and leaking.

CORN TURNING BROWN:

Corn turns brown during processing when too high of a temperature is used. The high temperature causes a caramelization of the sugar in corn. It may also be caused by some chemical, such as iron, in the water used in canning. When canned corn turns brown, the discoloring may also be due to the variety of corn, stage of ripeness, over-processing, copper or iron cooking utensils, or from water in some localities. Darkening of foods at the tops of jars may be caused by oxidation due to air in the jars, or by too little heating or processing to destroy enzymes. Please keep in mind that corn, peas, and lima beans expand instead of shrink during processing, and require a one-inch head space in the jar.

JARS BREAKING:

- 1). Jars are too tight in pressure cooker.
- 2). Not using standard jars.
- 3). Jars improperly tightened.
- 4). Not placing jars on rack (jars touching the bottom of canner).
- 5). Over-filling jars or packed too solidly.
- 6). Sudden temperature change between jars and water in unit.
- 7). Jars have invisible hair-line cracks.
- 8). Fluctuation of pressure during processing; be sure to maintain a steady pressure.

CLEANING YOUR PRESSURE COOKER:

The outside surface may be kept clean by washing with soap and water. Iron and various minerals in water and foods may darken the inside of the cooker/canner, but this discoloration will in no way affect food. These stains are harmless and may be removed by using one of the following methods:

- 1). A solution of one quart of water to one tablespoon of cream of tartar – pour enough of this solution into cooker/canner to cover the discoloration (do not fill over 2/3 full), then close cover securely. Place pressure regulator weight on vent pipe and heat until pressure regulator rocks gently. Remove cooker/canner from heat; allow to stand until gauges reaches zero. Remove pressure regulator weight and cooker cover-allow to stand for two to three hours. Empty contents and scour thoroughly with a soap-impregnated steel wool cleaning pad; wash, rinse, and dry.
- 2). A metal sponge with any of the aluminum cleaners on the market, such as percolator cleaner.
- 3). A solution of one quart of water to one tablespoon of water may be brought to a boil in the cooker/canner.

If you have additional questions or concerns, please contact us at the address/phone numbers listed below, OR contact Alltrista (the parent company of Ball & Kerr) at 800-240-3340.

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