



SOUTH CAROLINA FAMILY AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

Affiliated with National Volunteer Outreach Network, Country Women's Council, U.S.A.,
Associated Country Women of the World and in partnership with Clemson University Cooperative
Extension Service

SCFCL website: <http://www.scfcl.com>

Leader Training Guide

Freezer Jams-The Easy Way to Enjoy Local Fruits All Year

Objectives: FCL members will understand the steps for creating freezer jam. FCL members will understand the advantages of making freezer jam.

Lesson Overview/Introduction: Freezer jams are an excellent way to enjoy fresh fruit flavor throughout the entire year. These jams are one of the simplest forms of food preservation since most require little to no cooking or processing. A great way to use fresh fruits during the growing season, even novice canners will find these recipes simple. They are also a great choice for introducing children to cooking since these recipes call for minimum time in the kitchen but still require chopping (or squishing), measuring, stirring, timing, and clean up.

Lesson:

Freezer jams are made using these ingredients: fruit, sugar, pectin. The premise of this procedure is to combine the proper ratios of ingredients and wait for them to thicken. The resulting product is placed into cold storage to prevent spoilage. The product created tastes like fresh fruit (vs. cooked fruit.) It is a softer set than jelly. The gel for freezer jam is the equivalent of a soft spread or thick dessert topping.

Technically, you can make freezer jams with regular pectin, low sugar pectin, instant pectin or low methoxyl pectin (Pomona's Universal Pectin.) But each of these pectins require their own specific order of steps. This lesson will focus on using instant pectin and all information from this point will reference instant pectin since it is the type used by the large majority of people making freezer jam. For specific information on using other types of pectin, contact your nearest Food Safety and Nutrition agent.

***Note:** If you are making large batches of jam (doubling the recipe) it is HIGHLY suggested to use Pomona's Universal Pectin. Recipes using regular pectin often fail to gel when doubled. However, Pomona pectin recipes that are doubled will set when the directions are followed.*

Here are the basic steps for making freezer jam by using instant pectin:

1. Gather all equipment (including jars) and make sure equipment is clean and ready to use. Gather all food ingredients and make sure you have the proper quantities. Thoroughly wash any fresh fruits under briskly running water and gently pat dry.
2. Measure instant pectin into a bowl
3. Measure sugar (or granulated sugar substitute) and add to pectin. Stir together.
4. Prepare fruit (chop or crush.) Measure proper amount of prepared fruit.
5. Add prepared fruit to sugar/pectin mixture.
6. Stir for three minutes.
7. Ladle mixture into prepared freezer containers. Leave one-half inch headspace to allow for expansion in freezer.

8. Let stand 30 minutes at room temperature to completely thicken.
9. Place in refrigerator up to 3 weeks or in freezer up to one year.
10. To use frozen jam, place in refrigerator 24 hours to thaw before using.

What fruit can I use to make freezer jam? Any type of fruit may be used, but berries and peaches tend to be the most popular. Even frozen fruit may be used. Just make sure to thaw it before starting the recipe.

How much fruit must I use? Full scale recipes using instant pectin are typically very flexible and can be scaled down without any problems. This makes them a great choice for using up small quantities of fresh or frozen fruit that you have no other use for. Use adequate fruit to make small batches (2 half-pint jars) up to a full recipe (6 half-pint jars) making sure to adjust your other ingredients accordingly.

Can I reduce the sugar content in the recipe? You will need some sugar (or artificial sweetener) to prevent the product from being too tart and/or bland. With most instant pectin brands, directions are provided that use granulated sugar substitute in place of sugar. Splenda® is commonly substituted 1:1 for sugar when using instant pectin. *If you prefer to make jams or jellies with no sugar or sweetener of any kind, it is suggested to use Pomona's Universal pectin which has its own specific instructions.*

What kind of jars should I use? Half-pint, straight-sided jars work best. Small freezer containers work well, too. Make sure that the container you use is moisture-vapor proof so that it will withstand freezer temperatures plus allow no chance of absorption of nearby off-putting flavors (like nearby garlic or onion.)

What brands are available? Ball and Mrs. Wages are the instant pectins most readily available in South Carolina. Ball sells 4.7 oz. containers (which are enough to make 15 half-pint jars.) Mrs. Wages sells 1.59 oz envelopes (which is enough to make one batch of 5 half-pint jars.) As of the date of this writing, the prices range from \$2 to \$5 per item depending on brand and location of purchase.

Where do I purchase instant pectin? Most grocery stores sell instant pectin (located with canning supplies or baking section.) Discount stores (in the kitchen or baking section) and hardware stores (who sell canning supplies) also stock various pectins. There are numerous online sources for purchasing pectin ranging from amazon.com to specialty food preservation websites.

These recipes yield excellent flavor with minimum time spent in the kitchen:

Pineapple Upside Down Cake Freezer Jam

Yield 5 (8 oz.) jars

Ingredients:

- 1 cup granulated sugar (or granular sugar substitute that measure 1:1)
- ½ cup brown sugar (or granular brown sugar substitute that measures 1:1)
- 5 tablespoons Ball RealFruit™ Instant Pectin
- 2 (20 oz.) cans crushed pineapple in its own juice, drained well
- ¼ cup finely chopped maraschino cherries
- 1/8 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 5 (8oz.) freezer safe jars

Directions:

1. Stir white and brown sugar and instant pectin together in bowl until well blended.
2. Add pineapple, cherries and vanilla extract. Stir 3 minutes.
3. Ladle jam into clean jars, leaving one-half inch headspace. Attach lids.
4. Let stand at room temperature until thickened, approximately 30 minutes.
5. Label and refrigerate up to 3 weeks or freeze up to 1 year.
6. Thaw frozen jam overnight in refrigerator before using.

Peach Freezer Jam

Yield: 1 (8 oz.) jar

This is a great option for making just one jar of jam—to use up those last couple of peaches!

Ingredients

- ¾ cup pitted, peeled and finely chopped peaches
- 1 tablespoon Ball RealFruit™ Instant Pectin
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar (or granulated sugar substitute that measures 1:1)
- 1 ½ teaspoons lemon juice

Directions:

1. Stir together peaches, sugar and lemon juice. Let stand for 10 minutes.
2. Add pectin gradually, stirring well the entire time to prevent clumping. Stir 3 minutes.
3. Ladle jam into clean jars, leaving one-half inch headspace. Attach lids.
4. Let stand at room temperature 30 minutes.
5. Label and refrigerate up to three weeks or freeze up to 1 year.
6. Thaw frozen jam overnight in refrigerator before using.

Strawberry Freezer Jam

Yield 5 (8 oz.) jars

Don't have strawberries? This recipe can be made with any type of crushed berries.

Ingredients

4 cups crushed fruit (approx. 4 -1 pound containers)

1 ½ cups granulated sugar (or granulated sugar substitute that measures 1:1)

1 (1.59 oz.) packet Mrs. Wages No Cook Freezer Jam

Directions:

1. Combine sugar (or sugar substitute) and pectin until well blended.
2. Add crushed fruit to sugar mixture and stir for 3 minutes.
3. Ladle jam into clean jars, leaving on-half inch headspace. Attach lids.
4. Let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes.
5. Label and refrigerate up to three weeks or freeze up to 1 year.
6. Thaw frozen jam overnight in refrigerator before using.

Lesson Summary: Instant pectin can be combined with fresh fruit and sugar to make a gelled product. This simple process creates a tasty, easy-to-make soft spread that can be stored in the freezer and is excellent when used as a jam, dessert topping, or pastry filling. The task of making freezer jam is simple (measure, mix, stir, freeze) and requires minimal time in the kitchen.

Suggested Activities:

- Club members can make the recipes included in this lesson at home. Have taste test at the club meeting.
- Try the recipes that are enclosed with your package of instant pectin. Share the recipe with club members.
- Make the recipe as a group during the club meeting. Each club member can bring their assigned ingredients and/or equipment needed for making the jam. Every member can go home with their own container ready for the refrigerator.

Suggested Materials:

Ball Blue Book, 37th Edition.

Ball Canning Back to Basics: A Foolproof Guide to Canning Jams, Jellies, Pickles, and More, 2017.

Mrs. Wages Home Canning Guide

So Easy to Preserve, University of Georgia, 6th Edition

Lesson Prepared by: Rhonda Matthews, County Extension Agent, Abbeville County

Lesson Review by: Dr. Julie K. Northcutt, Professor, Department of Food, Nutrition and Packaging Sciences, Extension Program Team Leader, Food Safety & Nutrition Program Cooperative Extension Service

Sources/References:

Fresh Preserving.com

Mrswages.com

Pomonapectin.com

FREEZER JAMS



Pineapple Upside Down Cake Freezer Jam

Yield 5 (8 oz.) jars

Ingredients:

- 1 cup granulated sugar (or granular sugar substitute that measure 1:1)
- ½ cup brown sugar (or granular brown sugar substitute that measures 1:1)
- 5 tablespoons Ball RealFruit™ Instant Pectin
- 2 (20 oz.) cans crushed pineapple in its own juice, drained well
- ¼ cup finely chopped maraschino cherries
- 1/8 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 5 (8oz.) freezer safe jars

Directions:

1. Stir white and brown sugar and instant pectin together in bowl until well blended.
2. Add pineapple, cherries and vanilla extract. Stir 3 minutes.
3. Ladle jam into clean jars, leaving one-half inch headspace. Attach lids.
4. Let stand at room temperature until thickened, approximately 30 minutes.
5. Label and refrigerate up to 3 weeks or freeze up to 1 year.
6. Thaw frozen jam overnight in refrigerator before using.

Peach Freezer Jam

Yield: 1 (8 oz.) jar



Ingredients:

- ¾ cup pitted, peeled and finely chopped peaches
- 1 tablespoon Ball RealFruit™ Instant Pectin
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar (or granulated sugar substitute that measures 1:1)
- 1 ½ teaspoons lemon juice

Directions:

1. Stir together peaches, sugar and lemon juice. Let stand for 10 minutes.
2. Add pectin gradually, stirring well the entire time to prevent clumping.
3. Stir 3 minutes.
4. Ladle jam into clean jars, leaving one-half inch headspace. Attach lids.
5. Let stand at room temperature 30 minutes.
6. Label and refrigerate up to three weeks or freeze up to 1 year.
7. Thaw frozen jam overnight in refrigerator before using.

Strawberry Freezer Jam

Yield 5 (8 oz.) jars



Ingredients:

- 4 cups crushed fruit (approx. 4 -1 pound containers)
- 1 ½ cups granulated sugar (or granulated sugar substitute that measures 1:1)
- 1 (1.59 oz.) packet Mrs. Wages No Cook Freezer Jam

Directions:

1. Combine sugar (or sugar substitute) and pectin until well blended.
2. Add crushed fruit to sugar mixture and stir for 3 minutes.
3. Ladle jam into clean jars, leaving on-half inch headspace. Attach lids.
4. Let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes.
5. Label and refrigerate up to three weeks or freeze up to 1 year.
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Handout